

Alphabetics Instruction for English Language Learners



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Learning Outcomes

1. Model explicit instructional practices that capitalize on the cross-linguistic layers of language
2. Describe assessment practices for EL students
3. Highlight resources to support teachers

Best practice is best practice!

English Language Learners in the United States

- 10.4 percent (5.1 million) of students are English Learners
- 75.7 percent of these students speak Spanish
 - Other common languages in the public schools
 - Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Russian
 - Multiple language spoken in children's homes

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2019

Nationally State of Ohio

- **9%** of 4th grade EL students are considered proficient readers (at or above).
- **4%** of 8th grade EL students are considered proficient readers (at or above).
- **2%** of 4th grade EL students in Ohio are considered proficient readers (at or above).
- **6%** of 8th grade EL students in Ohio are considered proficient readers (at or above).

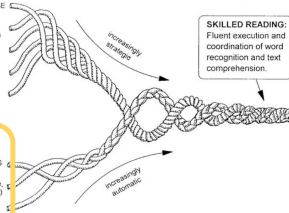
THE MANY STRANDS THAT ARE WOVEN INTO SKILLED READING

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

- BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE (facts, concepts, etc.)
- VOCABULARY (breadth, precision, links, etc.)
- LANGUAGE STRUCTURES (syntax, semantics, etc.)
- VERBAL REASONING (inferences, metaphor, etc.)
- LITERACY KNOWLEDGE (print concepts, genres, etc.)

WORD RECOGNITION

- PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS (syllables, phonemes, etc.)
- DECODING (alphabetic principles, spelling-sound correspondences)
- SPIGHT RECOGNITION (of familiar words)



(Scarborough, 2001)

Cross-Linguistic Transfer

- “Influence from one of a speaker’s languages to another” (Curzan & Adams, 2011, p. 372)
 - Positive transfer
 - Negative transfer

Limits to Cross-Linguistic Transfer

- Contextual factors
 - Lack of instruction in L1
- Intra-individual factors
 - Working memory, etc.
- Orthographic factors
 - Shallow vs. deep orthography

(Geva & Ramirez, 2015)

Lexical Quality Hypothesis (LQH)

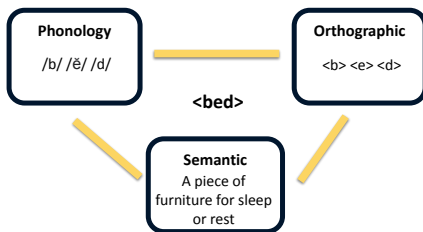
The Lexical Quality Hypothesis states the reading comprehension is dependent on the quality of the lexical representation of words (Perfetti, 2007).

How do you develop a high quality lexical representation of a word?

Teach using the layers of language!

Sounds ↔ Letters ↔ Meaning

Lexical Quality Hypothesis (LQH)



The Asset of L1



Key Principles for PA Instruction

- Focus PA instruction on phonemes that do not exist in L1
- Provide multiple opportunities for talk and pronunciation
- Provide explicit examples for vocabulary, linking to L1 where possible

Strategies to Facilitate PA tasks

- Teach vocabulary words before engaging in PA tasks
PA tasks ↔ Vocabulary
- Teach vocabulary of following directions
 - Your turn/my turn/together
 - Position words (beginning/middle/end)
 - Order words (first/second/last)
 - Qualitative concepts (same/different)

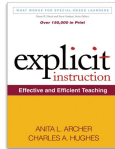
PA Considerations

- One to two skills
- Small groups
- Brief, purposeful instruction
- Link to print
- Explicit instruction

(Nieser & Cárdenas-Hagan, 2020)

Explicit Instruction (Vaughn & Fletcher, 2021)

- | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Segmenting complex skills into smaller, more manageable tasks |
| Modeling or thinking-aloud |
| Prompting successful engagement using faded supports and prompts |
| Providing feedback |
| Purposeful Practice Opportunities |



“The science of reading has established that **explicit instruction** is associated with **beneficial outcomes** for students and may be the **secret sauce of instructional success.**”

(Fletcher et al., 2019; Foorman et al., 2016, as cited in Vaughn & Fletcher, 2021, p. 4)

Blending Instructional Routine

1. Purposefully select words with phonemes not in a child's L1
2. Model each phoneme, highlighting articulatory features when necessary
3. Model blending the sounds into a whole word
4. Ask students to repeat the word
5. Define the word
6. Ask students to provide the L1 word
7. Repeat with additional words, gradually releasing responsibility



adapted from Nieser & Cárdenas-Hagan, 2020

Scaffolding Phonemic Awareness

"The sounds in *shoe* are /sh/ /oo/. What are the sounds in shoe?"

"There are 2 sounds in *shoe*. Tell me the first sound. Tell me the second sound."

"Our word is *shoe*. What are the sounds in *shoe*?"

Additional Considerations: stops vs. continuants, number of sounds, materials (Elkonin boxes, Say It and Move It, etc.)

The Asset of L1



| Explicit Instruction (Vaughn & Fletcher, 2021) | Explicit Phonics Instruction for EL students |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Segmenting complex skills into smaller more manageable tasks | Organize tasks into the smallest units first |
| Modeling or thinking-aloud | Use brief, clear & consistent language to introduce graphemes |
| Prompting successful engagement using faded supports and prompts | I do, We do, You do; Define and tie vocabulary back to L1 |
| Providing feedback | Error correction procedures |
| Purposeful Practice Opportunities | Controlled text reading opportunities; Spelling practice |

| Explicit Instruction (Vaughn & Fletcher, 2021) | Explicit Phonics Instruction for EL students |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Segmenting complex skills into smaller more manageable tasks | <p>“EL student may have native language literacy knowledge that could benefit second language literacy.”</p> <p><small>Nieser & Cárdenas-Hagan, 2020, p. 65</small></p> |
| Modeling or thinking-aloud | |
| Prompting successful engagement using faded supports and prompts | |
| Providing feedback | |
| Purposeful Practice Opportunities | |

Effective Phonics Instruction for EL learners

“Educators who work with ELs **do not need to be proficient speakers** of each language spoken in their classroom. However, they should endeavor **to learn about those phonics systems**, so that instruction can be focused to **where English and the native languages differ.**”

(Nieser & Cárdenas-Hagan, 2020, p. 66)

Phonics Instructional Routine

- Say three words with the same initial sound
- Have the student repeat the words
- The student determines the common sound
- Teacher reviews the sound, articulatory features, and letter formation pathway
- Teacher leads a discussion comparing and contrasting the phoneme-grapheme correspondence to the sounds in L1 and L2

(Nieser & Cárdenas-Hagan, 2020)

The Asset of L1



Morphology

re + turn + ing → re turn ing

Strategies to Facilitate Morphology Learning

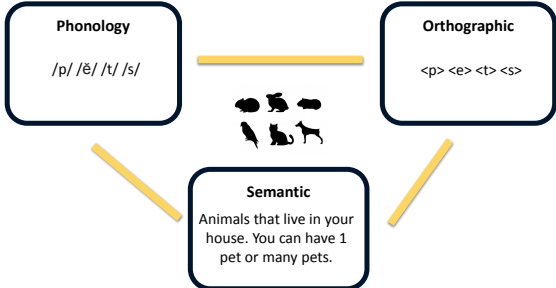
- State the job of the morpheme
 - Explicitly teach terms (e.g., prefix, suffix, base)
- Determine if the morpheme exists in the student’s L1 and make connections
- Read the base, read the suffix, read together
- Provide examples
- Be thoughtful about what phoneme-grapheme correspondences students have learned when choosing words (systematic)
 - “apples” versus “pets”
 - you can still teach the concept during oral language activities

(Nieser & Cárdenas-Hagan, 2020)

Morphology Instructional Routine

- Say three words with the same morpheme
- Have the student repeat the words
- Write the words on the board
- Ask which letters spell the target morpheme
- Where do we find these letters in the word
- State the morpheme and how it changes the word

(Nieser & Cárdenas-Hagan, 2020)






**Assessment
and
English Language Learners**

Mount St. Joseph University

Assessment Considerations

- Universal Screening
- Progress Monitoring
- Data-based decision making



BRIEF 2
Assessment and Data-Based Decision-Making

(Project ELITE, Project ESTRELLA, & Project REME, 2015)

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Universal Screening

- 3 times per year
 - Tools for monolinguals will likely over-identify second language learners because they do not consider the students literacy development, language development, and educational history
 - Single data points might not be reflective of a students skills
 - Rate of growth
 - Dynamic assessment (i.e., test-teach-retest)
 - Multiple assessments
- Errors versus difference
 - Assessment bias
 - Accurate interpretation

(Project ELITE, Project ESTRELLA, & Project REME, 2015)

Progress Monitoring

- Learning difficulties
 - slower rate of growth
- Lack of opportunities
 - learn rapidly given explicit and systematic instruction
- Learning in L1 and L2
 - PM should be done in both languages sometimes alternating languages when PMing for time purposes

(Project ELITE, Project ESTRELLA, & Project REME, 2015)

Data-Based Decision Making

- Data review
 - Intervals
 - More frequent for EL students
 - Placement considerations
 - Language development
- Decoding skills are only one component of a reading program
 - Other skills matter (e.g., vocabulary, syntax) and support reading comprehension

(Project ELITE, Project ESTRELLA, & Project REME, 2015)



Resources and Teacher Support

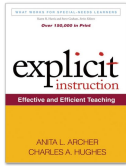
L1 Information



ASHA
American
Speech-Language-Hearing
Association

ASHA - [Phonemic Inventories and Cultural and Linguistic Information Across Languages](#)

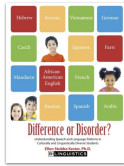
Books



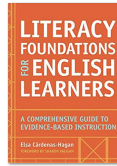
Archer & Hughes



Geva & Ramirez



Stubbe Kester



Cárdenas-Hagan

Miscellaneous Resources



¡Colorín colorado!
A bilingual site for educators and families of English language learners



MTSS *for* **ELS**

Big Ideas

Evidence-based practices for teaching monolingual students are also best practices for teaching ELs.

Leverage the strengths and capacity in L1 to support L2 development in language and literacy.

While teachers need not speak a child's L1, they must learn about its phonology, orthography, and morphology.
