Project Title: Science and Language Learning: Lessons for and from Students

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Project Description: This research project is a derivation of our 2007-2008 synergy grant, which investigated how a fourth-grade teacher’s developing understanding of the role of language in science learning affected her language-focused lesson design and teaching. Science lessons were designed based on the written content of science textbooks that fourth grade students are required to read and comprehend. The lessons were implemented during the 2007-2008 school year. Our results showed that many scientific concepts are packed into short texts that contain crucial information for students to understand, especially difficult for English language learners. The current research study will investigate how the lessons were implemented by the teacher in her fourth grade classroom and the impact of the lessons on students, both on their learning of science and their engagement with the lessons.