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Teaching English/Spanish Cognates to Increase Reading Comprehension

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TEACHING ENGLISH/SPANISH COGNATES
TO INCREASE
READING COMPREHENSION

by

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A curriculum has been developed for middle school English as a Second Language (ESL) students to improve their reading comprehension. A review of the literature found that vocabulary is an essential part of reading comprehension and becoming aware of English/Spanish cognates can increase the students' English vocabulary. The curriculum includes a survey to assess a student's knowledge and use of cognates, lesson plans to introduce the concept of cognates, to practice recognizing English/Spanish cognates, and learn the correlation of suffixes between English and Spanish. The curriculum also includes lists of English/Spanish cognates divided by subjects.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

<u>Introduction</u>

"Vocabulary knowledge is fundamental to reading comprehension; one cannot understand text without knowing what most of the words mean" (Nagy, 1988, p. 1). Students whose word knowledge is enormous rarely encounter a word they do not know. Conversely, a small vocabulary can hamper or effectively stop comprehension. This curriculum project will focus on increasing the English vocabulary of Spanish speaking English as a Second Language (ESL) students by teaching English-Spanish cognates.

McLaughlin asserts that vocabulary is a key to successful reading and to successful academic learning generally. He calls a child's vocabulary the best predictor of academic success. Studies of native English-speaking children show that they make enormous strides in vocabulary growth during elementary school. Researchers estimate that children learn about 3,000 new words every year during their school career. McLaughlin states "Imagine the burden this places on a child learning English as a second language. These children have to catch up with classmates who are constantly learning more and more words" (quoted in Maragoni, 1997, p. 8).

Holmes and Ramos (1993) found that "the existence of cognate vocabulary in a target language is of critical importance for the language learner. For this reason, native speakers of Romance languages enjoy a

certain advantage in learning English when compared to speakers of non-Indo-European languages" (p. 87). Holmes and Ramos also conclude that even for the beginner the existence of cognates in a target language makes reading comprehension more accessible. They admit that there other dimensions which help in reading, but the most striking similarity for many language learners is the presence of cognate vocabulary.

Purpose of the Project

This project is a supplemental curriculum for existing middle school ESL programs and content classrooms. It is intended to assist literate Spanish speaking students to increase the number of known English vocabulary words. This curriculum project will focus on increasing the English vocabulary of Spanish speaking ESL students by teaching English-Spanish cognates.

The district in which the author teaches intends that students keep up with their native English speaking peers in the academic subject areas while they are acquiring English. The project provides a variety of means to teach English content and academic vocabulary cognates to aid students in reaching this goal.

Significance of the Project

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (1994) found that while the gap was narrowing between the achievement of white and Hispanic students, the average scores of white students at all three ages or

grades were higher than the average scores of Hispanic students in all subject areas.

The State of Washington has developed student benchmarks that ESL students are expected to achieve. The district in which the author teaches states within its ESL Philosophy (1990) "It is absolutely essential for the student to learn the English language in order to achieve the necessary adjustment to survive in an English speaking environment" (n.p.).

To help students gain a better working knowledge of English can only help them achieve more academically. The cognate vocabulary shared by Spanish and English needs to be exploited to students' advantage. As Holmes and Ramos (1993) stated there is a need to "throw some light on cognate recognition and comprehension, an aspect of vocabulary learning that has rarely been mentioned, either in research or in teaching materials, despite its immense importance to a large number of English students" (p.105).

Limitations of the Project

The supplemental curriculum in this project is for middle school classrooms. It is only part of an effective ESL program for teaching English. The focus is only Spanish-English cognates, as Spanish is most often the native language of ESL students in the author's district.

Definition of Terms

Cognate: "Items of vocabulary in two languages which have the

same roots and can be recognized as such. The two principal properties of cognates lie in their orthographic and semantic similarity in the languages compared" (Holmes & Ramos, 1993, p. 88).

ESL: This is an acronym for English as a Second Language. It is often used to describe students whose native language is other than English, or classes or curriculum that teach English to those students (Garcia, 1991).

ESP: This is an acronym for English for Specific Purposes. It is the second language acquisition of English in specialized contexts, such as civil engineering, industrial engineering, and educational psychology (English for Specific Purposes Journal, 1994, 13).

False Cognates: Two words of the same origin that may be orthographically recognizable, but totally different in meaning (Holmes & Ramos, 1993).

L1: Used in professional journal articles on language to denote a person's first language (Argulewicz & Sanchez, 1982).

L2: Used in professional journal articles on language to denote a person's second language (Argulewicz & Sanchez, 1982).

Target language: Used in professional journal articles on language to denote the language the student is studying to acquire (Krashen, cited in Maun, 1986).

Overview of the Remainder of the Project

Chapter Two is a review of the relevant literature pertaining to reading achievement among Hispanic students, the importance of

vocabulary development to reading comprehension, and cognates.
Chapter Three describes the procedures undertaken to develop the project.
Chapter Four is the project itself: a cognate awareness student survey,
specific lessons plans to introduce cognates, practice recognizing
English/Spanish cognates, and learn the correlation of suffixes between
English/Spanish cognates. It also includes lists of English/Spanish
cognates divided by subject. Chapter Five consists of a summary,
conclusions, and recommendations by the author.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Periodically, reading performance or achievement is assessed nationally. These assessments are used to gauge the educational system's progress, by comparing current results with previous results. A major concern is the finding that Hispanic students, as a group, continue to score lower than their white classmates. Campbell (1994) reported the disheartening news that while the gap between White students and Hispanic students was narrowing, the average scores of White students at all three ages or grades were higher that the average scores of Hispanic students in all subject areas.

Low Reading Achievement Among Hispanic Students

In a report intended for educators and policy makers, Applebee (1987) reported that Hispanic and black students are behind their classmates by grade 4 and never reach the same level, even for those who go to college. While there were differences between the two minority groups, they both read less well than their white classmates and were therefore at a disadvantage in academic settings. Selsky (1990) found that even when the average proficiency levels among Hispanics rose, there was still a considerable gap between their level and whites of the same age group.

An investigation by Berends (1996) found that when the differences in scores between white students and Hispanic students were adjusted in the area of social context (family, school, community), the gap shrank, but white students still scored higher, even considering the adjustment.

Another major concern is the high rate of high school dropouts within the Hispanic student group. Rivera (1993) reports that the completion of high school rate for Hispanics in 1990 was 54.9% and declined in 1992 to 52.1%. According to the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, Hispanics not only have a higher dropout rate, they drop out earlier. The Commission found:

> an alarming 40 percent of Hispanic dropouts had not completed the eighth grade. Another 18 percent of Latino dropouts completed ninth grade, but left before completing 10th grade, and over one-half (58 percent) of Hispanic dropouts had less than a 10th grade education. (quoted in Intercultural Development Research Association, 1996, p. 12)

Jimenez, Garcia and Pearson (1996) point out the achievement or performance discrepancies between Hispanic and white students are usually explained as cultural or congenital factors. They believe that investigation of the reading knowledge and reading strategies of successful bilingual students could help improve reading instruction and help in the creation of alternate models of proficient reading. They suggest that the focus should be on the potential strength of bilingualism, rather than viewing it as a weakness.

Garcia (1991) feels that the low test performance of Hispanic children should motivate researchers to investigate the reading development, instruction, and assessment of limited English proficient children. Garcia points out that many educators argue against relying on reading achievement test scores for student placement and assessment, but the practice continues. In fact, in the author's district (and others), the guidelines of federally funded programs require that reading achievement scores be used as criteria for student progress and continuation of services. Just looking at a student's reading score, Garcia contends, seriously underestimates their reading comprehension potential. She states that "educators need to understand the factors that may uniquely affect the reading performance of second-language students so that they can use this information to provide more effective evaluation and instruction " (Garcia, 1991, p. 388). Clarke (1981) suggests that "that two students could produce similar L2 reading behaviors for different reasons: one because he is a poor reader, the other because he has not been able to transfer his L1 reading skills to the second language" (p. 79).

Reading achievement is crucial to academic success. Applebee (1987) stated that if groups such as Hispanic students do not receive additional educational support, they are at risk of school failure. Applebee, Langer and Mullis reported:

> the differences between Latino and non-Latino white students' reading performances lit primarily in the areas of vocabulary and conceptual knowledge, that these differences begin to widen at around 4th grade, and that they do no diminish even when the

students are in college" (quoted in Hancin-Bhatt & Nagy, 1994, p. 289).

Hancin-Bhatt & Nagy (1994) felt that these findings are serious "because Latino bilinguals constitute the single largest - and fastest growing -segment of the limited-English proficiency/bilingual student population. Therefore, increasing English vocabulary knowledge is essential for ensuring the academic success of these students " (p. 289-290).

First Language Literacy and Vocabulary Knowledge

One of the primary components of reading comprehension is vocabulary knowledge. A division for this project will be made between first language vocabulary as it relates to literacy, and the second language vocabulary as it relates to second language literacy.

Nagy (1988) claimed that word knowledge is essential to reading comprehension. He believed that students cannot understand text without knowing what most of the words mean.

Dole, Sloan and Trathen (1995) stated:

Most people recognize the important relationship between knowing words and reading well. In general, studies have shown that students with extensive vocabularies do better on reading comprehension tests than students with smaller vocabularies. This makes sense intuitively in that we would expect students who knew more words to understand what they read better. (p. 453)

Different methods of vocabulary instruction have been debated, but the need for vocabulary instruction in native language reading to

improve reading comprehension is a given (Blachowicz & Lee, 1991). They stated that "poorer readers know less about fewer words than do more able readers, and poor readers are frequently unmotivated or unable to do the amount of contextual reading required to extend their vocabularies" (Blachowicz, 1991, p. 191).

Second Language Literacy and Vocabulary Knowledge

As important as vocabulary knowledge is to reading comprehension in the first language, it is more so in second language literacy. Saville-Troike (1984) reported that vocabulary knowledge in English is the most meaningful aspect for academic achievement. Vocabulary in ESL classes should be related as much as possible to students' subject matter classes. Cooper (cited in Weatherford, 1990)) stated that of the three major parts of language - grammar, phonetics and vocabulary- vocabulary was the most important. Weatherford (1990) expressed that in order to carry on a serious conversation or read a newspaper, 5,000 words, at least, were needed. To be really fluent, a reader needed to control not only 10,000 words but also thousand of expressions and idioms.

In a study by Jimenez et al. (1996), it was discovered that the successful bilingual readers focused or were more sensitive to the need to define and understand unknown words than the successful Anglo readers in that study. They felt it was also probably true that the successful Anglo readers simply knew more English vocabulary.

Garcia (1991) stated that second language readers may know a

vocabulary concept in both languages, but not the tiny differences in usage within a context in the second language. Clarke, Cziko & Perkins (cited in Garcia, 1991) found that trouble with key vocabulary seemed to hinder reading comprehension more severely for second language readers.

Garcia (1991) concluded in her study:

> the interview data specifically demonstrate that the presence of unknown vocabulary in the questions and answer choices was the major linguistic factor that adversely affected the Hispanic children's reading test performance. In some cases, the Hispanic children showed that they had comprehended the test passages but had not comprehended the questions, due to problems with vocabulary. (p. 388)

Kim (1995) conducted a study with 108 Korean high school students. The results showed that vocabulary and syntax were very important in second language reading. Kim also observed the trouble students had not knowing the complete and varied meanings of words. It was found that students knew an English word with only a single meaning, so that when it was used in a different context, they had trouble knowing its meaning.

A variety of factors have been found to affect bilingual students' second language (L2) literacy. Garcia (1991) found Spanish speaking students differed in their level and type of background knowledge and in their interpretation and knowledge of English vocabulary. Favreau and Segalowitz found successful adult bilingual readers were shown to read more slowly, in both first and second languages, when compared to monolingual adults (cited in Jimenez et al., 1996). Argulewicz and

Sanchez (1982) point out that speaking, writing and reading skills may not develop at the same time. Goodman, Goodman and Flores pointed out that "reading then, need not follow oral development but may be parallel to it and contribute to general language control " (quoted in Argulewicz & Sanchez, 1982, p. 283).

The Advantages of Teaching Cognates to Increase Vocabulary

English and Spanish share important similarities which could provide bilingual students with help in English vocabulary and reading comprehension (Hancin-Bhatt & Nagy, 1993). Academic English is filled with Spanish-English cognates: words that have similar or identical spellings and meanings. Hancin-Bhatt and Nagy (1994) also reported that there are systematic connections between suffixes in English and Spanish. They cited the example of words that end in -ty in English (e.g. felicity) had Spanish cognates ending in -dad (e.g. felicidad).

A study conducted by Nagy, Garcia, Durgunoglu, and Hancin-Bhatt (1992) concluded that the biliterate, bilingual students tested were aware of cognates and made some use of that knowledge to aid their reading in English. Perhaps the most important finding of this study was the fact that the knowledge of Spanish vocabulary can contribute to English reading comprehension, but it was not automatic. It depended on the students' awareness of the relationship of cognates in Spanish and English. This study clearly supported the teaching of cognates to bilingual students to aid their English reading comprehension. In the words of the authors:

This study supports instruction aimed at increasing Spanish-

English bilingual students' utilization of Spanish-English cognate knowledge in their English reading. The fact that students as young as fourth grade demonstrated cognate awareness suggest that explicit instruction in the use of cognates in students' second-language reading can help these student overcome difficulties that they may face with English reading vocabulary. (Nagy et al., 1992, p. 8)

Another study of successful bilingual readers of Spanish and English revealed that the students were aware of cognates and used the strategy of searching for cognates (Jimenez et al., 1996). All eight of the successful bilingual readers in that study mentioned during either the interviews or the think alouds that they knew about the strategy of searching for cognates. An example is the student Gilda, when she states "I know that there are some words that look alike but I don't know what Proportional means" (quoted in Jimenez et al., 1996, p. 100).

There is evidence that capable readers use their cognate awareness to help them read unfamiliar words in testing situations. Schmitt (1988) found in a study examining SAT results indicated that true cognates or words with roots in English seemed to aid Hispanic students' performance. In a related study, Rivera and Schmitt (1988) found that content analysis of omitted items showed when an item had several true cognates, it was omitted less by both Mexican-American and Puerto Rican students.

An additional advantage to the teaching of cognates is that the students see their native language as an important source of information

(Jimenez et al, 1996). Langer and associates concluded that bilingual children who were competent readers used their knowledge of Spanish as support when they had trouble reading English. (cited in Jimenez et al., 1996)

Cognate Recognition in Foreign Language Classes

The teaching of cognates to aid in second language acquisition is not new and is used in many foreign language classes in many countries. In a presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Foreign Language Association of Georgia, Weatherford (1990) related using cognates in foreign language teaching and presented examples in German, Latin, Greek and French.

As Treville (1996) stated with adult language learners, it seemed appropriate to search for ways to facilitate genuine second language learning and the similarities between French and English should be exploited early to facilitate language learning. Her classroom experiments described the merits of an initial focus on French/English cognates, to expand the vocabulary of beginning-level French university students.

As Dutch and English are closely related, de Bot, Cox, Ralston, Schaufeli and Weltens found (1995) that there are many words that are very similar in form and/or meaning. They focused on cognates in three categories: 1) real cognates, such as English 'lip' and Dutch 'lip; 2) semi-cognates, such as English 'flag' and Dutch 'vlag'; and 3) 'false friends' such as English 'list' and Dutch 'list' (meaning trick).

Brazilian students of English have been taught using cognate recognition activities from the beginning of the English for Specific

Purposes (ESP) Project in 1978 (Holmes & Ramos, 1993). The activities have proven successful and a part of the Project methodology. It was helpful to these students to recognize the majority of Latin origin words in an English academic reading text. These students were native speakers of Portuguese or Spanish. They were taking short courses aimed at enabling them to read in English in their special area of study.

False Cognates

Researchers urge caution, however, when cognates are taught to students learning a second language (Lengeling, 1996; Reid, 1948). False cognates, or words that appear to be similar but are not, can trick second language students. Lengeling (1996) cautioned that false cognates were misleading and caused problems for second language learners. The different meanings could lead to miscommunication which would need to be clarified. She offers the example of 'libreria' and 'library', as they both come from Latin, but have different meanings. 'Liberia' means a store where books and paper can be bought (bookstore), as opposed to 'library' where books can be found, but not purchased. She furthers cites the example of 'assist' and 'asistir':

> In Spanish the 'asistir' means "to attend a class" but it is confused with the word "assist" in English which is synonymous with "help". Often Spanish speakers will produce a sentence such as "I assist my English class four times a week". (Lengeling, 1996, p. 3)

Lengeling (1996) suggested discussing a couple of false cognates quickly and easily in class, depending on the level of the class and time

available.

Martinez (1994) found in her English for Specific Purposes study that very few false cognates were found. A small list of six was included with her report findings. They are: actual (Spanish <u>actual</u> means 'current'), designs (Spanish <u>designar</u> means 'assign'), fact (Spanish <u>factor</u> means 'factor'), improved (Spanish <u>no aprobado</u> means 'disapproved'), place (Spanish <u>place</u> means 'to please') and success (Spanish <u>suceso</u> means 'event').

Summary

The academic achievement of Hispanic students is lower than that of their white classmates. A review of the literature indicated at the center of academic achievement is the ability to read for understanding and to read to gain new insights and information. The connection of vocabulary to reading comprehension has been shown in both first and second language literacy. The teaching of cognates to Spanish-English learners can broaden their vocabularies and has shown promise to aid the Spanish-English bilingual student and increase our understanding of biliteracy.

CHAPTER THREE

PROCEDURES

The project originated from several experiences of the author, both as a teacher and a learner. The district in which the author teaches sponsored Spanish classes at no cost for all district employees interested in beginning or continuing their study of the Spanish language. The author had studied French in high school and college, but had never studied Spanish. In the first class, the instructor briefly pointed out the existence of cognates and how, if known, they afford the language learner an instant vocabulary in the new language.

Classroom experiences with second language learners were the second catalyst for this project. The author taught ESL classes at the middle school level. One student in particular seemed to instantly grasp ideas and concepts, provided the term was a cognate in Spanish. An example is the word 'map'. The Spanish term is 'mapa'. This student was literate in his own language, so the word not only had a similar oral sound, but the written form is very close also. Additionally, when the author taught a lesson on Latin roots, much discussion was generated about the similarities between the Spanish, English and Latin. The names for subjects, such as "biology" in English and "biologia" in Spanish were noticed by the students, especially the student mentioned before.

The third catalyst was when the author became acquainted with a colleague who was himself a student of English. Having taught in Mexico for many years, he had moved with his family to the United States.

During a discussion in a linguistics class, he related his process of learning English and the author was intrigued. He began reading in English, which was the main method he used to learn English. He also shared with our class the list of cognates which he had compiled during the time he was learning English.

Current writings and research in the areas of English and Spanish cognates, the use of cognates in other language learning situations, second language literacy and the connection between vocabulary and reading comprehension were examined by the author. The district goals for ESL learners were examined. Lesson plans and activities were developed to provide instruction to meet those goals using cognates.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT

The project is divided in three parts. First, the project includes a cognate awareness survey, assessing the student's reading abilities and knowledge and use of cognates in reading English. Second, a variety of ten lesson plans is included in the project, to introduce the concept of cognates, practice recognition and learn the correlation of suffixes between English and Spanish. The project also includes lists of English and Spanish cognates, divided by the subjects of Science (cell Biology, ecology, plant Biology, general astronomy, planets, sound, light, states of matter), Social Studies (geography, government, maps, community, professions) and Mathematics.

In administering the cognate awareness survey, the teacher will ascertain if the student is literate in Spanish, English or both. Even if the student is not literate in English, the introduction of the concept of cognates will foster a sense of hope in the student, as many of the words she already knows in Spanish have an English cognate. If the concept of cognates is unfamiliar to the student, it will be a strategy she can use. If it is a strategy she uses, instruction in the area of cognates will broaden her cognate vocabulary.

The lessons are intended to be springboards for further student exploration in the area of cognates. The lesson formats can be used with selected target cognates the teacher identifies. Once the student is made aware of the concept of English/Spanish cognates, she will begin the

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recognize more cognates in authentic texts and print around her.

The cognate lists are also intended to be springboards for additions by the students and teacher. As each new unit in a content subject is begun, the student can use the list as a beginning point for that chapter.

Cognate Awareness Survey

Cognate Awareness Survey

The purpose of this survey is twofold. First, it will determine to what extent, if any, the bilingual, biliterate student is aware of cognates in Spanish and English. Secondly, it will determine if the student uses the knowledge of cognates in her second language (English) reading. These questions may be used in verbal or written form.

1. Are you able to read Spanish?

2. Are you able to read English?

3. In which language do you believe you read best?

4. When you are reading English, have you noticed that some words look exactly like, or almost like, Spanish words?

5. When you are reading English, do you look for words that look familiar to help you understand what you are reading? (If yes, go to #6. If no, go to #7)

6. Do you always search for similar words, or just occasionally?

7. Did you know that there are lots of words in English and Spanish that look almost the same, or exactly the same, and mean the same thing in English and Spanish?

8. Can you think of any words that look alike and have the same meaning in English and Spanish?

9. Do you think knowing many words that are similar in English and Spanish will help your reading in English?

*Adapted from Jimenez (1996)

Cognate Lesson Plans

Introduction to Cognates
Matching Activity #1

Overall Objective:
The student will learn and add English cognates to her vocabulary

Materials:
numbered photographs or drawings of selected musical instruments
worksheet with instrument names
overhead transparency listing 5 English/Spanish cognates

Procedures:
1. Whole class - Introduce the concept of cognates. "Cognates (cognados in Spanish) are words that are spelled/pronounced somewhat the same between two languages and whose meaning is the same. See if you can match the words that mean the same thing on this overhead just by looking at the similarities in their spellings. You might be surprised at how much English you already know!" Call on five volunteers to draw a line, each student matching the English word to the Spanish word on the overhead.

English	**Español**
machine	internacional
mark	biología
international	carpintero
carpenter	máquina
biology	marco

Place numbered photographs of musical instruments where students can easily see them, such as a pocket chart or the tray on the writing board. "Look at the worksheet that names musical instruments. Match the names to their illustrations." Show pictures of: clarinet, guitar, harp, flute, harmonica, trumpet, violin, piano (Spanish: clarinete, guitarra, arpa, flauta, armónica, trompeta, violín, piano). Elicit answers from the class to match.

2. Small groups - Divide the class into groups of 2 or 3 and have each group match the five English/Spanish words and the musical instrument names to the photographs after consultation.

3. Individual student activity - Each student does both matching activities alone.

* Adapted from the Internet

Introduction to Cognates
Matching Activity #2

Overall Objective:
The student will learn and add English cognates to her vocabulary

Materials:
overhead with two examples
worksheet for class, group or individual completion
overhead of worksheet to provide answers to students and discussion

Procedures:
1. Whole class: "I am interested in what you know about English words which are like a certain Spanish word. In this task, you will see an English word along with four Spanish words which look like and have a similar meaning as the English word. All four are words in Spanish. Reflect on all four choices, and then circle the Spanish word which is closest to the English word in meaning. Do the best you can. You will not receive a grade for this, I just want to see how much you know about certain English and Spanish words which are similar. Let's do some examples."

Examples:

1. study
    a. estudiante
    b. estudiantil
    c. estudiar
    d. estudiando

2. amorous
    a. amor
    b. amorosa
    c. amorosamente
    d. amante

Matching activity

1. anxious
    a. ansia
    b. ansiar
    c. ansiedad
    d. ansioso

2. celebrate
    a. celebrar
    b. celebración
    c. celebrador
    d. celebrante

3. opinion
    a. opinión
    b. opinable
    c. opinar
    d. opinante

4. purify
    a. purificación
    b. puridad
    c. purificar
    d. purificativo

5. religion
    a. religionario
    b. religión
    c. religioso
    d. religiosidad

6. pianist
    a. pianista
    b. pianoforte
    c. piano
    d. pianola

2. Small groups - Divide the class into groups of 2 - 4 and have each group match the English word to the Spanish word with the closest meaning.

3. Individual student activity - Each student completes the matching activity alone.

Answer Key:

Examples
1. c - estudiar
2. b - amorosa

Matching Activity
1. d - ansioso
2. a - celebrar
3. a - opinión
4. c - purificar
5. b - religión
6. a - pianista

*Adapted from Hancin-Bhatt & Nagy (1994)

Recognizing English/Spanish Cognates

Overall Objective:
The student will learn to recognize cognates and add English cognates to her vocabulary

Materials:
worksheet containing items with one Spanish cognate and four English words, including one cognate
overhead of worksheet for use as correction and discussion

Procedures:
1. Whole class - Introduce the worksheet as practice for recognizing cognates. "Use your knowledge of English and its connection with Spanish vocabulary to choose the correct cognate for the Spanish word given." Direct the students to complete the worksheet, circling the English word they believe is the cognate for the Spanish word given.
   Using the overhead, lead a class discussion, and require that the students explain the answers they had chosen.

1. gobernador
   - a. goblet
   - b. governor
   - c. goblin
   - d. goddess

2. cañón
   - a. canine
   - b. canoe
   - c. cannon
   - d. canyon

3. público
   - a. public
   - b. publish
   - c. puberty
   - d. pub

4. distancia
   - a. dissent
   - b. distance
   - c. distaste
   - d. distend

5. investigar
   - a. investigate
   - b. investor
   - c. invent
   - d. invert

6. familia
   - a. famous
   - b. famine
   - c. family
   - d. fame

7. operar
   - a. opera
   - b. opinion
   - c. operation
   - d. operate

8. correctamente
   - a. correlate
   - b. correctly
   - c. correspond
   - d. corrode

9. extinto
   - a. extend
   - b. extenuate
   - c. extent
   - d. extinct

10. filamento
    - a. filibuster
    - b. filament
    - c. film
    - d. filings

11. rotación
    - a. rotation
    - b. rotary
    - c. rotten
    - d. rotate

12. prático
    - a. practice
    - b. practise
    - c. practical
    - d. prairie

Recognizing English/Spanish Cognates

2. Small groups - Divide the class in groups of 2-4 students. Students will fill in the worksheet cooperatively, using consultation. Groups share their answers with the class.

3. Individual student activity - Each student completes the worksheet alone and checks her work using the answer key.

Answer Key

1. gobernador-governor
2. cañón-canyon
3. público-public
4. distancia-distance
5. investigar-investigate
6. familia-family

7. operar-operate
8. correctamente-correctly
9. extinto-extinct
10. filamento-filament
11. rotación-rotation
12. prático-practical

*Adapted from Arteaga & Herschensohn (1995)

Reading English is Easy!

Overall Objective:
The student will learn and add English cognates to her vocabulary

Materials:
handout with prepared English paragraphs; questions following
overhead of handout, to provide answers to students, and for discussion
overhead of English paragraph with cognates highlighted
handout with prepared Spanish paragraphs

Procedures:
1. Whole class - Introduce the activity. "Finding patterns in cognates is one way to use what you know. Use what you already know to check your understanding of the following paragraphs written in English." Direct students to read the paragraph silently and answer the questions and be ready to participate in class discussion.

Mexico is a republic. Costa Rica is another republic of Central America and Brazil is a republic of South America. The capital of Mexico is Mexico. The capital of Costa Rica is San Jose and of Brazil is Brasilia. In Mexico and in Costa Rica, they speak Spanish, but in Brazil they speak Portuguese.
Brazil is an important nation. Mexico and Costa Rica are also important. Many tourists visit Mexico, Costa Rica and Brazil.

Answer these questions, based on your understanding of the paragraphs.
1. What do Mexico, Costa Rica, and Brazil have in common?
2. Where is Costa Rica?
3. What is the capital city of Brazil?
4. What language is spoken in Mexico and Costa Rica?
5. What language is spoken in Brazil?
6. Who visits these countries?
7. Give the Spanish for the words that are <u>not</u> cognates.
   also_____   and_____   are_____

Using the overhead of the paragraphs, discuss and mark the cognates they recognize. Following the discussion, pass out the paragraphs in Spanish or the English highlighted version and allow the students to further check their answers.

2. Small groups - Divide the class in groups of 2-4 students. Each group reads the paragraphs and through consultation, marks the cognates and answers the questions. Groups shares their findings with the entire class.

3. Individual student activity - Each student reads the paragraph and answers the questions on an individual basis. The English paragraph with highlighted cognates and/or the Spanish paragraph are provided to the student so she may check her answers.

<center>

English
(with cognates underlined)

</center>

     Mexico is a republic. Costa Rica is another republic of Central America and Brazil is a republic of South America. The capital of Mexico is Mexico. The capital of Costa Rica is San Jose and of Brazil is Brasilia. In Mexico and in Costa Rica, they speak Spanish, but in Brazil they speak Portuguese.
     Brazil is an important nation. Mexico and Costa Rica are also important. Many tourists visit Mexico, Costa Rica and Brazil.

<center>

Español

</center>

     México es una república. Costa Rica es otra república de Centroamérica y Brasil es una república de Sudamérica. La capital de México es México. La capital de Costa Rica es San José y la de Brazil es Brasilia. En México y en Costa Rica, se habla español, pero en Brazil se habla portugués.
     Brasil es una nación importante. México y Costa Rica también son importantes. Muchos turistas visitan México, Costa Rica y Brasil.

*Adapted from Lubiner (1992)

It's All in the Ending

Overall Objective:
The student will learn and add English cognates to her vocabulary,
learning the patterns of word endings of English/Spanish cognates

Materials:
worksheet containing groups of English words with identical endings
overhead of worksheet containing groups of English words with identical
endings
worksheet containing groups of Spanish words, for use as a correction tool
copies of English narrative/expository material, appropriate to students'
reading level

Procedures:
1. Whole class - Introduce the concept of comparable endings of
English/Spanish cognates. "Many English and Spanish words come from
the same parent word, so they are related in spelling and meaning. Often,
the patterns of change from Spanish to English will be helpful to you in
figuring out words you do not know. Look at the following group of
words and see if you can identify the pattern they show. First, let's go over
the example."

	English ent	Spanish ente
Example: continent, evident, innocent	ent	ente
1. admiration, education, situation	_ _ _ _	_ _ _ _
2. university, variety, eternity	_ _ _ _	_ _ _ _
3. curious, furious, nervous	_ _ _ _	_ _ _ _
4. glory, family, industry	_ _ _ _	_ _ _ _
5. investigate, operate, dictate	_ _ _ _	_ _ _ _
6. pianist, artist, tourist	_ _ _ _	_ _ _ _
7. public, comic, exotic	_ _ _ _	_ _ _ _
8. communism, Buddhism, Judaism	_ _ _ _	_ _ _ _
9. distance, ambulance, France	_ _ _ _	_ _ _ _
10. difference, correspondence, innocence	_ _ _ _	_ _ _ _
11. exactly, rapidly, correctly	_ _ _ _	_ _ _ _
12. identical, typical, practical	_ _ _ _	_ _ _ _

Lead a class discussion, calling on volunteers for the English and
Spanish word endings. The teacher can fill in endings on the overhead, or
call for students to complete the blanks. Ask students to suggest other
words that can be listed under the same ending headings. Ask the

students to state the pattern for each comparable ending in English and Spanish.

To apply the concept of patterns in English and Spanish cognates with comparable word endings, provide photocopies of content or narrative texts, and lead the students in looking for words that can be classified under the same headings.

2. Small groups - Divide the class in groups of 2-4 students. Students will fill in the worksheet cooperatively, using consultation. Groups formulate the pattern that each group of words follows. Groups share their answers with the entire class.

3. Individual student activity - Each student completes the worksheet alone and checks her work using the answer key.

ANSWER KEYS

Cognate Endings
English to Spanish

		English	Español
1.	admiration, education, situation	tion	ción
2.	university, variety, eternity	ty	dad
3.	curious, furious, nervous	ous	oso
4.	glory, family, industry	y	ia
5.	investigate, operate, dictate	ate	ar
6.	pianist, artist, tourist	ist	ista
7.	public, comic, exotic	ic	ico
8.	communism, Buddhism, Judaism	ism	ismo
9.	distance, ambulance, France	ance	ancia
10.	difference, correspondence, innocence	ence	encia
11.	exactly, rapidly, correctly	ly	mente
12.	identical, typical, practical	ical	ico

Cognate Endings
Spanish to English

		English	Español
1.	admiración, educación, situación	tion	ción
2.	universidad, variedad, eternidad	ty	dad
3.	curioso, furioso, nervioso	ous	oso
4.	gloria, familia, industria	y	ia
5.	investigar, operar, dictar	ate	ar
6.	pianista, artista, turista	ist	ista

7. público, cómico, exótico	<u>ic</u>	<u>ico</u>
8. comunismo, budismo, judaísmo	<u>ism</u>	<u>ismo</u>
9. distancia, ambulancia, Francia	<u>ance</u>	<u>ancia</u>
10. diferencia, correspondencia, inocencia	<u>ence</u>	<u>encia</u>
11. exactamente, rápidamente, correctamente	<u>ly</u>	<u>mente</u>
12. idéntico, típico, práctico	<u>ical</u>	<u>ico</u>

*Adapted from Lubiner (1992)

Practicing General Rules
for English/Spanish Cognates

Overall Objective:
The student will learn general rules for English/Spanish cognates, and add English cognates to her vocabulary

Materials:
worksheet with Spanish cognates given
overhead of worksheet for correction and class discussion

Procedures:
1. Whole class - Review the concept of comparable endings of English/Spanish cognates and the general rules for those cognates. Instruct the students to complete the worksheet, providing the English cognate for the Spanish word given and the general rule. Next, the students will apply the rule to three different Spanish words and provide the English cognates.

2. Small groups - Divide the class in groups of 2-4 students. Students will fill in the worksheet cooperatively, using consultation. Groups formulate the general rule and decide as a group the English cognates for the Spanish words given.

3. Individual student activity - Each student completes the worksheet alone and checks her work using the answer key.

Example: continente = <u>continent</u>
       Rule: Spanish words that end in "ente", in English end in "ent".
          Give the English for: presente_____
                                 absorbente_____
                                 equivalente_____

1.   educación =_____
      Rule:
      Give the English for: concesión_____
                                   hesitación_____
                                   superstición_____

2. universidad =_____
    Rule:
    Give the English for: realidad_____
                             comunidad_____
                             electricidad_____

3. nervioso = _____
    Rule:
    Give the English for: contagioso_____
                             religioso_____
                             supersticioso_____

4. familia = _____
    Rule:
    Give the English for: tendencia_____
                             apologia_____
                             tragedia_____

5. operar = _____
    Rule:
    Give the English for: tolerar_____
                             participar_____
                             fabricar_____

6. artista = _____
    Rule:
    Give the English for: comunista_____
                             economista_____
                             pianista_____

7. publico = _____
    Rule:
    Give the English for: trágico_____
                             heroico_____
                             épico_____

8. comunismo = _____
    Rule:
    Give the English for: pesimismo_____
                             capitalismo_____
                             socialismo_____

9. distancia = _____
       Rule:
       Give the English for: ambulancia_____
                                    importancia_____
                                    substancia_____

10. diferencia = _____
       Rule:
       Give the English for: cadencia_____
                                    insistencia_____
                                    inteligencia_____

11. correctamente = _____
       Rule:
       Give the English for: exactamente_____
                                    rápidamente_____

12. práctico = _____
       Rule:
       Give the English for: ilógico_____
                                    lógico_____
                                    idéntico_____

*Adapted from Maun (1986)

Missing Letters

Overall Objective:
The student will learn and add English cognates to her vocabulary,
learning the patterns of word endings of English/Spanish cognates

Materials:
Worksheet containing a list of partially written English cognates
overhead transparency of worksheet of list for class correction and
discussion

Procedures:
1. Whole class -This activity will be a follow-up lesson, following an
introductory lesson on cognates. Review the concept of suffix
relationships between English and Spanish cognates. Direct the students
to fill in the missing letters for the English cognates on the worksheet,
keeping in mind the suffix changes from Spanish to English. Volunteers
can fill in the overhead transparency.

2. Small groups - Divide the class in groups of 2-4 students. Students will
fill in the worksheet cooperatively, using consultation. The teacher can
call on volunteers from each group to complete answers on the overhead
transparency.

3. Individual student activity - Each student completes the worksheet
alone and checks her work using the answer key.

Missing Letters

1. absorb____	7. commun____	13. contin_____
2. famil_	8. identi___	14. glor__
3. differ_____	9. toler___	15. tour___
4. situa_____	10. ambul____	16. reali___
5. exact__	11. religi____	17. apolig____
6. artis__	12. eterni___	18. import_____

*Adapted from Hancin-Bhatt & Nagy (1994)

Recognizing Cognates
in
Authentic Materials

Overall Objective:
The student will practice recognizing English cognates in authentic materials

Materials:
Authentic materials (or photo copies) such as table of contents from textbooks, magazines, newspapers, advertisements, transportation schedules, restaurant menus, television program charts, travel postcards, and travel literature
Overhead transparencies of materials

Procedures:
1. Whole class - Provide photo copies of authentic materials to each student, or create an overhead transparency of the material, large enough for all students to see. Allow time for students to search for cognates and call on volunteers to share cognates they recognize. Guide the students through a class discussion about the main idea of the material, identifying as many cognates as possible.

2. Small groups - Divide the class into groups of 2-4 students. Provide each group with different materials and request that each group prepare presentations about their materials to the entire class at the end of a given time frame. Overhead transparencies can be used by the students during their presentations, if they desire.

3. Individual student activity - Each student receives material or a photo copy and they work alone to glean the main idea, striving to identify cognates in the text. Answer keys are provided on the overheads for the student to check her answers.

Cognate Dictionaries

Overall Objective:
The student will learn and add English cognates to her vocabulary

Materials:
Brief list of common English/Spanish cognate patterns
Spiral notebook for each student, minimum of 50 pages

Procedures:
1. Whole class - Provide each student with the list of common English/Spanish cognate patterns and a spiral notebook for their dictionary. Instruct each student to create headings in the dictionaries, following the categories on the list of common cognate patterns. Students should list a new heading every 3-4 pages, allowing ample room for additional words to be placed in the dictionary upon discovery. In addition to the heading, instruct the class to give an example of at least two English/Spanish cognates that follow the pattern given on that page.

Example:	English: -ate (suffix)	Spanish: -ar (suffix)
	indicate	indicar
	create	crear

2. Small groups - This activity will only be done as a whole class, or on an individual basis, as new students arrive.

3. Individual student activity - Each student is provided with a spiral notebook, instructed to create headings in their dictionary every 3-4 pages, and examples of at least two English /Spanish cognates that follow the pattern given on that page.

A Brief List of Common English/Spanish Cognate Patterns

English	Spanish
-ate (suffix)	-ar (suffix)
-ction (suffix)	-cción (suffix)
-ant (suffix)	-ante (suffix)
-ent (suffix)	-ente (suffix)
-tion (suffix)	-ción (suffix)
-ty (suffix)	-dad (suffix)
-ous (suffix)	-oso (suffix)
-y (suffix)	-ia (suffix)
-ism (suffix)	-ista (suffix)

-ic (suffix)   -ico (suffix)
-ance (suffix)   -ancia (suffix)
initial s + consonant   initial es + consonant

Follow up: Create posters for the classroom, one for each pattern, and encourage students to add words that demonstrate the patterns as the year progresses.

Cognate Trioramas

Overall Objective:
The student will learn and add English cognates to her vocabulary

Materials:
Authentic materials and/or student created cognate dictionaries
paper, cut in 8 1/2" X 8 1/2" squares, at least two per student
pencils, pens, colored pencils
scissors
glue, tape or staples
magazines, suitable for cutting

Procedures:
1. Whole class - Present to the students a finished triorama. Explain and demonstrate how to fold, cut and glue the paper to achieve a triorama. (Diagram and directions on following page.) Instruct students to first fold the paper and mark the cutting line lightly with a pencil. Next, the students should label the triorama with the subject, and write three cognates from authentic materials or cognate dictionaries within the triorama. Students may illustrate, if desired. Magazine pictures can be used for illustration.

Instruct the students to create at least two trioramas. One triorama must be related to a content area, containing cognates related to that subject. The second triorama can contain cognates in a subject of the student's choice, such as soccer, everyday items, or professions. The students are allowed to make additional trioramas. The trioramas may be placed on flat surfaces in the classroom such as shelves or desks, in singles, pairs, or quartets. They may also be stapled to bulletin boards in singles or pairs.

2. Small groups - Divide the class into groups of four. Each student is responsible for one triorama. The four papers will be joined to form a quartet. The teacher may designate the subjects for each triorama or allow for student choice.

3. Individual student activity - The instructions can be made available to all students, to construct trioramas as a follow up activity as new cognates are discovered.

Triorama Directions

*Fold square paper
  in half to from a
  triangle.
*Fold in half again.
*Unfold.
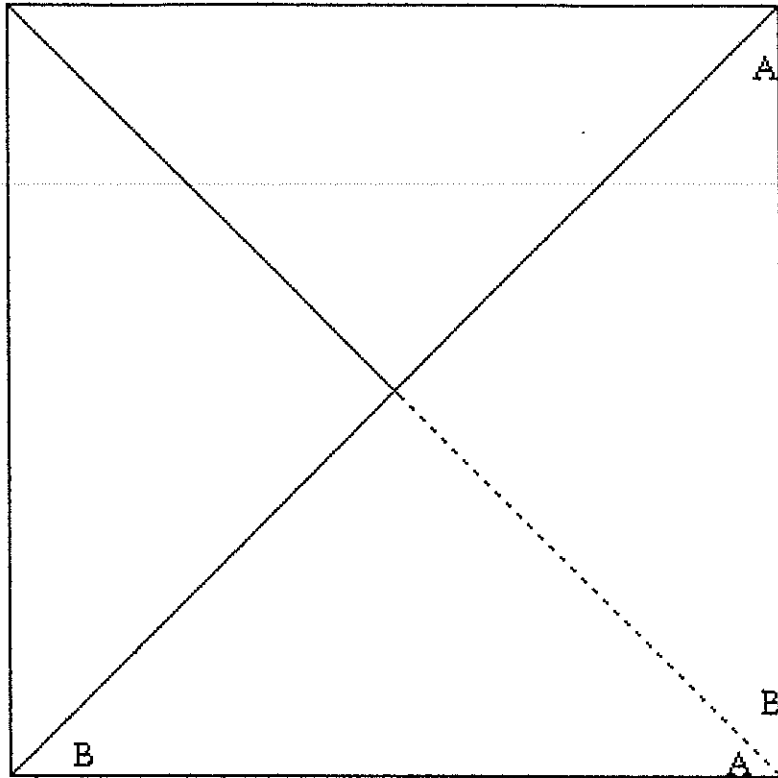
*Write on and/or
  illustrate
  the triorama.

*Cut one
  crease to the
  center
  as shown.

*Overlap the two
  cut sections,
  matching points
  A and B,
  as shown.
*Secure the
  overlapping paper
  with rubber cement,
  glue, tape or staples.

Lists of
English/Spanish Cognates
by Subject

English / Spanish Cognates
The Human Body / El cuerpo Humano

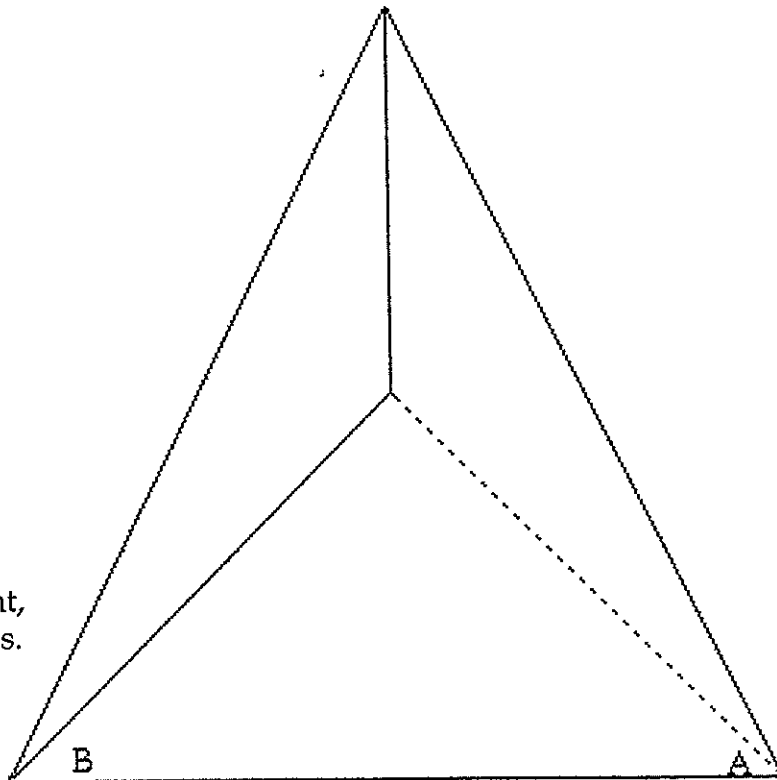|	
aorta	aorta
appendix	apéndice
aqueous humor	humor ácueo
auditory canal	conducto auditivo
auditory nerve	nervio auditivo
beneficial	beneficioso
bile	bilis
canine teeth	caninos
cartilage	cartilago
cerebellum	cerebelo
circulatory system	circulación
cornea	córnea
cranium	cráneo
diet	dieta
deficiency	deficiencia
Eustachian tube	trompa de Eustaquio
esophagus	esófago
incisors	incisivos
intestinal	intestinal
iris	iris
labyrinth	laberinto
larynx	laringe
molars	molares
muscle	músculo
optic nerve	nervio óptico
palate	paladar
retina	retina
saliva	saliva
spinal column	columna vertebral
stomach	estómago
vertebra	vértebra

English / Spanish Cognates
Cell Biology / Biología Celular

algae	algas
amoeba	ameba
bacteria	bacteria
cell	célula
cell division	división celular
cell membrane	membrana celular
chloroplast	cloroplasto
cytoplasm	citoplasma
embryo	embrión
microbe	microbio
nucleus	núcleo
organism	organismo
paramecium	paramecio
protozoan	protozoo
virus	virus

English/Spanish Cognates
Ecology / Ecologia

amphibian	anfibio
atmosphere	atmósfera
biosphere	biosfera
carbohydrate	carbohidrato
carnivore	carvívora
community	communidad

decompose	descomponerse
evolution	evolución
extinct	extinto
habitat	hábitat
herbivore	herbívoro
metamorphosis	metamorfosis
migration	migración
mutualism	mutualismo
omnivore	omnívoro
parasite	parásito
photosynthesis	fotosíntesis
predator	predador
prey	presa
protein	proteína
reproduce	reproducirse
reptile	reptil
rodent	roedor
species	especie
spore	espora

English/Spanish Cognates
Plant Biology / Biologia de las Plantas

annual	anual
anther	antera
aquatic	acuático
cambium	cámbium
chlorophyll	clorofila
cotyledon	cotiledón
embryo	embrión
fertilizer	fertilizante

filament	filamento
geotropism	geotropismo
ovary	ovario
perennial	perenne
petal	pétalo
petiole	peciolo
phototropism	fototropismo
photosynthesis	fofsíntesis
pistil	pistilo
pollen	polen
pollination	polinización
sepal	sépal
stoma	esoma

English/Spanish Cognates
General Astronomy/Astronomía general

comet	cometa (el)
elliptical	elíptico
magnitude	magnitud
meteor	meteoro
meteorite	meteorito
nebula	nebulosa
orbit	órbita
radiotelescope	radiotelescopio
revolution	revolución
rotation	rotación
satellite	satélite
supergiant	supergigante
telescope	telescopio
vernal equinox	equinoccio vernal

English/Spanish Cognates
Planets/Planetas

Jupiter	Júpiter
Mars	Marte
Mercury	Mercurio
Neptune	Neptuno
Pluto	Plutón
Saturn	Saturno
Uranus	Urano
Venus	Venus

English/Spanish Cognates
Sun and Moon/El Sol y la Luna

corona	corona
crater	cráter
eclipse	eclipse
nucleus	núcleo
photosphere	fotosfera
solar eruption	erupción solar

English/Spanish Cognates
Space travel/vuelo espacial

astronaut	astronauta
gravity	gravedad

English/Spanish Cognates
Sound/Sonido

acoustics	acústica
decibel	decibel
echo	eco
frequency	frecuencia
intensity	intensidad

medium	medio
receiver	receptor
stethoscope	estetoscopio
supersonic	supersónico
ultrasonic	ultrasónico
vacuum	vacío
vibrate	vibrar

English/Spanish Cognates
Light/Luz

angle	ángulo
focal point	punto focal
focus	foco
lens	lente
opaque	opaco
prism	prisma
refraction	refracción
translucent	translúcido
transparent	transparente

English/Spanish Cognates
States of Matter/Estados de la materia

Celsius	Celsio
centigrade	centígrado
condensation	condensación
contract	contraerse
crystal	cristal
dissolve	disolver
evaporate	evaporar
expand	expandirse
Fahrenheit	Fahrenheit

gas	gas	volcano	volcán
gaseous	gaseoso		
liquid	líquido		
solid	sólido		
solution	solución		
thermometer	termómetro		

English/Spanish Cognates
Maps/Mapas

antarctic circle	círculo antártico
arctic circle	círculo ártico
atlas	atlas
Equator	ecuador
east	este
latitude	latitud
longitude	longitud
North Pole	Polo Norte
north	norte
prime meridian	primer meridiano
state capital	capital estatal
symbol	símbolo
Tropic of Cancer	Trópic de Cáncer
Tropic of Capricorn	Trópico de Capricornio

English/Spanish Cognates
Geography/Geografía

antarctic	antártico
arctic	ártico
canyon	cañón
coast	costa
continent	continente
crater	cráter
desert	desierto
dune	duna
erosion	erosión
fertile	fértil
glacier	glaciar
gulf	golfo
hemisphere	hemisferio
island	isla
latitude	latitud
longitude	longitud
magma	magma
mantle	manto
mountain	montaña
nucleus	núcleo
peninsula	península
pole	polo
terrain	terreno

English/Spanish Cognates
Government/Gobierno

congress	congreso
constitution	constitución
democracy	democracia
election	elección
governor	governador
political party	partido político
president	presidente
representative	representante

republic	república	geologist	geólogo
senate	senado	marine biologist	biólogo
senator	senador		marítimo
supreme court	corte suprema	mechanic	mecánico
		musician	músico

oceanographer	oceanógrafo
painter	pintor

English/Spanish Cognates
Community/Comunidad

airport	aeropuerto	pharmacist	farmacéutico
bank	banco	photographer	fotógrafo
barber	barbería	plumber	plomero
clinic	clinica	professor	profesor
hospital	hospital	reporter	reportero
museum	museo	sculptor	escultor
park	parque	secretary	secretario
pharmacy	farmacia	typographer	tipógrafo
restaurant	restaurante	veterinarian	veterinario
supermarket	supermercado		

English/Spanish Cognates
Professions/Profesiones

actor	actor
actress	actriz
architect	arquitecto
artist	artista
banker	banquero
barber	barbero
carpenter	carpintero
dentist	dentista
dietician	dietista
electrician	electricista
engineer	ingeniero

English/Spanish Cognates
Mathematics/Matemáticas
General vocabulary/Vocabulario general

arithmetic	aritmética
calculate	calcular
column	columna
compare	comparar
compass	compás
count	contar
decimals	decimales
equation	ecuación
exponent	exponente
fraction	fracción
millions	millones

operation	operación
position	posición
probability	probabilidad
sum	suma

English/Spanish Cognates
Subtraction/Resta

difference	diferencia
minuend	minuendo
minus	menos
subtrahend	substraendo

English/Spanish Cognates
Multiplication/Multiplicación

associative property	
	propiedad
	asociativa
distributive property	
	propiedad
	distributiva
factor	factor
factoring	factorización
multiple	múltiplo
product	producto

English/Spanish Cognates
Division/División

divide	dividir
dividend	dividendo
divisible	divisible
divisor	divisor
maximum	máximo
common divisor	común divisor
quotient	cociente

English/Spanish Cognates
Geometry/Geometría

angle	ángulo
area	área
circle	círculo
cone	cono
cube	cubo
cylinder	cilindro
diagonal	diagonal
diameter	diámetro
hexagon	hexágon
line	línea
parallel	paralelo
parallelogram	paralelogramo
pentagon	pentágono
perimeter	perímetro
polygon	polígono
radius	radio
rectangle	rectángulo
triangle	triángulo

English/Spanish Cognates
Computers/Computadoras

character	carácter
cursor	cursor
data	datos
digit	digito
disk	disco
memory	memoria
program	programa
software	software
terminal	terminal

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The ability to read well in English is crucial to academic success in our school system, whether a student is a native speaker of English, or learning English. After the initial stages of learning to read, students require the skill of reading well in English to learn. Content area textbooks contain much vital information that the student must comprehend if the subjects are to be mastered.

A key component of reading well and academic success is vocabulary knowledge. The student who commands a large working vocabulary has an easier task in learning to read and comprehending more than the student whose vocabulary is smaller.

English and Spanish enjoy many similarities. Cognates, words that are similar in appearance and meaning, help the second language learner gain access to the target language. This project was developed to provide literate Spanish speaking students a method to increase the number of known English vocabulary words to increase reading comprehension, by teaching English/Spanish cognates.

Conclusions

The lessons plans and activities in this project met with various levels of success in the ESL classroom. The level of success was

determined by the level of literacy each student possessed and their awareness of cognates. Just as in a regular classroom, there were differing abilities of literacy in the ESL classroom, but tapping into English/Spanish cognates helped each student increase their vocabulary, regardless of their starting point.

The cognate awareness survey has been a helpful starting point for the teacher. The initial assessment of a student's literacy abilities and cognate awareness allowed for effective student grouping within the classroom, along with tailoring the lessons to the needs of the students. It also reinforced the students' belief that English/Spanish cognates existed, and further developed that strategy for the students.

The strategy of recognizing cognates within authentic texts was one of the most important and useful outcomes of the lessons. It was the application of this strategy that helped students comprehend English text to a greater degree. One student commented "We need more lessons like this one! This really helps!" It heightened the students' awareness and gave them another tool toward being successful in class. It was also evident that acknowledging and valuing their first language was important to them. The author believes that students' bilingual abilities are often overlooked or minimized.

The lists of cognates divided by subjects was useful at the beginning of content area lessons as vocabulary introductions and reinforcement. Within each subject area, the lists were considered as a starting point, to be added to as more cognates were encountered. Especially for the highly literate students, these cognates were an immediate connection

to the concepts being introduced. It would also be helpful to group cognates alphabetically for quick reference. A data base could be compiled with student input over the course of a year for a most comprehensive list related to the students' content textbooks and other reading materials.

Recommendations

The author believes that the success of an ESL program depends on assessing the language strengths of the students in first and second language, creating a safe environment in which to learn a second language, and aligning the findings of the latest language research with the best practices of teaching. The most successful ESL program will guide the student to proficiency in English while utilizing strengths in her first language. This project attempts to contribute to the strategies the teacher has to meet the goals set forth by the state and the school district. It has evolved and will continue to evolve as students and the teacher keep the strategy of utilizing English/Spanish cognates in the forefront of their daily classroom activities.

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