

## Role-Focused Instruction and the Participation Level of English Language Learners in Collaborative Environments

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**Abstract:** Research Question: What is the effect of role-focused instruction on the participation level of English Language Learners in collaborative environments? Methods: This correlational study took place in a 12th grade classroom. Participants included 28 students, of whom 3 were English Language Learners. To gather baseline data, I observed the students in collaborative environments and recorded the participation based on interactive communication occurrences. During the instructional unit, specific instructional strategies were implemented, focused on role-based participation during small-group or whole-group speaking and listening activities. Qualitative data were collected during continued documentation of interactive communication occurrences in the students' behavior, focusing specifically on the participation level of English Language Learners. Findings: The observed participation of the students as a whole class increased during the first of two role-focused activities, and increased significantly after the second activity. For English Language Learners, the participation level increased significantly after the first of the two activities, bringing them to the same level of participation as the rest of the class, and this level was maintained during the second activity. Conclusions: From my active role in creating these instructional environments, I have observed a positive correlation between a role-focus in collaborative work and student participation. From these results I would conclude that this strategy may be an effective way to promote higher levels of participation in collaborative activities.

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