



Prifysgol Cymru

Y Drindod Dewi Sant

University of Wales

Trinity Saint David

Design, conduct and critically evaluate a close-to-practice research project (lesson study) focusing on the model of the transformative teacher in developing practice that has a positive impact on the learner.

Research Question: Does EVI (Explicit Vocabulary Instruction) have an impact on learners' retention and application of a new word?

Gallwch ychwanegu'ch targedau o'ch aseiniad diwethaf gan ddefnyddio'r tabl isod. /

Please add your targets from the previous assignment using the table below.

	Targed/Target	Yr hyn yr wyf wedi'i wneud yn yr aseiniad hwn. What I have done in this assignment.
Targed/Target 1	To break down lengthy sentences, using punctuation, to improve the clarity of my point.	I have varied my sentence structures with a view to clarifying my points.
Targed/Target 2	To revisit conventions for accurate use of quotations.	I have familiarised myself with the Harvard referencing guide on Moodle.
Targed/Target 3	To be more innovative and creative in applying principles.	I feel that I have made efforts to be innovative however I believe that this is something that will improve with more experience.

Introduction

Teaching is increasingly becoming a research driven, evidence- based, reflective profession (BERA/RSA, 2014). The introduction of the new 'Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership in Wales' (WG, 2019) has seen a shift towards teachers working in a collaborative and informed way in order to drive teaching and learning forwards, ensuring that what takes place in our classrooms is reflective of best practices and underpinned by current research. Undertaking this research project has enabled me, as a student-teacher specialising in English, to consider the importance of Explicit Vocabulary Instruction (hereinafter referred to as EVI) within the classroom. The aim of this research is to determine the effectiveness of dedicating a lesson to EVI on the pupils' ability to retain and apply a specific new word and to establish whether this ought to be a common place strategy within the classroom.

Research Context

The research project, which forms the basis of this assignment, was conducted at School X. In accordance with BERA's Educational Guidelines for Educational Research (2018) School X will be referred to as such throughout this assignment in order to ensure the preservation of confidentiality and anonymity of the school and pupils who willingly participated in the research lessons.

School X is a large secondary school based in suburban Swansea, with 1700 pupils enrolled (My Local School, 2020). My research- partner and I were both placed in School X for Professional Teaching Experience one (PTE one). Importantly, School X is a pioneer school for the draft curriculum in Wales based upon 'Successful Futures' (Donaldson, 2015). According to ESTYN, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, School X demonstrates "innovative approaches to curriculum design" (ESTYN, 2018, p. 2). This directly refers to the Key Stage 3 curriculum which has been organised into Areas of Learning and Experience (Donaldson, 2015). This was particularly relevant during the planning stages of our research. It was essential to ensure that the four purposes underpinned what we were aiming to achieve within the lesson, as this is what pupils at School X are accustomed to.

Moreover, School X prides itself upon having a dedicated team of teacher-researchers who are allocated time to research and evaluate educational developments which consequently inform school policy. A focus of the research team has been to encourage teachers across

all subject disciplines to allocate time during their lessons to teaching Tier II and Tier III vocabulary to pupils, using a variety of methods (Beck, McKeown and Kucan, 2013). The vocabulary research undertaken by School X thus far certainly influenced our decision to further research robust methods by which to teach vocabulary and this assignment presented the perfect opportunity in which to do so. As a student- teacher of English, I feel passionate about increasing pupils' vocabulary and wish to embed as many methods of teaching vocabulary into my armoury as possible.

In considering the practicalities of conducting this research, my research-partner and I chose to focus our research on Key Stage 3 pupils. Enquiries were made by my research-partner and I, in collaboration with our subject mentors (WG, 2019) to determine the scheme of work that these pupils would be following at the time in which the research would be conducted. It transpired that pupils were studying a unit of work on the topic of 'Fairy tales' which allowed us significant scope to select an appropriate word to teach pupils during each of our lessons focusing on EVI. Moreover, this avoided any disruption to their overall unit of work, which was key to us obtaining authentic empirical data.

Overview of Relevant Literature

Literacy, it could be argued, is the bedrock of academic success and thereafter life outside of compulsory education. Literacy skills are deemed necessary in order to understand the world in which we live (WG, 2012). Further evidence in support of this view indicates that pupils who are unable to read, write or communicate effectively are more likely to underachieve across all subjects studied in secondary school (Ricketts, Sperring and Nation, 2014). The focus on literacy is therefore significant and is firmly embedded within 'Successful Futures' (Donaldson, 2015) as a cross-curricular responsibility.

Recent research conducted into literacy in secondary schools by the Education Endowment Foundation has outlined seven recommendations that, if implemented, should improve literacy across all subject areas (EEF, 2019). Notably, the second recommendation is to "provide targeted vocabulary instruction in every subject" (EEF, 2019, p. 4). The difficulty faced by teachers however in implementing explicit vocabulary instruction into their lessons cannot go without mention. Specifically, teachers may struggle to afford the necessary time to teach subject-specific Tier III words in every lesson as it would afford them little time to teach anything else (Didau, 2014). However, there is some comfort to be derived from the view that "We gain words from conversation, observation, television/media use, reading, and so on." (Shanahan, 2019). It is important to recognise therefore that there exists a well-

established view that vocabulary is acquired through many different sources. However, in order to ensure that pupils acquire, understand and retain new Tier II and Tier III words it is in fact essential to ensure that these are explicitly taught to students, in accordance with the recommendations put forward by the EEF (2019).

Furthermore, Beck, McKeown and Kucan (2013) emphasise the importance of robust vocabulary instruction and state that the “Development of these facets of word knowledge must be the direct focus of instructional conditions” (p. 14). Furthermore, the model that they promote separates words into three distinct categories labelled Tiers I to III. Tier I words are high frequency words used in spoken language that pupils are likely to be familiar with. Tier II words are those which are high frequency in written texts and Tier III words are academic, subject specific words. Importantly, Beck, McKeown and Kucan (2013) discuss how words are organised into this tiered system in order to establish appropriate instructional methods for each tier. The main distinction appears to be that Tier I words do not require explicit teaching on the basis that most pupils will acquire these in a number of different ways, such as in discussions with their peers (Didau, 2014). Alternatively however, the evidence suggests that Tier II and Tier III words must be explicitly taught to pupils as it is unlikely that pupils will gain an understanding of these words incidentally (Beck, McKeown and Kucan, 2013).

Fundamentally, one of the key factors in deciding to focus our research on the explicit teaching of vocabulary is that it throws up a number of potential issues in terms of viability of dedicating entire lessons to teaching single words. This however is addressed by Beck, McKeown and Kucan (2013) who state that it is imperative to ensure that lessons which include the explicit teaching of Tier II and Tier III words are planned carefully in advance of the lesson whereby the words will be taught. Mainly, this is to ensure that the words which will be explicitly taught to pupils are high-utility words (Beck, McKeown and Kucan, 2013). Therefore, the literature suggests that dedicating entire lessons to EVI will, on balance, save teachers time in the long run as it will serve to consolidate and solidify pupils’ understanding which will save precious time in the future. The main caveat to this, however, is that the word must be one which will be beneficial to pupils in their understanding of the world (WG, 2012).

In turn, we must consider the explicit teaching of subject-specific Tier III words which are not common in every day use but are essential for academic success in certain subjects, such as Maths and Science (Beck, McKeown and Kucan, 2013). This is important as prior to the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework (2012) it might have been deemed the priority of English teachers to teach vocabulary. The view which is now held, however, is that teaching literacy should not be “compartmentalised into a narrow range of subjects”

(Quigley, 2018, p. 96). Thus, vocabulary is being taught across the subject disciplines using a variety of different methods such as the SEEC (select, explain, explore, consolidate) Model (refer to Figure 1 below) and the Frayer Model (Figure 2), as recommended by Quigley (2018). Importantly, current evidence suggests that, in order for pupils to fully understand the meaning of a new word, they must be explicitly taught it as opposed to merely handing them a dictionary which “resembles passing them an umbrella to fend off a hurricane” (Quigley, 2018) using explicit strategies as those in Figures 1 and 2 below.

Figure 1 (Quigley, 2018):

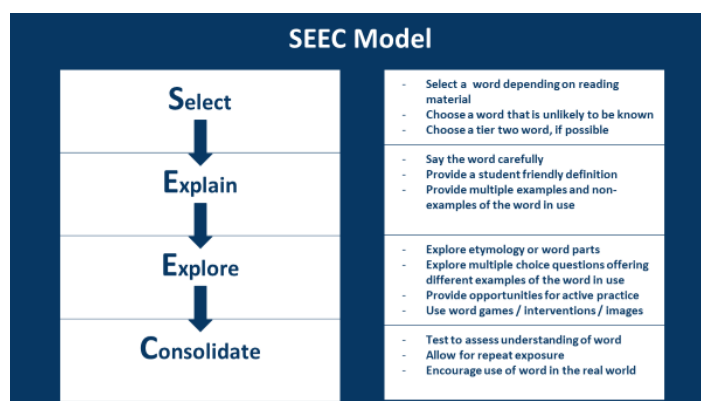
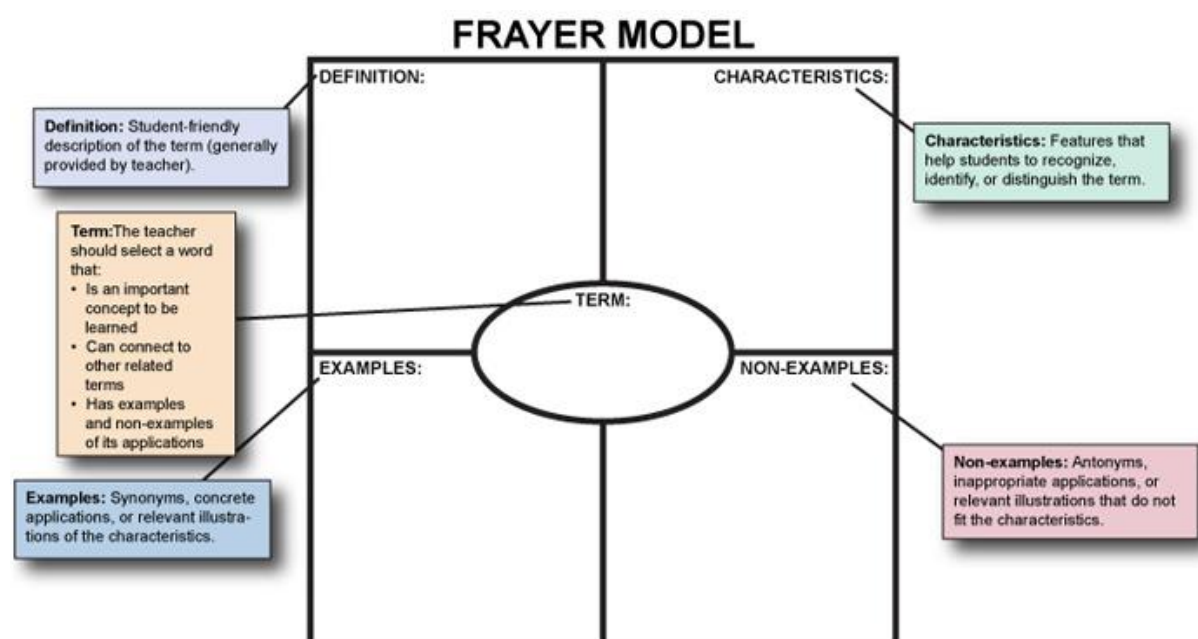


Figure 2 (Quigley, 2018):



Further aspects of the relevant literature will be discussed in greater detail in the lesson study results and analysis and discussion sections below.

Lesson Study Methodology

In determining the most appropriate method to adopt in conducting this research, of key importance was identifying a research model that would afford me the opportunity to transform my own teaching and give me greater insight into the “why and how of teaching as well as the what” (Donaldson, 2015, p. 7). In order to achieve these aims, the decision was taken to apply the lesson study model (Dudley, 2014). Utilising this model enabled me to conduct a research project in collaboration with a fellow student-teacher with a view to designing a lesson with a specific aim in mind, which will hopefully lead to an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in my classroom (Hill, 2013; Fernandes and Yoshida, 2004). Ultimately, this is the driving force behind any research being conducted by teachers today, in accordance with the new ‘Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership in Wales’ (WG, 2019) which expect teachers to be collaborative, innovative, research driven, lifelong learners.

Upon identifying the lesson study model as the basis of our research, we considered how we could best implement this within the timescale and resources available to us. Whilst it would have been preferable to complete at least three cycles with more than two student-teachers and a larger sample of case study pupils (refer to Figure 3 below) this was not feasible in the timescale available. We therefore devised a plan which allowed for the cycle to be completed twice (refer to Figure 4) with a view to analysing our results and overall findings following the second cycle.

Figure 3 (Dudley, 2014):

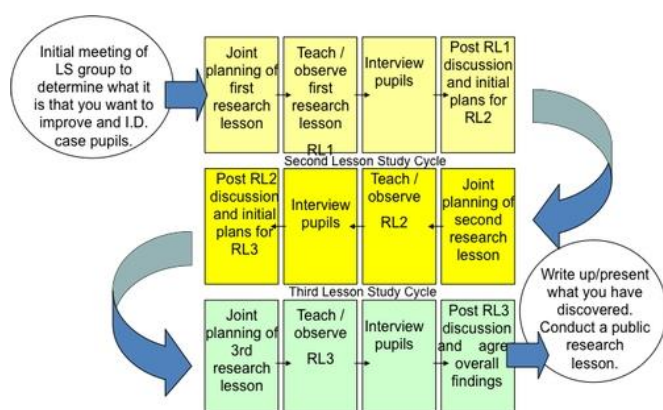
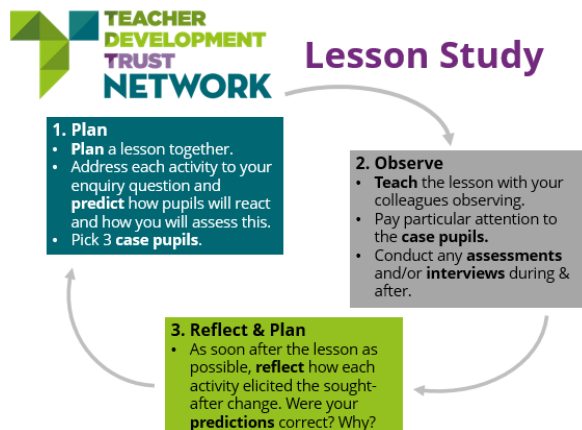


Figure 4 (Teacher Development Trust Network, 2015):



The Teacher Development Trust Network advocates the use of this Japanese model of “teacher-led research” (Teacher Development Trust Network, 2015) in encouraging teachers to work collaboratively in order to effect a positive change in teaching and learning. This is further supported by a study conducted by Godfrey et al (2019) which evidenced positive pupil outcomes as a direct result of the lesson study research. Conversely, a study undertaken by the EEF (2018) concerning pupils in Key Stage 2 found no evidence to indicate that the lesson study resulted in an improvement in pupils’ attainment in maths and reading. Whilst it is noted that there are studies (such as those undertaken by the EEF) which are inconclusive regarding the existence of a positive correlation between research and outcomes, the overall position appears, in my view, to be clear. Thus, a research-led project coupled with an adaptive and reflective approach to teaching has clear benefits to the development of the individual teacher’s practice and more importantly, the development and attainment of pupils.

Research tools were thereafter devised in order to assist with the observing and recording of our empirical data. Firstly, we created a focused observation schedule which narrowed down the key considerations for the observer during the observation (Fletcher Wood, 2016). We were of the view that it was essential to give the observer a structured focus in order to ensure that the observer could conduct observations as a non-participant in order to preserve authentic classroom dynamics (Silva, 2002). Furthermore, we aimed to minimise

the risk of pupils responding to the presence of the observer, resulting in an inaccurate depiction of usual classroom behaviours, known as 'The Hawthorne effect' (AQR, 2013-18). A "fly on the wall" (Simpson and Tuson, 2003, p. 56) method of observation was therefore selected in order to combat any potential issues caused by the mere presence of an observer in the classroom. In practice, steps were taken to mitigate this by placing the student-teacher at the back of the classroom, out of pupils' direct sight.

It is acknowledged that there exists further weaknesses in using structured observation sheets as they leave little scope for recording any events which may occur unexpectedly and do not fall within the remit of the structured sheet. However, it was considered that recording extensive notes during the observation would have hindered the observer and may also have resulted in the missing of vital incidents and exchanges that took place within the classroom (Kumar, 2014).

It is argued that there are two main weaknesses in gathering data by observation. Firstly, the method itself is time consuming and secondly, it is subject to observer bias (Simpson and Tuson, 2003). In order to try and overcome these hurdles, we opted to keep the observation sheets as focused as possible (see above paragraph) and furthermore employed the Leuven Scale (Laeyens, 2008) in order to methodically assess engagement. Selecting three case study pupils also assisted in overcoming this as it was more manageable for the observer to fully observe three pupils. In terms of observer bias, this was mitigated by conducting the focus group interviews immediately after both lessons. This served to "enrich and validate observation data" (Simpson and Tuson, 2003, p.19).

As stated above, following each lesson, we conducted focus group interviews with the case study pupils. The interviews were conducted using semi-structured questions that had been prepared beforehand (refer to Appendices R4 and R8). The benefit of using semi-structured interview questions, as opposed to questionnaires, was that it enabled data of a higher quality to be obtained and allowed for the expansion of questions using techniques such as prompting, probing and checking/clarifying information (Drever, 2003). Following each interview, steps were taken by my research-partner and I to transcribe the interviews in order to ensure the "retaining as much of the original information as possible and avoiding any distortion" (Drever, 2003, p. 60).

The final, essential component in conducting lesson study research is reflecting on each experience and using those reflections in order to inform the next lesson study cycle (Dudley, 2014). In order to ensure accurate reflection, my research-partner and I used the Assisted Reflective Conclusions Model utilising a variety of reflection techniques developed by Rolfe 2001; De Bono 1985; Kolb 1994, Gibbs 1988 and Bloom 2001 (Cohen, Mannion

and Morrison, 2011). Our aims in reflecting using these strategies were to ensure that we analysed our teaching practice in a methodical and academic manner in order to arrive at reasoned assumptions (Tripp, 1993) that would inform our subsequent lesson study cycle and moreover, our future teaching practice.

Ethical Considerations

There are clear ethical issues to be considered when working with children. Prior to commencing this research, it was compulsory to submit an Ethics Form (attached at Appendix R1) which contained details pertaining to the potential ethical issues that might be encountered during the research process. This research proposal gained Conditional Approval by the Ethics Committee in January 2020.

Significantly, children are deemed as vulnerable and at risk of being harmed or exploited by the research procedure. Accordingly, research must be ethical in order for it to be approved and ultimately, the researchers must be able to demonstrate that all of the potential risks to the participants have been considered and that all necessary steps have been taken in order to minimise the risk of any harm that may be caused, consequentially, to participants (Shawa, 2017).

My research-partner and I took great care when completing our Ethics Form as it was our priority to ensure that all steps were taken to address all ethical considerations in as much detail as possible. As student- teachers, it is imperative to ensure that we are ethically informed practitioners (BERA, 2018). In undertaking this research, I have been afforded an opportunity to engage with the EWC's Code of Professional Conduct and Practice (2019) which stipulates that members of the profession must conduct themselves in an ethical and trustworthy manner. In respect of this research project, it appeared that there were three key aspects regarding ethical conduct.

The first was to ensure that consent was obtained from pupils and their parents before the research commenced, which School X organised on our behalf.

Secondly, pupils had to be made aware of the research and given the opportunity to opt-out at any point. Additionally, pupils were advised that they could withdraw their consent at any given time, even during the focus group interviews following the lessons. It was crucial to explicitly inform pupils that they were participating voluntarily in the research and, on that basis, they were entitled withdraw their consent at any time, without repercussion. My research-partner and I both encountered this particular issue during each of our lessons.

Case study pupils, who were selected prior to the lesson either withdrew their consent during the course of the lesson or refrained from giving consent in the first instance. This was a circumstance that my research-partner and I had anticipated might occur and had ensured that alternative pupils could be selected accordingly. However, from an ethical perspective this certainly reinforced the notion that research relationships between the researcher and pupil “can be characterised as fluid, negotiable and unpredictable” (Barker and Smith, 2001, p.146).

Thirdly and finally, it was and remains a priority to protect all data collected during this research to ensure that it remains accurate and authentic, safe and secure, confidential and anonymous in compliance with the university policy statement (UWTSD Research Data Management Statement, 2018). As outlined within the Ethics Form attached hereto at Appendix R1, pupils who were observed during the research lessons and subsequently participated in the focus group interviews will be identified as Pupils A to F, in order to ensure their identity is protected (BERA, 2018).

Lesson Study 1 Results and Analysis

Prior to the lesson study it was essential to ensure that my research-partner and I had planned an effective lesson in which pupils would be exposed to EVI. Various tasks were chosen which provided pupils with multiple exposures (Quigley, 2018) to the word ‘enchanted’. By explicitly teaching pupils the meaning of the word ‘enchanted’, they were able to focus on retaining and applying the word. Whilst teaching the lesson, I assessed the pupils’ ability to retain and apply the word through feedback and questioning (William, 2011).

The Power Point presentation which forms the basis of the first lesson plan is attached to this assignment at Appendix R2. Prior to preparing the lesson plan, I undertook a detailed review of the evidence in relation to vocabulary instruction with a view to establishing the best teaching strategies to implement within our lesson.

In designing our lesson, we used some aspects of a model recommended by the ‘Iowa Reading Research Centre’ (Zimmerman and Reed, 2017) which formed our three key aims: firstly, to provide pupils with a definition of the word ‘enchanted’ and also the relevant contextual information regarding the word; secondly, to ensure that, throughout the lesson, pupils were exposed to the word on multiple occasions and finally; for pupils to gain deeper processing of the word’s meaning and use.

The lesson was therefore constructed to include written tasks, visualisation tasks and tasks that concentrated on teaching different forms of the word (Quigley, 2018). Pupils were therefore introduced to the adverb, verb and noun version of the word, in addition to the adjective. Importantly, data collected during the focus group interviews indicated that all case study pupils had some awareness of the word 'enchanted', in its adjective form, prior to the EVI lesson. This will be discussed further below.

During the first lesson study, I was the teacher and my research-partner was the observer. An observation that I made whilst teaching was that most pupils were able to complete the tasks within the allocated time and were enthusiastic when providing feedback and responding to questioning. Whilst our research question predominantly focused on whether EVI impacted upon learners' retention and application of a new word, it was also prevalent to ascertain whether entire lessons spent on explicit vocabulary instruction were engaging for pupils. Ultimately, we were aware that if the evidence demonstrated that pupils were not engaged in the lesson, then we would have to consider ways in which to alter the second research lesson in order to ensure better engagement from pupils. Crucially, this would also call into question the usefulness of dedicating entire lessons to teaching vocabulary explicitly, as aforementioned in my literature review and raised as a potential concern by Didau (2014).

In order to measure pupil engagement and involvement during the lesson therefore, my research-partner and I opted to utilise the Leuven Scale (Laevers, 2008) which is supported by Estyn (2018). This enabled us to measure pupil engagement on a scale of one to five as can be seen below (Figure 5). Hence, whilst observing, my research-partner scored the case study pupils in respect of their level of engagement and this was thereafter recorded upon the observation sheet, attached at Appendix R3. Data collected in this regard evidenced that all three of the case study pupils were highly engaged in the lesson, scoring a four and above. Nevertheless, it is important to note that this was only one tool used to measure engagement. Given that the Leuven Scale was designed predominantly for primary school children it does have limitations and resultantly, this approach was used in conjunction with other methods of assessing engagement such as monitoring feedback and pupil responses to questioning. Overall however, employing the Leuven Scale provided us with a useful starting point in which to measure engagement whilst observing (Dubiel, 2014).

Figure 5 (Laevers, 2008):

The Leuven Scale for Involvement

Level	Well-being	Signals
1	Extremely low	Activity is simple, repetitive and passive. The child seems absent and displays no energy. They may stare into space or look around to see what others are doing.
2	Low	Frequently interrupted activity. The child will be engaged in the activity for some of the time they are observed, but there will be moments of non-activity when they will stare into space, or be distracted by what is going on around.
3	Moderate	Mainly continuous activity. The child is busy with the activity but at a fairly routine level and there are few signs of real involvement. They make some progress with what they are doing but don't show much energy and concentration and can be easily distracted.
4	High	Continuous activity with intense moments. They child's activity has intense moments and at all times they seem involved. They are not easily distracted.
5	Extremely high	The child shows continuous and intense activity revealing the greatest involvement. They are concentrated, creative, energetic and persistent throughout nearly all the observed period.

Immediately following the lesson, the interview was conducted with the focus group (transcript attached at Appendix R4) which consisted of three pupils who had been selected on an attainment spread basis. As one of the pupils had withdrawn consent during the lesson another pupil had been selected to participate in the interview. The main conclusions that were drawn from the focus group interview were as follows: all pupils across the spread of attainment were aware of the adjective 'enchanted' prior to the lesson; all pupils felt that they had gained a better understanding of the variations of the word 'enchanted' (the adverb, verb and noun) as a direct result of the tasks that they undertook within the lesson; all three pupils stated that the tasks which improved their understanding were the tasks which required them to contextualise the various formats of the word and subsequently use the word in sentences. Pupils A, B and C all clearly stated that they benefited from the visualisation task. All pupils opined that the explicit vocabulary lesson helped them to gain a deeper understanding of the word and they were of the view that they would be more confident in applying the word to a variety of contexts. Finally, all pupils were emphatic regarding future vocabulary lessons and felt that further lessons would be significantly beneficial to their understanding, retention and application of more advanced vocabulary.

Further analysis of the chosen word 'enchanted' during interview resulted in Pupil A stating that, in future, the word that is the subject of the vocabulary lesson should be more challenging than 'enchanted'. This identifies the dilemma faced by teachers in considering which words are essentially worthy of this explicit instruction and furthermore, whether it

could be argued that some words which may appear as Tier II are in fact Tier I (Lemov, 2016).

Overall, the results taken from the observation, focus group interview and workbooks identified that the case study pupils during this first lesson, had retained an understanding of the word 'enchanted' and were able to apply it effectively. Furthermore, the evidence indicated that pupils had been highly engaged during the lesson. In considering ways in which the lesson could be improved, consideration was given specifically to the data collected from Pupil A regarding the difficulty of the word that we had chosen to explicitly teach. However, it was essential for the purposes of data collection during the second research lesson to maintain use of the word 'enchanted' in order to establish whether this result would be repeated (Lewis and Hurd, 2011).

Collaboratively, we reviewed the observation sheet, reflection sheet (refer to Appendix R5) and pupils' workbooks. By reflecting, we were able to identify areas for improvement and alter the next lesson accordingly (Thompson and Wolstencroft, 2018). Namely, it was clear from observing all three case study pupils, that teacher-led modelling of the visualisation task would be beneficial as these pupils, amongst others in the class, asked questions clarifying what was meant by an 'enchantment' and they sought further clarity in terms of what they were required to draw.

In addition to this, we identified that Pupils B and C would have benefited from being provided with live example answers to some of the more challenging tasks. For example, the task requiring pupils to write a sentence beginning with the adverb 'enchantingly' proved problematic for Pupils B and C in this first lesson study, as they both required one on one attention from myself which involved providing them with examples.

Finally, it was evident from the workbooks that most of the pupils in the class (including Pupils A, B and C) had correctly completed the plenary which required pupils to identify two sentences which used the word 'enchanted' incorrectly. Whilst this data determined a positive outcome for the purposes of the research, we considered that the more able and talented pupils would also benefit from a stretch and challenge which pushed them even further academically (Lemov, 2015). Consequently, the decision was taken to amend the plenary to include a stretch task requiring pupils to re-write the incorrect sentences correctly.

Lesson Study 2 Results and Analysis

Resulting from the first lesson study, the Power Point presentation was amended to take account of the data collected during the first lesson study cycle (Dudley, 2014). The altered presentation slides are attached at Appendix R6 accordingly.

During this second lesson, my research-partner taught whilst I observed (refer to Appendix R7 for the written observations). It was immediately clear to me that there was a high level of engagement from the case study pupils. This was demonstrated by non-verbal communicative actions such as raising hands and nodding. Most noticeably, Pupil E was bouncing up and down in their chair to gain the attention of their teacher. Pupils D and F were observed to be engaged also, by raising their hands during feedback and actively participating in completing the tasks and answering questions when called upon. In reference to the Leuven Scale (Laevers, 2008) pupils scored a four and above (refer to observation schedule at R7).

In respect of vocabulary instruction, my observations indicated that the case study pupils understood the meaning of the adjective 'enchanted', as had been the case with Pupils A, B and C. This was predominantly observed by all three pupils being able to use the adjective in describing the image displayed during the first task. The response of Pupil D was that the image portrayed an 'enchanted forest', clearly demonstrating an understanding of the word and furthermore, an ability to use it in the correct context (the image was in fact a forest that could be described as 'enchanted'). This observation data was reinforced during the focus group interview (refer to Appendix R8 for copy transcript) as all three pupils confirmed that they had known the adjective before the lesson. Interestingly, their acquisition of the word had been through previous exposure to stories, with Pupil F elaborating that they had learnt the word through being read stories at primary school. This supports the assertion referred to within my literature review that Tier II words are usually high frequency words identified in texts (Beck, McKeown and Kucan, 2013). The word 'enchanted' may not be a word that one would perhaps hear in every day spoken language, but it is a word that appears frequently within fairy tales.

During the focus group interview, all pupils were willing and eager to contribute. It was important to ensure that pupils were given a reasonable amount of time to share their perspectives and explain their reasoning, as opposed to me forming my own conclusions about what they intended to say (Danby, 2011). Essentially, this also served to produce more reliable data from the focus group interview (Drever, 2003).

In collating the data from the observation and focus group interview, the main conclusions drawn were as follows: firstly, Pupils D, E and F confirmed that they felt more confident in their use of the adverb, verb and noun versions of the word 'enchanted' as a direct result of the lesson and secondly, all pupils felt that the visualisation task had been beneficial. Interestingly, this task appeared to be more successful (evidenced by no questions seeking further clarification by Pupils D, E and F) in the second lesson which could be attributed to the fact that it was modelled by the teacher first (Shanahan, 2020).

Recommendations made by Pupil D were that the chosen word could have been explored through alternative tasks such as role play. Pupil D further stated that they would have liked there to have been more paired tasks and finally, a more challenging word could have been chosen as the subject of the lesson, echoing the findings of Pupil A in the first interview. Pupil E also commented that it would have been helpful to come up with their own ideas for using the word 'enchanted' which would essentially require a less structured, less scaffolded lesson affording pupils the opportunity to perhaps engage in a creative writing task with the focus being on the word 'enchanted'. This would have been explored further in a third lesson study cycle, but in any event will inform my future teaching methods.

Discussion of research findings

The most striking result to emerge from this data was that Pupil A and Pupil D did not feel challenged enough with regards to explicit teaching of the word 'enchanted'. Of importance, is that Pupil A and D are the highest attaining pupils from the sample. Furthermore, data collected in relation to these pupils specifically during our observations, reflections and from reviewing their workbooks support this finding. During the interviews, this assertion was not made by Pupils, B, C, E and F.

This finding is particularly relevant given that, in some respects, it supports the literature that exists regarding explicit vocabulary instruction. Namely, it is imperative that teachers carefully select and plan, in advance, the Tier II word that will be the focus of EVI (Beck, McKeown and Kucan, 2013). Additionally, teachers will have the complicated task of considering which Tier II words are at the right level of difficulty for all pupils within the same class. This may prove less challenging where classes are set by attainment but ultimately the evidence suggests that there is no clear method that can be used in order to determine which words are known by pupils and which are not. Consequently, one recommendation is to choose words which are "useful and interesting – ones that students will be able to find uses for in their everyday lives" (Beck, McKeown and Kucan 2013, p. 38).

Perhaps, this indicates that for some Tier II words (specifically those which pupils have already been exposed to during their scheme of work) it is only necessary to allocate a portion of time within the lesson to EVI in order to gain deeper understanding. It seems that this might prove equally as beneficial to pupils, as devoting an entire lesson to it. Additionally, this might prove more manageable within English lessons and cost effective, as teachers are unlikely to be in a position where they can frequently dedicate entire lessons to EVI due to the ongoing and challenging demands that they face in delivering their subject on a daily basis (Davison and Daly, 2014).

As already mentioned, my research-partner and I followed the model outlined by the 'Iowa Reading Research Centre' (Zimmerman and Reed, 2017) in preparing the EVI lessons. One strength of this model is that teachers can select certain elements from the model with a view to using EVI as part of their lesson, as opposed to an entire lesson. To use the example given in the blog by Zimmerman and Reed (2017), pupils could be explicitly taught the meaning of the word 'phenomenon' and then complete a reading comprehension exercise from a text (the blog refers to Maya Angelou's poem 'Phenomenal Woman' (1978)) which contains the word 'phenomenon'. This would provide pupils with a significant benefit, as reading comprehension strategies can be used to consolidate and deepen understanding of specific vocabulary (Lemov, 2016). Furthermore, the EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit (2018) has determined that reading comprehension strategies have an extremely high impact for a very low cost, based on their extensive research (note that this will be discussed further in my recommendations).

Thus, it is evident from the data collected that a strength of EVI is that it does result in pupils gaining a more comprehensive understanding of a word. The data obtained emphasised that all case study pupils demonstrated a more advanced understanding, particularly in relation to the adverb, verb and noun versions, of the word 'enchanted'. Pupils stated that they would not have been as familiar with these versions of the word prior to the research lessons. The focus group interviews were extremely positive and assisted enormously in enabling a more advanced analysis of the research to be undertaken. Whilst all pupils enjoyed the lesson and felt that they would benefit from further lessons focusing on EVI, this could conversely be considered as a limitation. Ultimately, one weakness of EVI is that teachers, particularly of English, might consider it cumbersome and impractical given the sheer volume of Tier II and Tier III words to choose from. One way of overcoming this limitation, however, could be to include targeted, robust vocabulary strategies (Marzano, 2020) as part of each lesson.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In terms of conducting research using the lesson study model, a real strength that has been identified is that it enables teachers to conduct action research in relation to real pupils that they teach in their everyday classrooms. As a student-teacher I have benefited enormously from the cyclical process at the heart of the lesson study approach (Dudley, 2014). In particular, the ability to reflect frequently throughout the study in order to modify our approach, for the benefit of teaching and learning, has been invaluable. This lesson study has enabled me to deeply reflect upon teaching and learning strategies that have been utilised in order to move my own teaching forwards, as advocated by Hattie (2009, p.32) “the biggest effects on student learning occur when teachers become learners of their own teaching”.

Notably, the research conducted during this study of EVI identified clear benefits to pupils. Whilst a reasonable first reaction to dedicating an entire English lesson on the targeted instruction of a word that pupils were familiar with beforehand may purport to have little benefit, this research has proved otherwise. Evidenced by the documents attached hereto at Appendix R10 are excerpts from the six case study pupils’ workbooks which demonstrate that pupils have gained a deeper understanding of the word ‘enchanted’ as a result of the lesson.

Mastery of vocabulary is essential for pupils to gain intellectual autonomy and the confidence to take ownership of their own work as ambitious and capable learners (Donaldson, 2015). In my view, this aspect of EVI is of critical importance. Providing pupils with the opportunity to spend additional time considering the definition, origins and etymology, synonyms and other aspects of a word is the “building block to autonomy” (Lemov, 2016, p.338). It is difficult to envisage other teaching methods which would support this deep dive into the world of vocabulary. As a direct result of this research, I am confident that EVI enhanced pupils’ understanding of the word ‘enchanted’, especially in its adverb, verb and noun version, even though they were aware of it, in its adjective form, prior to the lesson. Taking this data into consideration, I remain firm in my view that less explicit methods of instruction would not have enabled the case study pupils to gain an in depth knowledge of the meaning of the word ‘enchanted’, nor would they be aware of the various ways in which they might apply this word in different contexts.

However, focusing upon the lesson study itself, a limitation identified was that it was limited to conducting only two cycles of lesson studies, and that data was collected from a limited number of case study pupils. This could have been improved by allowing for a third lesson study, as the data that has been collected had proven particularly valuable and highlighted

improvements that could have been made in advance of a further cycle (Lewis and Hurd, 2011). This further lesson study would have enabled us to assess whether or not pupils had retained the meaning of the word 'enchanted' and further, would have allowed us an opportunity to test the retention and application of a Tier III word that pupils would either have had no knowledge of or limited knowledge of prior to the lesson.

In considering potential modifications to research tools for the future, it may be advantageous to consider including a larger sample of case study pupils from a wider range of attainment levels. This would provide us with richer data from which to draw our conclusions, accurately assess any generalisations that could be made and more importantly, reinforce the established evidence that will inform our future teaching practice (BERA/RSA, 2014). Importantly, the data from this study enables us to conclude that the generalisations derived from this study are that most pupils within the two classes would have been aware of the word 'enchanted' prior to the EVI lessons and furthermore, that it is likely that higher attaining pupils would have preferred to learn a more challenging word during the EVI lessons.

Overall, the conclusions that I have drawn from my research findings are that this lesson study research project has enabled me, as a student-teacher of English to research an area of particular interest to me, using a sample of pupils that I have been responsible for teaching during PTE one. Whilst it has not been without its flaws, I have been able to determine that EVI is a tool that I will certainly utilise as a teacher. In my practice, I will aim to teach pupils a number of Tier II and Tier III words explicitly in conjunction with other tasks such as reading comprehension strategies to reinforce and enhance the learning of these specific, carefully chosen words. Whilst I am confident that this will prove challenging at times, I believe that it is essential to embed EVI into the developing curriculum in Wales in order to ensure that we are producing pupils who are confident, capable, ethically informed citizens of Wales and the wider world (Donaldson, 2015).

References

Barker, J. and Smith, F. (2001). *Power, positionality and practicality: Carrying out fieldwork with children*, *Ethics, Place and Environment: A Journal of Philosophy and Geography*, 4(2): 142-147.

British Educational Research Association (BERA), (2018). *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*, 4th ed. [e-journal] Available at: <<https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018-online>> [Accessed: 2nd February 2020].

Beck, I.L, McKeown M.G and Kucan L. (2013). 2nd edition. *Bringing Words to Life: Robust Vocabulary Instruction*. New York: The Guildford Press.

BERA/ RSA, (2014). *Research and the Teaching Profession* [Online] Available at: <https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/pdfs/bera-rsa-research-teaching-profession-full-report-for-web-2.pdf> [Accessed 15 February 2020].

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education*, 7th ed. London: Routledge.

Davison J. and Daly C. (2014). *Learning to Teach English in the Secondary School*. 4th ed. Oxon: Routledge.

Danby, S. (2011). The Novice Researcher: Interviewing Young Children. *Qualitative Inquiry*, January, pp. 74-84.

Didau, D. (2014). *Closing the language gap: Building vocabulary* [Online] Available at: <https://learningspy.co.uk/literacy/closing-language-gap-building-vocabulary/> [Accessed 19 February 2020].

Donaldson, G (2015) *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales*. Available at: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/successful-futures.pdf> [Accessed: 18th February 2020].

Drever, E. (2003) *Using Semi-Structured Interviews in Small-Scale Research*. Revised ed. Glasgow: SCRE Publication.

Dubiel, J. (2014). *Learning and Development Assessment: Measuring Up* [Online] Available at: https://www.ncn.ie/images/Measuring_Up_Nursery_world_Handout.pdf [Accessed 20th February 2020].

Dudley, P. (2014) Lesson Study: A handbook [Online] Available at: <http://repositorio.minedu.gob.pe/bitstream/handle/123456789/5017/Lesson%20Study%20a%20Handbook.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed> [Accessed 18th February 2020].

Department for Education (2009) *Improving subject pedagogy through Lesson Study*. [Online] Available at: https://moodle.uwtsd.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/289257/mod_resource/content/1/Improving%20subject%20pedagogy%20through%20Lesson%20Study.pdf [Accessed 18th February 2020].

Educational Workforce Council (EWC) 2019. *Code of Professional Conduct and Practice for Registrants with the Education Workforce Council (EWC)* Available at: [file:///C:/Users/Admin/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/J16540%20EWC%20Code%20of%20Professional%20Conduct_E_Web%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Admin/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/J16540%20EWC%20Code%20of%20Professional%20Conduct_E_Web%20(1).pdf) [Accessed: 20th February 2020].

EEF (2018) *EEF Projects: Lesson Study* [Online] Available at: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/project/?id=212&t=EEF%20Projects&e=212&s=> [Accessed 18th February 2020].

EEF (2018) *Teaching and Learning Toolkit* [Online] Available at: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Toolkit/complete/EEF-Teaching-Learning-Toolkit-October-2018.pdf> [Accessed 20th February 2020].

EEF (2019) *Improving Literacy In Secondary Schools: Guidance Report* [online] Available at: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Literacy/EEF_KS3_KS4_LITERACY_GUIDANCE.pdf [Accessed 19 February 2020].

ESTYN (2018). [Online] *Using research findings and action research to improve teaching* Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/effective-practice/using-research-findings-and-action-research-improve-teaching> [Accessed 18th February 2020].

ESTYN (2018). *School X ESTYN report* [unable to access for confidentiality]
Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/> [Accessed 18 February 2020].

Fernandez, C., & Yoshida, M. (2004). *Lesson study: A Japanese approach to improving mathematics teaching and learning*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Available at: <https://www.scirp.org/reference/ReferencesPapers.aspx?ReferenceID=714606> [Accessed: 18th February 2020].

Fletcher-Wood, H (2016) *Ticked Off: Checklists for teachers, students, school leaders*. Carmarthen: Crown House Publishing

Godfrey, D. Seleznyov, S. Anders, J. Wollaston, N and Barrera-Pedemonte, F. (2019) *A developmental evaluation approach to lesson study: exploring the impact of lesson study in London schools*, Professional Development in Education, 45:2, 325-340, Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19415257.2018.1474488> [Accessed: 18th February 2020].

Hattie, J. (2009) *Visible Learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. London. Routledge.

Hill, R.(2013). *The Future Delivery of Education in Wales* [Online] Available at: <file:///C:/Users/Admin/Documents/ECAD7003/New%20folder/ECAD7003/130621-delivery-of-education-report-en.pdf> [Accessed 18th February 2020].

Kumar, R. (2014) *Research Methodology*, 4th ed. London: SAGE.

Lemov, D. (2015). *Teach Like a Champion 2.0*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lemov, D. (2016). *Reading Reconsidered*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lewis C.C and Hurd J. (2011). *Lesson Study Step by Step*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

Laevers, Ferre (2008). *The Leuven Involvement Scale for Young Children: LIS-YC (3-6 Year Olds)*.

Marzano, D. (2020). *Tips from Dr. Marzano: Vocabulary for the common core* [Online] Available at: https://www.marzanoresources.com/resources/tips/vcc_tips_archive [Accessed 20th February 2020].

McLeod, S (2017). *Kolb's Learning Styles and Experiential Learning Cycle*. Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html> [Accessed: 18th February 2020].

My Local School. (2020) *My Local School: School X* [Online] Available at: [https://gov.wales/my-local-schoolX\[redacted\]](https://gov.wales/my-local-schoolX[redacted]) [Accessed 18 February 2020].

Quigley, A. (2018) *Closing the Vocabulary Gap*. New York: Routledge.

Ricketts, J., Sperring, R. and Nation, K. (2014). *Educational attainment in poor comprehenders* [Online] Available at: <https://pure.royalholloway.ac.uk/ws/files/23125617/Rickettsetal2014.pdf> [Accessed 19 February 2020].

Shanahan, T. (2019). "Shanahan on Literacy" [Blog] 4th January 2020. *Five things every teacher should know about vocabulary instruction* Available at: <https://shanahanonliteracy.com/blog/five-things-every-teacher-should-know-about-vocabulary-instruction> [Accessed: 19th February 2020].

Silva, K et al (2002) *Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years*. Available at: <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/4650/1/RR356.pdf> [Accessed: 18th February 2020].

Simpson, M. and Tuson, J. (2003). *Using Observations in Small-Scale Research: A Beginner's Guide*. Glasgow: SCORE.

Shanahan, T. (2020) *Does Modelling have a place in high quality literacy teaching?* [Online] Available at: <https://www.shanahanonliteracy.com/blog/does-modeling-have-a-place-in-high-quality-literacy-teaching> [Accessed: 18th February 2020].

Shawa, L. B. (2017) *Ethics in Educational Research* [Online] Available at: www.researchgate.net/publication/312069857 [Accessed 19th February 2020].

Thomson, C. and Wolstencroft, P. (2018) *The Trainee Teacher's Handbook A companion for Initial Teacher Training*. First edition ed. London: SAGE.

The Association for Qualitative Research (2013-18) *Hawthorne Effect*. Available at: <https://www.aqr.org.uk/glossary/hawthorne-effect> [Accessed: 18th February 2020].

Tripp, D (1993) *Critical Incidents in Teaching – Developing Professional Judgement*. London: Routledge.

Teacher Development Trust Network (2015) *What is a lesson study?* [Online] Available at: <https://tdtrust.org/what-is-lesson-study> [Accessed 18th February 2020].

University of Wales Trinity Saint David (2018) UWTSD Research Data Management Statement. Available at: <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/> [Accessed: 18th February 2020].

Welsh Government (2012) *National Literacy and Numeracy Framework* Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/storage/64812b0e-3d20-4d10-94e8-68221e47a38d/to-support-schools-in-introducing-the-national-literacy-and-numeracy-framework.pdf> [Accessed: 18th February 2020].

WG. (2019). *Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership*. Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/storage/19bc948b-8a3f-41e0-944a-7bf2cadf7d18/professional-standardsfor-teaching-and-leadership-interactive-pdf-for-pc.pdf> [Accessed: 18th February 2020].

William, D. (2011). *Embedded Formative Assessment*. Bloomington: Solution Tree Press.

Zimmerman, L and Reed, D.K (2017) "Iowa Reading Research Centre" [Blog] 31st October 2017. *Attributes of Effective Explicit Vocabulary Instruction*. Available at: www.iowareadingresearch.org [Accessed: 19th February 2020].