Instructional Strategies for English Language Learners with Special Needs

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"If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn."

Ignacio Estrada

Inspiring you to inspire them... www.tes.co.uk
1. Understanding how all students learn
2. What specific areas do ELLs who are struggling academically need to develop.
3. Why the development of prior knowledge and vocabulary is key to making the curriculum accessible to ELLs with special needs.
4. Which instructional strategies can be useful to address the individual difficulties of ELLs with special needs due to sensory and/or cognitive impairments.
What do we need to know about ELLs with Special Needs?
A student shall not be determined eligible for special education if the determinant factor is:

• lack of appropriate instruction ...
  or

• limited English proficiency
  (Part 200 -- Regulations of the Commissioner of Education)
All students are general education students, some of whom receive special services!
Meet Soteri

- Age 12 years old
- Grade 6
- Simultaneous language learner, both English and Spanish are spoken in the home
- Born in New York City, Parents were born here as well. Grandparents were born in Puerto Rico
- Primarily speaks English and is in the transitioning stage of English language proficiency
- Parents speak both English and Spanish
- Grandparents, who take care of Soteri after school every day, speak only Spanish.
- Classification: Learning Disability
To LEARN students have to develop their cognitive structures—psychological systems for organizing and processing information.

Garner, B.K., 2007, Getting to Got It, ASCD
Cognitive structures can be classified into three (3) independent categories:

1. Comparative Thinking (the foundation for developing all three)

2. Symbolic Representation

3. Logical Reasoning

Garner, B.K., 2007, *Getting to Got It*, ASCD
Comparative Thinking Structures

• **Foundational** to learning. **Prerequisite** to more complex cognitive structures

• They **process** information by **identifying** how small chunks of data are **alike** and **different**

• Include:
  – Recognition
  – Memorization **
  – Conservation of constancies
  – Temporal orientation
  – Metaphorical thinking

Garner, B.K., 2007, *Getting to Got It*, ASCD
To develop **comparative thinking structures** students **MUST** become reflectively aware of sensory input and mentally visualize information for processing.

Garner, B.K., 2007, *Getting to Got It*, ASCD
Symbolic Representation:
verbal & nonverbal language, mathematics, music and rhythms, movements, dance, and gestures; interpersonal interactions; graphics; drama, multimedia

Logical Reasoning:
use of abstract reasoning to process and generate information
Cognitive Structures cannot be taught, but teachers and parents can help students develop them, as students must teach themselves to learn.

Garner, B.K. , 2007, Getting to Got It, ASCD
How can students develop their own cognitive structures in order to learn?
Prior knowledge & experiences

Abstracting general principles & applying to new and different situations

Identifying predictable rules

Making connections

Finding patterns

Learning
How can ELLs with Special Needs develop their cognitive structures?
1. Making connections with PRIOR KNOWLEDGE and experiences

2. Finding PATTERNS

3. Identifying PREDICTABLE RULES

4. Abstracting general principles and APPLYING to NEW and DIFFERENT situations
General Knowledge and Skill Domains

- Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing
- Strategy Knowledge and Use
- Vocabulary
- Organization Study Skills
- Working Memory
- Attention
- Language Coding

Guide to Quality Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development and Implementation (February, 2010)
General Knowledge and Skill Domains

- Language Coding
- Strategy Knowledge and Use
- Working Memory
- Vocabulary
How Might a Disability Affect Language Acquisition?

- Sensory Deficits (auditory & visual)
- Cognitively Challenged
- Speech & Language Difficulties
- Behavioral Disorders
- Neurological or Motor Disorders

- Affects ability to obtain undistorted input for acquisition.
- Challenged ability to construct & retain essential connections between conceptual & linguistic representation.
- Difficulties processing or constructing meaning through language.
- Difficulty engaging in learning activities & isolation could impede development in L2.
- May lack necessary control to coordinate production of target language.

How can we assist ELLs with Special Needs to:

- Make Connections
- Find Patterns
- Identify Rules
- Abstract Principles to new & different situations
Instructional Strategy
#1
Why Activate Prior Knowledge?

- Schema theory: the mental frameworks that organize our knowledge and assumptions is used for interpreting and processing new information and influences attention.

- Constructivist theory: we construct knowledge when we connect new information to prior knowledge, concepts and experiences.

- Our role is to facilitate students making those connections.
The questions that parents face as they raise children from infancy to adult life are not easy to answer. Both fathers and mothers can become concerned when health problems such as colds arise any time after the early stage to later life. Experts recommend that young children should have plenty of sleep and nutritious food for healthy growth. Boys and girls should not share the same bed or even sleep in the same room. They may be afraid of the disease.
What is your schema?

The questions that poultry farmers face as they raise chickens from incubation to adult life are not easy to answer. Both farmer and merchants can become concerned when health problems such as coccidiosi arise any time after the egg stage to later life. Experts recommend that young chicks should have plenty of sunshine and nutritious food for healthy growth. Banties and geese should not share the same barnyard or even sleep in the same roost. They may be afraid of the dark.
• What do you know about raising chickens?

• What strategies would you use to Activate Prior Knowledge?
  
  Image Gallery

  5 Senses Chart

  KWL Chart

  Alphabet Brainstorm

  Word Web
HOW to Activate Prior Knowledge

• Image or Alphabet Brainstorm
• Five Senses Chart (it looks like, sounds like, feels like...)
• Graphic Organizers (concept maps, KWL)
• Anticipation Guide (before and after the lesson)
  • Agree/Disagree, True/False, Fact/Fiction, Reality/Myth
• Videos and Pictures
• Cloze Activities
• Show and Tell (realia)
  • Use the language of the discipline
  • Identify the “Big Picture”
  • Explore essential attributes
• Use the native language!!!
Always Remember to…
Build Background Knowledge
Go deeper!

- Background Knowledge is stored in memory as an “I” event, one in which the student was directly, personally involved in. Create an EXPERIENCE!

- Students need a minimum of four exposures to new content no more than 2 days apart, that elaborate on ideas.

- Connect content to real life. Relevance makes it stick.

- Look for Cultural Assumptions: idioms, metaphors, history
Instructional Strategy
#2
Universal Design for Learning

Prior Knowledge

Finding Patterns and Relationships

Identifying Rules

Abstracting Principles

Video Clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDvKnY0g6e4
Universal Design for Learning

Instruction can be customized and adjusted to meet individual student needs by creating options for:

1. how instruction is presented,
2. how students express their ideas, and
3. how teachers can engage students in their learning.

In this manner, we can support our students to succeed in the CCLS.
II. Options in Action/Expression

Cooperative group work, oral presentations, writing assignments, graphic organizers, student documentaries, story boards, etc.
III. Options in Engagement

• Activate prior knowledge, use multi-cultural perspective, provide choices, assist in goal setting, etc.
Activity: Turn and Talk

With a partner, choose 2 examples within each guideline that will support Soteri. What is your rationale for choosing each example? Explain how you will implement?
Instructional Strategy #3
Build Bigger Vocabularies
It is now well accepted that the chief cause of the achievement gap between socioeconomic groups is a language gap.

~Hirsch, 2003

The 30-Million Word Gap
Hart & Risley
Children from advantaged homes knew about 5 times more words than children from the lowest income homes.
Do I have to eat these?

Yeah.

Yes, because vegetables have vitamins that will help you grow and become stronger.
Why is Vocabulary So Important?

• Single, best predictor of school success.
• The correlation between vocabulary scores and reading comprehension scores is consistently high across many studies.
• Vocabulary is closely associated with intelligence and knowledge.
• A rich knowledge of words results in more elaborated understanding of concepts.
How vocabulary relates to ELLs

• The average native English speaker enters kindergarten knowing at least 5,000 words.
• The average ELL may know 5,000 words in his or her native language, but very few words in English.
• While native speakers continue to learn new words, ELLs face the double challenge of building that foundation and then closing the gap.
• ELLs are not going likely to learn academic English from their parents nor their peers. They are going to learn it from you. You will be their model for rich academic language.
Some ELLs may not know...

• Some basic words (shown, table, afterwards)
• Multiple meanings of common words (state, argue, power)
• Connectors (so that, thereby, however)
• Some times do not recognize cognates (habitat, function)
• Have trouble with multisyllabic words (inconsistently)
• Specific or sufficient words to describe a process or content - they use the same simple words over and over.
How does vocabulary relate to SWDs?

The Catch 22:

• The development of proficient reading skills is documented as the most effective independent word learning strategy.
• Students who read more have better vocabularies.
• Students who struggle with reading, as many students with disabilities do, don’t read as much as their peers.
• Students with LD lack strategies to learn words from context and have weak word knowledge.
A Vocabulary Riddle
To comprehend what we read, at least 95% of the words must be recognized automatically.

How is this possible given the number of words in English?
Why not teach all the unknown words in a text?

• The text may have a great many words that are unknown to students – too many for direct instruction.

• Direct vocabulary instruction can take a lot of class time – time that teachers might better spend having students read.

• Students may be able to understand a text without knowing the meaning of every word in the text.

• Students need opportunities to use word-learning strategies to independently learn the meanings of unknown words.

(Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001)
National Reading Panel on the Role of Vocabulary Instruction

1. Make time for both incidental and explicit instruction.
Incidental vs Intentional

Incidental Vocabulary Learning:
• Rich Oral Language Experiences
• Wide Reading
  • Teacher Read-Alouds
  • Independent Reading

Intentional Vocabulary Teaching:
• Specific Word Instruction
  • Explicit, direct Instruction of words in text

Word Learning Strategies:
• Morpheme Analysis
• Contextual Analysis
• Cognate Awareness
• Dictionary Use
GOAL:

Students independently engage in accountable talk to challenge thinking, push for evidence and/or refine arguments that support their ideas and learning.

Students:
• Stay on topic.
• Use accurate and appropriate information relevant to the topic.
• Think deeply about what the partner has to say.
ACTIVITY: POSTER TALK

*See Hickman and Dray

What do you know about accountable talk?

How might you implement Accountable Talk with your students?

What else needs to be implemented for Accountable Talk?

What are the benefits of Accountable Talk?
Active engagement in activities of listening, speaking, reading and writing, allows students to develop a deep understanding of word meanings, connections to other words and to their own experiences.
It’s Always About Vocabulary

Comprehension depends on knowing at least 93% of the words in a text.

Key vocabulary is emphasized.
New vocabulary is presented in context.
The number of vocabulary items is limited.

An ELL needs explicit instruction and at least 12 meaningful and authentic production opportunities to own a word. (M. Calderon)
Margarita Calderon’s Vocabulary Instruction for English Language Learners
Margarita Calderon’s 7 Steps to Vocabulary Instruction

- Introduce the word. Ask students to repeat the word 3 times
- Read and show the word in a sentence (context) from the text
- Teacher gives the dictionary or glossary definition(s)
- Present a student-friendly explanation/definition of the word with examples students can relate to
- Highlight an aspect of the word that might create difficulty
- Engage the students in an activity to orally use or own the word and concept
- Teacher assigns peer reading with oral and written summarization activities and explains how the new words need to be used or how students will be accountable for these words
Vocabulary Instruction

1- Watch the video

2- Take notes of the steps the teacher utilizes in her explicit vocabulary instruction. Provide examples.

3- Share out.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G7y0yd8H4tM
Pre-teach Vocabulary

To ensure mastery of complex words and concepts that students will encounter in an upcoming text, pre-teach key key words.

- **Pre-select words** from an upcoming text, conversation or activity
- Explain the meaning with student-friendly definitions.
- Provide examples of how it is used.
- Ask students to repeat the word multiple times (choral).
- Plan activities involving listening, speaking, reading and writing.
  1. Role playing or pantomiming and use gestures
  2. Show real objects
  3. Find a variety of pictures or drawings or short videos
  4. Use the Spanish equivalent

*Colorin  Colorado 2007*
English users follow set rules for coining new words, thus adding greatly to the number of potential words in the language.

The postman likes our street because it is dogless.
ELLs need a lot of support on word families (the possible forms of a word)

In response to a reading on discrimination, one student writes,

“I am absolutely oppose. My boss discriminations me all the time at Macy’s. She salaries me lower than other people and prejudices at me sometimes.”

Kate Kinsella example
**MORPHEME MATCH-UPS**

Cut out the morphemes below and create as many words as you can. Use the MORPHEME MATCH-UPS GUIDE to help you determine the meanings of these words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>phone</th>
<th>tele</th>
<th>vision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>scope</td>
<td>micro</td>
<td>graph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>auto</td>
<td>sub</td>
<td>mobile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>way</td>
<td>scribe</td>
<td>re</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use frequency lists. With a vocabulary of 2000 high-frequency words, a learner knows 80% of words in a text. *

Nation divides vocabulary into three classifications:
(1) high frequency words
(2) general academic words
(3) technical or specialized words

* However, 95% of words must be known to infer meaning: (Liu & Nation 1985)
Isabel Beck

Both usefulness and frequency should be considered for all students.

Three tiers of vocabulary:

• **Tier 1** - Basic words that label common objects or concepts

• **Tier 2** - Information words that are critical to comprehension, words with multiple meanings

• **Tier 3** - Technical or subject-specific words that label content
Selecting Key Vocabulary

You are about to teach a unit on the life cycle of the butterfly.

What words would you teach during this unit?
Selecting Key Vocabulary

Science Unit: Life cycle of the butterfly.

How would you select the words to teach during this unit?

metamorphosis  document
record  first, next, finally
egg  chrysalis
cycle  butterfly
caterpillar  wings
larva  circle
observe  change
pupa  adult

What are the Tier 1, 2 & 3 words?
## Science Unit Key Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content / Concept</th>
<th>Life Cycles of the Butterfly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3 words (content)</td>
<td>Metamorphosis, egg, larva, caterpillar, pupa, chrysalis, adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2 words (process and function words)</td>
<td>Cycle, observe, record, document, first, second, next, then, finally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1 words (common words)</td>
<td>Butterfly, wings, change, circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words that teach English Structure</td>
<td>Cycle (bicycle, recycle)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cognate Awareness

- Examples: family and “familia,” director and “director,” and conversation and “conversación.”
- Note that about 40% of all English words have similar cognates in Spanish! This is an obvious bridge to the English language – if the student is made aware of how to use this resource.
- False cognates do exist (mano in Spanish means hand, not man), but they are the exception to the rule.
- Encourage ELLs to guess at words and try to decipher text based on this existing knowledge. The more familiarity a teacher has with Spanish, the easier it is to point out these connections.

*Colorin Colorado 2007*
In linguistics, cognates are words that have a common etymology, or origin. It is derived from the Latin word *cognatus* (meaning blood relative).

About 40% of English words have a Spanish cognate.

Haitian Creole (kréyol ayisyen) is a French creole, mixed of English, Spanish and African languages.
complicated : complicado
family : familia
director : director


CAUTION: False cognates do exist but they are the exception to the rule. (Ex: mano in Spanish means hand, not man)
Enjoy your Lunch!

We will resume promptly in 1 hour.
Case Study: Soteri
1- Take 1 minute to look over the UDL Checklist provide.

2- While watching the video clip, identify elements of UDL utilized by the teacher.

1- At your tables, discuss how you can support Soteri in the classroom you watched in the video.

2- What instructional strategies can the teacher add to her lesson to make learning accessible for Soteri? (Use Bilingual CC Grade 6 Progressions, NYSESLAT Targets of Measurement and 6th Grade Performance Level Description for Listening and Speaking). Address both “Language and Content Objectives.”
Keep in mind

How Students Learn

– Making connections with Prior Knowledge and experiences
– Finding Patterns
– Identifying Predictable Rules
– Abstracting general principles and applying to new and different situations

Support Strategies

– UDL guidelines
– Prior knowledge
– Vocabulary
How do we break barriers to access, progress and involvement in the General Education Curriculum?

What Factors Might Present Barriers to Access, Participation & Progress in the General Education Curriculum based on the CCLS for Soteri?
Instruction for Students with Disabilities should be:

• Structured and **explicit**
• Focused on specific skills and strategies
• Planned in a “gradual release of responsibility” model of instruction (“I do – We do – You do”)
• Instruction in Self-Regulated Strategy Development and Opportunities for Peer Assisted Learning
• Meaningful and relevant content that is interesting to students; authentic connections to real life.
Resources

- Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning, Buehl, D., 2009, International Reading Association
- Getting to Got It!, Garner, B.K., 2007, ASCD
- Literacy Instruction for English Language Learners, Cloud, N., Genesee, F., Hamayan, E. 2009, Heinemann
- Preventing Long-Term Els, Calderon, M. & Minaya-Rowe, L., 2011, Corwin Press
- Teaching Reading & Comprehension to English Learners, K-5, Calderon, M., 2011, Solution Tree Press
- The GO TO Strategies: Scaffolding Options for Teachers of ELLs, K-12, Project EXCELL, University of Missouri-Kansas City
- Vocabulary websites:
  - The Academic Word List [www.victoria.ac.nz](http://www.victoria.ac.nz)
  - Academic Work Link [www.academicvocabulary.info](http://www.academicvocabulary.info)
  - The First 4,000 Words [www.sewardreadingresources.com](http://www.sewardreadingresources.com)
- Words their Way with English Learners, Helman, R. etc.,2012, Pearson
Please Fill Out Assessment Information
Thank You

Mahalo
Kiitos
Toda
Grazie
Obrigado
Takk
Gracias

Thanks
Merci