Vocabulary in the Content Areas
Considerations for ELLs

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1

English Language Learners

- Fastest Growing Student Population
- 4.6 million in U.S. public schools
- Represent 400 different home languages
- Spanish is the most common home language (77%)
- Chinese and Arabic second most common languages representing less than 3% of English learners in U.S. public schools
- Vocabulary development is necessary for developing a second language

2

MODELS OF READING DEVELOPMENT
Scarborough’s Reading Rope (2001)

3
Vocabulary is...
the ability to understand words and their meanings.

(Listening and Reading)

Vocabulary is...
also the ability to use words across many contexts.

(Speaking and Writing)

Research

Vocabulary knowledge more than any other factor is attributed to English Learners’ academic success or struggles.

(August, Carlo, Dresser & Snow, 2005; Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011; Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer & Rivera, 2006; Gersten et al; 2007)
Research

Vocabulary is an area where ELLS lag behind their peers.

English-language learners do well acquiring word-level skills like decoding.

The majority of ELLs with reading difficulties struggle with text level skills such as: fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and writing.

(National Literacy Panel, 2000)

Research

• Many ELLs arrive at school with a more limited English vocabulary than English-speaking students.
  • ELLs may lack labels in English for concepts they know and have labels for in their first language.
  • ELLs and English speakers may have different concepts for the same label.
  • ELLs may have labels and basic knowledge of concepts but lack the depth of conceptual knowledge required for academic success.

Word Learning Strategies for English Language Learners

• Cognate Awareness
• Morphological awareness
• Multiple opportunities for use
Cognates and Units of Study

- Cognates are words that are similar in spelling and meaning across languages
- Introduction via Themes or Units of Study
- Examples may include transportation, health, school life, foods, hobbies, sports, shapes, colors, math, science, and social studies.
- Many words are cognates and can be used during instruction.

Cognate Awareness

- The ability to identify that words from other languages share similar spellings and meanings.
- English shares cognates with many languages.
- One example: canoe (English/Catalan), canoa (Spanish/Italian/Portuguese), canoë (French), kanu (German)

True and False Cognates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>True Cognates</th>
<th>False Cognates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tríángulo-triangle</td>
<td>carpeta-carpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tractor-tractor</td>
<td>embarrassed-embarazada</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Explicit Instruction of Cognates

- Introduction of Unit.
- Examples may include transportation, health, school life, foods, hobbies, sports, shapes, colors, math, science, health and social studies.
- Many words within specific subject areas are cognates with English and can be used during instruction.
- Remember, cognates are words that are similar in spelling and meaning across languages.

Examples of Cognates

- Transportation Theme
  - Spanish
    - auto
    - tractor
    - tren
    - canoa
    - helicóptero
  - English
    - auto
    - tractor
    - train
    - canoe
    - helicopter

Examples of Cognates

- Math
  - Spanish
    - adición
    - álgebra
    - multiplicación
    - geometría
    - división
  - English
    - addition
    - algebra
    - multiplication
    - geometry
    - division
Examples of Cognates

- **Science**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>biología</td>
<td>biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experimento</td>
<td>experiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ciencia</td>
<td>science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laboratorio</td>
<td>laboratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>célula</td>
<td>cell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of Cognates

- **Social Studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>democracia</td>
<td>democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>libertad</td>
<td>liberty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cultura</td>
<td>culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>industrial</td>
<td>industrial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constitución</td>
<td>constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>independencia</td>
<td>independence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Components of Language for Vocabulary Instruction

- **Phonology**
  (Examples include knowledge of sounds within words)
- **Semantics/Morphology**
  (Examples include understanding word meaning, its synonyms, antonyms and knowledge of word parts)
- **Grammar**
  (Examples include understanding word’s part of speech)
- **Pragmatics/Use**
  (Examples include understanding formal and informal use, idioms and sayings)
- **Orthography**
  (Examples include letter and spelling pattern knowledge)
Cross-Language Example

• The word is canoe in English. Say the word.
• The word in Spanish is canoa.
• How many syllables are in the Spanish word? How many are in the English word.
• How many morphemes or meaning units? One. Let's discuss the meaning of the word canoe. Let's describe and compare and contrast it with a ship.
• Is the word a noun? Can it be used as a verb?
• Can you use the word in a sentence?
• Can you describe the similarities and differences in the spelling of canoe in English and Spanish?

Cognate Awareness

• Explicit instruction of cognates can provide a foundation for transfer of vocabulary and conceptual understandings across languages (August, et al., 2007)

Reflection

• How will I incorporate cognates within my instruction for English learners?
• What are some of the features for cognate instruction that I should include to deepen English learners' understanding?
• How will I encourage cognate awareness across the various content areas?
Morphological Awareness

- Morphological awareness is the ability to identify the smaller meaning components within words and the ability to use that knowledge to deduce the meaning of other unknown words.
- Meta-Morphological Awareness involves the ability to transfer this knowledge from the native language to the second language.
- Transfer depends upon the similarities between the morphological systems of the languages (Geva and Ramirez, 2015)

Selecting Appropriate Words

- It is important to know a student’s level of proficiency in the native language and English.
- Students may know the concept and the word in native language but, not in English.
- Many words in English are common words used in native languages such as, Spanish.
- Sixty percent of the English language is derived from Latin and thus learning word parts or morphemes is a word learning strategy that is helpful for English learners.

What Does it Mean to Know a Word?

- A student's maximum level of reading comprehension is determined by his or her knowledge of words. This word knowledge allows students to comprehend text.
- Knowing a word does not mean simply knowing its definition. Knowing a word means knowing about the word and its usage as well as how to build on this knowledge to learn about additional words.
Learning to Read

- As students learn to read they must be taught to attend to the smallest units of sounds to decode and to the morphemes to understand the meanings of new words (Carlisle & Stone, 2005)

Morphological Awareness

- Inflectional Morphemes change the number or quantity, verb tense and/or degree. (pant - pants, run - running, small - smaller - smallest)

- Derivational Morphemes are those that focus on how words are derived from other words by the use of word parts. (cheerful, preview)

Morphological Awareness Across Languages

- Morphemes are the smallest units of meaning in a language
- Morphological awareness is the ability to understand how words have meaning units and can be very helpful for understanding word meanings, increasing vocabulary and informing spelling
- Meta-morphological awareness is the ability to understand and use morphemes across languages to increase understanding of words and inform spelling in various languages
### Some Spanish Prefixes and their English Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish Prefixes</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>English Prefixes</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>anti-</td>
<td>contra</td>
<td>anti-</td>
<td>against</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ex-</td>
<td>afuera</td>
<td>ex-</td>
<td>outside of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extra-</td>
<td>más</td>
<td>extra-</td>
<td>above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in-</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>in-</td>
<td>not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inter-</td>
<td>entre</td>
<td>inter-</td>
<td>between</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multi-</td>
<td>mucho</td>
<td>multi-</td>
<td>many</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Some Spanish Roots and their English Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish Roots</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>English Roots</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>audi</td>
<td>oír</td>
<td>audi</td>
<td>to hear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>auto</td>
<td>solo</td>
<td>auto</td>
<td>by itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fin</td>
<td>final</td>
<td>fin</td>
<td>final</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fono</td>
<td>sonido</td>
<td>phono</td>
<td>sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graf</td>
<td>escribir</td>
<td>graph</td>
<td>written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kilo</td>
<td>mil</td>
<td>kilo</td>
<td>one thousand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Spanish Suffixes and their English Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish Suffixes</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>English Suffixes</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-ista</td>
<td>alguien que</td>
<td>-ist</td>
<td>one who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-itis</td>
<td>inflamación</td>
<td>-iti</td>
<td>inflammation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ivo</td>
<td>causa de</td>
<td>-iv</td>
<td>causing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-lento</td>
<td>en relación de</td>
<td>-lent</td>
<td>related to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-oso</td>
<td>lleno de</td>
<td>-ous</td>
<td>full of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-sión</td>
<td>estado de</td>
<td>-sion</td>
<td>state of being</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Morphological Knowledge and Word Origin

- In English we have to determine how to spell the suffix –or & –er. (S=or)
- Suffix –or and –er means “one who” (Spanish –or means “one who”)
- Old English words are basic survival words
- Latin words are more sophisticated. (facilidad/facility, aplacar/placate)
- Old English words use –er
- Latin words use –or
- Old English examples include: farmer, worker
- Latin examples include: professor, director

Morphological Knowledge and Word Origin

- English words of Greek origin will spell the sound /f/ with the letters ph.
- Greek words are long and scientific
- Words of Greek origin will spell the /k/ sound with the letters ch as in the word chemistry
- English words of French origin will spell the /ch/ sound with the letters sh
- Latin based words will spell the /sh/ sound as ci, si, ti, as in the words nation and percussion and special

Sample Lesson

- We will learn a prefix today. A prefix is found at the beginning of a word and can change its meaning. Say bilingual, bicycle, bimonthly.
- What did you hear that was the same?
- Look at the words as I write them. How do we spell bi-?
- Do any of these words look familiar to you in your first language? Tell me about this. Say the words in your language.
- Let’s discover the meaning.
- If you speak two languages, you are considered to be … bilingual.
- Something that you pedal that has two wheels is a … bicycle.
- If you do something two times a month then we say … bimonthly.
- So what do you think the prefix bi- means?
- Can you think of other words with prefix bi-? For example, if you do something two times a week the word is _____. (biweekly) If you do something two times a year the word is ______ (biannually).
- We will create a word wall for our word parts including prefixes.
- We will also add this prefix to your vocabulary notebook. We can write the words in 2 languages. Good job.
- As you listen to people or as you read, please listen carefully to words that use the prefix bi- We will add them to our word wall.
- able  
  (able to) adorable  
  (capaz de) adorable  
  anti-  
  (against) antifreeze  
  (contra) anticongelante  

- audífonos  
  (to hear) audiophones  
  (oír) audífonos  
  bi-  
  (two) bilingual  
  (dos) bilingüe  

- ción  
  (state of) celebration  
  (estado de) celebración  
  - tion  
  (outside of) export  
  (afuera de) exportar  


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**Vocabulary Notebook**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREFIX</th>
<th>ROOT</th>
<th>SUFFIX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KEYWORD:</td>
<td>MEANING:</td>
<td>OTHER WORDS:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENTENCE:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**CUADERNO DE VOCABULARIO**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREFIJO</th>
<th>RAÍZ</th>
<th>SUFIJO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PALABRA CLAVE:</td>
<td>SIGNIFICADO:</td>
<td>OTRAS PALABRAS:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORACIÓN:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Engage in extended discussions with the word:**

- Do you think a telephone should be allowed in class?
- Do you think audiophones can damage your hearing? Why or Why not?
- Do you think there is a benefit for playing a musical instrument like a saxophone?
- Encourage English learners to use complete sentences and their target words within their responses.
**Additional Tool:**
**Sentence Starters**

- Help students with limited English language skills "get started" on a response.
- Teacher models appropriate academic language structure by starting a sentence that students will finish.
  - I think the word means __________
  - When I listen to the word, it reminds me of __________ because __________
  - Some other words that are similar in meaning are __________ and __________

**Vocabulary**

Introduce new words and use graphic organizers to explore word meanings and determine the relationship to other words

**Graphic Organizer**

- Definition:
- Synonyms: [Word in native language] [Word in English]
- Antonyms:
- Sentences:
I listen to the music with my audiophones.
Escucho música con mis audífonos.

**Student Glossaries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Usage</th>
<th>Picture</th>
<th>Word in Native Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miracle</td>
<td>It's a miracle to see a flower blooming.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Flower" /></td>
<td>Milagro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancestor</td>
<td>This is a picture of someone's ancestors.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Family" /></td>
<td>Antecesor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marvelous</td>
<td>The island is a marvelous place to visit.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Island" /></td>
<td>Maravilloso</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to make the connections and apply the knowledge from the native language to the second language.
SUMMARY

- English learners do not learn words with one simple encounter.
- English learners need much practice with words.
- English learners need various facets of information about a word.
- They also need to integrate a new word into their existing knowledge.

Multiple Opportunities

- English learners need multiple opportunities for using new words to make connections between academic content and life experiences.
- Teachers must strategically integrate sufficient practice opportunities so English learners can master new concepts and thus achieve a higher level of understanding.

ELLs in my Classroom

- Do I provide explicit vocabulary instruction with multiple opportunities to practice throughout the day?
- Do I engage students in effective word-learning strategies?
- Do I give opportunities for structured conversations?
- Do I give time to discuss with partners?
- Do I use immediate corrective feedback?
- Do I continually monitor students’ progress?
**Reflection**

- How will I ensure multiple opportunities for use of new vocabulary words?
- How will I make sure students use words across many weeks of instruction?

**Wrap-Up**

- English language learners can benefit from explicit vocabulary instruction that will assist them in applying their word knowledge in the primary language for the development of second language vocabulary.
- It is necessary for instructors to have knowledge of the shared and unshared components of the two languages in order to provide English language learners with sufficient opportunities to develop their language, vocabulary and literacy skills.

**Institute of Education Sciences Practice Guides**

- Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices
- Assisting Students Struggling with Reading RTI and Multi-Tiered Intervention in Primary Grades
- Teaching Academic Vocabulary and Content Knowledge to English Learners in Upper Elementary and Middle School
Resources
The International Dyslexia Association
www.eida.org
The National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCREST)
www.Nccrest.org
CEC Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners
www.cec.sped.org
Office English Language Acquisition
www.ed.gov/office/oela

Additional Resources
- Center for Applied Linguistics
  www.cal.org
- Center on Instruction for ELLs
  www.centeroninstruction.org
- IES Practice Guide Effective Literacy and English Language Instruction for English Learners in the Elementary Grades
- Colorín Colorado
  www.colorincolorado.com