Active and Scaffolded Vocabulary Instruction for English Learners

Linda Diamond & Lauren Greenberg

Consortium on Reaching Excellence in Education (CORE)

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Session Objectives

• Review components of effective vocabulary instruction for all students
• Examine additional supports for ELs
• Demonstrate effective scaffolds for ELs including primary language support, cognate analysis, use of structured sentence frames, and oral practice
• Examine steps necessary to create lessons with appropriate scaffolds for ELs
Vocabulary Matters: A National Snapshot

• First graders from higher SES groups know about twice as many words as less-advantaged children.

• The gap grows throughout the school years: top high school seniors know about four times as many words as lower-performing schoolmates.

• High-knowledge third graders have vocabularies comparable to low-performing twelfth graders.

• Adequate reading comprehension depends upon the reader knowing 90–95% of the words in a text.

Sources: Graves, Slater, & Smith; Beck & Nagy
The Importance of Vocabulary

“Recent research with ELs in kindergarten through grade twelve demonstrates the positive effects of focusing on domain-specific and general academic vocabulary through rich instruction using sophisticated texts.” Vocabulary knowledge in turn impacts comprehension.

—CA ELA/ELD Framework
Think-Write-Pair-Share

Think about all the ways you currently implement vocabulary instruction in your classroom. What are the one or two most effective practices that you incorporate? What makes them particularly effective?
“Direct teaching of vocabulary might be one of the most underused activities in K–12 education. The lack of vocabulary instruction might be a result of misconceptions about what it means to teach vocabulary and its potential effect on student learning. Perhaps the biggest misconception is that teaching vocabulary means teaching formal dictionary definitions.”

## A Crucial Component

### National Reading Panel Findings on Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning in rich contexts is valuable for vocabulary learning</th>
<th>Repetition and multiple exposures are important</th>
<th>Vocabulary can be acquired through incidental learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary tasks should be restructured as necessary</td>
<td>Vocabulary learning should entail active engagement in learning tasks</td>
<td>Computer technology can be used effectively to help teach vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional instruction of vocabulary terms is required for specific texts</td>
<td>Methods of assessment and evaluation can have differential effects on instruction</td>
<td>Dependence on a single instructional method will not result in optimal learning</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Crucial for English Learners

“Vocabulary knowledge is the single best predictor of second language learners’ academic achievement across subject matter domains.”

TESOL Quarterly 18: 199–219
Instruction for English Learners

• According to recent research syntheses, the types of instruction that are effective with students in general are also likely to be effective with English learners, but

• ELs require additional instructional supports

• ELs’ home language is a valuable resource that can be used to promote academic development

—Goldenberg, 2010, “Reading Instruction for English Language Learners,”

Handbook of Reading Research,
Vol. IV, International Reading Association
Effective Instruction for All

• Clear goals and objectives
• Appropriate and challenging material
• Well-designed instructional routines
• Clear input and modeling
• Active engagement and participation
• Interaction with other students
• Informative feedback
• Distributed practice and periodic review
• Formative assessment with re-teaching as needed
Additional Instructional Supports for ELs

- Target language AND content skills
- Clarity of tasks
- Redundant information
- Pictures, demonstrations, realia
- Graphic organizers
- Extra practice and time
- Differentiate instruction by language proficiency
- Material with familiar content
Primary Language Support

Research supports use of the following practices:
1. Use of cognates
2. Brief explanations in the home language
3. Preview and review of content in the home language
4. Teach strategies in the home language

Goldenberg, 2012
Key Components for Effective English Language Development

1. Designated ELD as well as integrated ELD
2. Explicitly teach language elements
3. Utilize consistent instructional routines
4. Orchestrate peer interactions in partner or group format utilizing structured response formats and sentence frames
5. Monitor language production

Kinsella, 2012
# Intentional Vocabulary Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word-Learning Strategies</th>
<th>Specific Word Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morphemic analysis (word parts: roots, prefixes, suffixes)</td>
<td>Rich and robust instruction of specific words chosen from text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual analysis</td>
<td>Direct teaching of a corpus of academic words such as the Coxhead Academic Word List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognate awareness for English learners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictionary use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why are “academic words” important?

• They are critical to understanding academic texts.
• They appear in all sorts of texts.
• They require deliberate effort to learn, unlike Tier 1 words.
• They are far more likely to appear in written texts than in speech.
• They often represent subtle or precise ways to say otherwise relatively simple things.
• They are seldom heavily scaffolded by authors or teachers, unlike Tier 3 words.

Common Core State Standards, Appendix A, page 33
Characteristics of Academic Language: 6 Interdependent Factors

1. Words of Latin and Greek origin
2. Morphologically complex words
3. More nouns, adjectives, and prepositions
4. Use of grammatical metaphor, including nominalizations
5. Informational density
6. Abstractness

Nagy & Townsend, 2012
Examples

• Grammatical metaphor: “boils down to”

• Nominalization: the process of turning another part of speech (usually verb or adjective) into a noun, typically by adding a suffix, e.g. frustrate > frustration, destroy > destruction.

• The committee evaluated the program and discovered numerous examples of illegal practice. > The committee’s evaluation revealed numerous examples of illegality.
Nominalization Activity

“Some Republican legislators are frustrated because they don’t believe the state has enough control over how education dollars are spent.”

Washington Times Mar 20, 2016

Your task:

Try writing a new sentence using the noun form of the word frustrated, keeping essentially the same or similar meaning. You may change the sentence structure entirely.
Beck’s Three-Tier System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>Basic words students are likely to know</td>
<td>school, think, love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>Frequently occurring, high-utility words that cross over many disciplines</td>
<td>emphasis, structure, range, dominate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>Rarely occurring words with highly specialized, domain-specific meanings</td>
<td>alliteration, kamikaze, integer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Word Lists for each Tier

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>CCSS Description</th>
<th>Sources for Lists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dale-Chall List of 3000 simple words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>General academic words and phrases</td>
<td>Coxhead Academic Word List (AWL) BYU The Academic Vocabulary List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>Domain-Specific words and phrases</td>
<td>Marzano</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Coxhead Academic Word List

- 570 words that occur frequently across a wide variety of content areas
- Divided into 6 sublists
- Each word is a headword or base word that includes a large number of related words
- *Constitute* includes constitutes, constituted, reconstitute, constitution, constitutional, unconstitutional, etc.
- Online at http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist/
Brigham Young University
Academic Vocabulary Lists

• Drawn from the COCA: Corpus of Contemporary
  American English

• You must register with the site in order to download the lists

• Available lists include the top 2000 word families in academic writing in COCA, and the top 3000 “core academic words”

• Used frequently by publishers of school-based texts

• More information at:
  http://www.academicvocabulary.info/ and
  http://www.wordandphrase.info/
# The Academic Vocabulary List

Mark Davies and Dee Gardner, Brigham Young University

**Sample of word families.** Complete lists and detailed information at [http://www.academicvocabulary.info](http://www.academicvocabulary.info).

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<td></td>
<td>interrelation (n)</td>
<td>Hum 191</td>
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</table>
My uncle was stationed at Misenum, in active command of the fleet. On 24 August, in the early afternoon, my mother drew his attention to a cloud of unusual size and appearance. He had been out in the sun, had taken a cold bath, and lunched while lying down, and was then working at his books. He called for his shoes and climbed up to a place which would give him the best view of the phenomenon. It was not clear at that distance from which mountain the cloud was rising (it was afterwards known to be Vesuvius); its general appearance can best be expressed as being like an umbrella pine, for it rose to a great height on a sort of trunk and then split off into branches, I imagine because it was thrust upwards by the first blast and...
Specific Word Instruction
Step One: Choose the Right Words

Ask yourself . . .

1. Is it a word whose meaning students are unlikely to know?

2. Is it a word that is generally useful—a “general-purpose word” that students are likely to encounter across a wide variety of domains?

3. Can the meaning of the word be explained in everyday language, using words and concepts that are familiar to students?

4. What is the word’s instructional potential? Is its meaning necessary for comprehension of the text being read?
Additional Considerations for Instruction with English Learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concrete vs. Abstract</th>
<th>Cognate Status</th>
<th>Depth of Meaning</th>
<th>Utility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can students be shown a picture or image of the word? Can it be demonstrated? Or is it abstract?</td>
<td>Does the English word have a cognate?</td>
<td>Does the word have multiple meanings?</td>
<td>Is the meaning of the word critical to understanding a text?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>veiled vs. reliable</td>
<td>reputation/reputación</td>
<td>party/sheer/composed/determined</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Let’s Try It!

• Read the short essay, *Darkness at Noon*.
• With a partner, choose three Tier 2 words (General Academic terms) for instruction in a middle school classroom with many English learners.
• You will have 8 minutes total time to read and choose words.
• Once you have decided on your 3 words, log in to socrative.com to report your choices. Enter Room # 124585
Specific Word Instruction Routine Step Two: Planning

1. Look up the words in an English learner’s dictionary.
2. Create a student-friendly definition.
3. Find the Spanish translation or cognate if applicable; other languages as well, if needed.
4. Plan an explanation with numerous example sentences.
Use Your 21\textsuperscript{st} Century Toolkit

• Utilize web-based sources for definitions, Spanish translations, and other language translations
• Utilize video or other web-based sources to find public-domain images to help anchor new word learning
• Transfer explanations, examples, and activities for processing and interaction to PowerPoint slide show or other high-impact visual presentation
Recommended Dictionaries & Websites

• Collins COBUILD New Student’s Dictionary  
  www.collinsdictionary.com

• Heinle’s Basic Newbury House Dictionary of American English  
  Online: nhd.heinle.com/

• Longman Dictionary of American English or Longman Advanced American Dictionary

• Online: Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English  
  www.ldoceonline.com

• Merriam-Webster’s Learner’s Dictionary:  
  learnersdictionary.com

• Translations at www.wordreference.com (18 languages)
Vocabulary.com

- Excellent website for word learning
- Has student-friendly explanations of words rather than dry dictionary definitions
- Teachers and students can create custom lists for practice
- Shows multiple usage examples
- Shows the full word family of each word
- Extensive examples of words used in current newspaper sources
- Educator Edition available for increased options; but free version is also fantastic
Identifying Cognates & False Cognates

- Cognates are words from two languages that share a similar spelling, pronunciation, and meaning.
- Cognates with same spelling (*artificial/artificial*)
- Cognates with nearly the same spelling (*extravagant, extravagante*)
- Cognates pronounced nearly the same (*qualities, cualidades*)
- False cognates—word spelled nearly the same and sounding the same but with different meanings (*exit, exito [success]*)
- False cognates but spelled identically (*pan, pan [bread]*)
Cognates and Related Words

Are these pairs cognates? Yes or No

posterity and posteridad
ruthless and despiadado
eternal and eterno
reassure and asegurar
Curriculum Example with Primary Language Support

• Stand-alone lessons support Spanish speakers.
• The lessons provide Spanish translations of every target word, definition, and context sentence.
• Students determine whether the Spanish translation of each word is a cognate or a related word.
Grant from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education
Explaining Cognates
Primary Language Support
Apply It

• Pick one of the high-utility words we identified.
• Use one or more of the recommended dictionary sites to craft a student-friendly explanation for your word.
• Find the Spanish translation (or other language of your choice) for your word. Decide whether the translation is also a cognate.
• Create at least two context sentences for the word.
• Use the blank planning template on page 3 of your handout.
Introducing Words:
A Three-Step Process

1. Provide a student-friendly explanation, as opposed to a formal definition.

2. Provide several contexts in which the word is used.

3. Provide opportunities for students to actively engage with the word and process its meaning.
Reliable/Not Reliable
The Student’s Task

• Pronounce words aloud.
• Engage actively with using and processing the words.
• Engage in oral language activities: EVERY student, EVERY word.
• Engage in written language activities using tools such as
  ✓ Word map
  ✓ Frayer model
  ✓ Other graphic organizer or word-learning template
  ✓ Index cards
  ✓ Vocabulary notebook
  ✓ Personal thesaurus
Process the Words
Word Map 1

- Meaning & Cognate
- Synonym
- Examples
- Antonym

Target word
Word Map 2

Definition in student’s own words

Target word

Synonyms

Use it in a sentence

Draw a picture
Frayer Model

- Definition in student’s own words
- Characteristics
- Examples
- Nonexamples

Target word
Make Response Cards

• On one card, write Yes on one side of the card, and No on the other. Please write as large and darkly as possible.

• Take a second card and fold it into 3 sections. Write A, B, and C on the 3 sections.
New Vocabulary

• converging
• belligerent
• ferociously
converging

• To come together, to meet at a certain point
• Spanish cognate: convergente
• Synonyms for converge: join, combine, contact, meet, come together, make contact
• The opposite of converge is to diverge, so the opposite of converging is ________________.
Examples

- If you hike in the country, you will often see converging paths, roads, and lanes.
- Two rivers or streams can converge into one.
Examples
Your Turn

• If you are driving down a street and you know that three streets are converging into one, what might happen?

• Brainstorm with a partner; A’s go first, then B’s. Use the sentence stem:

• If three streets are converging, ________________________ .

• Write a sentence:

• When several roads are converging, drivers need to ________________________ .
belligerent

• unfriendly and wanting to fight
• bellī = Latin root meaning war
Spanish Cognate

• beligerante
Examples

• The coach turned **belligerent** after the referee called a 20-yard penalty on his team.

• Some people get friendly and easy-going after a few beers; others become angry and **belligerent**.

• The judge told the lawyer that he had better tone down his **belligerent** attitude, or else he would be thrown in jail for contempt of court.
Partner Activity: Synonyms and Antonyms

• Here are some antonyms for **belligerent**: calm, mild-mannered, and agreeable. With your partner, think of at least 3 more.

• Now think of as many synonyms for **belligerent** as you can in one minute.
Your Turn

• Can you think of a situation in which you might have to calm down someone who has become belligerent?

• I might try to calm down someone who was belligerent by ___________.

• I might try to calm down someone who was belligerent by telling her to imagine that her grandmother just walked in the room.
ferociously (adverb)

• Violently dangerous, fiercely, in a dangerous way. Base word: ferocious (adjective)
• Spanish translation: ferozmente
• Example: The winds raged ferociously during the tropical storm.
• Ferocious can also mean very strong and unpleasant.
• Example: The children were scared of their grandfather’s ferocious temper.
Partner Activity:
Synonyms and Antonyms

• Here are some synonyms for ferocious: wild, savage, violent.
• With your partner, think of as many antonyms for ferocious as you can in one minute.
• What animals do you think are ferocious? Brainstorm with your partner and make a list.
Some Ferocious – Looking Animals
Why do dogs bark ferociously?

• Discuss with your partner.
• Use the sentence stem:
• Dogs sometimes bark ferociously because ______

______________________________________________________________
Can you . . .

- Can you scream ferociously?
- Can you eat ferociously?
- Can you sleep ferociously?
- Can you yawn ferociously?
- Can you grab something ferociously?
- Can you write ferociously?
- Can you scratch ferociously?
Your Turn

• One day, I was so ____________ (hungry, angry, itchy) that I ____________(use past tense) ferociously.

• My example:

• One day, I was so angry at my sister that I pulled her hair ferociously.
Wrap-Up

• Which word means aggressive and easy to make angry?
• Which word means joining together?
• Which word means wild and frightening?
• If you constantly argued with other students, would your friends think you were ferocious or belligerent?
• If everyone in the school rushed toward the bathrooms at the same time, would they be converging or ferocious?
Specific Word Instruction Routine
Step Three: Planning Activities for Processing the Words

1. Plan a brief follow-up activity, preferably done with a partner or with whole-class response.
2. Create a structured language frame for those words and usages that will be challenging for English learners.
Instructional Activities

• With a partner, decide on at least one activity which allows students to process the word’s meaning AND create a sentence frame which uses the target word. Fill in the sentence frame with an example of your own. (10 minutes)

• Be prepared to share with the group.
More Examples of Sentence Frames

• For mourn: I would mourn _______________, but I would not mourn __________________.
• For maintain: I would like to maintain _______________ because ____________________.
• For phase: Three early phases of human life are _______, _______, and _____________.
• H₂O in its __________ phase is called water, in its solid phase is called ________, and in its gaseous __________ is called water __________.
Planning Activities for Deep Processing

• Complete a sentence frame in response to a prompt; share with a partner
• Brainstorm a list with a partner
• Thumbs up/thumbs down
• True/false or yes/no cards
• Group oral response
• Group physical response
Beyond Initial Instruction

• Words should be revisited multiple times in different iterations.

• There is no magic number of word exposures that will guarantee word learning for every student.

• Students must use the words and incorporate them into daily discussion and writing activities.

• Brief, daily “warm-up” vocabulary activities provide a context for review and practice (Kinsella).

• Review games can be speedy and fun.
Match each word with its example.

- situated
- imperishable
- nestled
- unsupported
- narrated
- the idea of freedom
- on top of the table, next to the lamp
- a house of cards
- “Once upon a time . . .”
- snuggled in warm blankets
# A Sample 5-Day Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
<th>Homework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday</strong></td>
<td>20 min.</td>
<td>Teach 5 new words using the Routine for Specific Word Instruction</td>
<td>Write definitions, cloze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong></td>
<td>10 min.</td>
<td>Activities to deepen understanding</td>
<td>Review definitions, cloze, matching, puzzle, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday</strong></td>
<td>20 min.</td>
<td>Teach 5 new words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday</strong></td>
<td>10 min.</td>
<td>Activities to deepen understanding</td>
<td>Write sentences or paragraph using words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday</strong></td>
<td>20 min.</td>
<td>Short review activity or game</td>
<td>Quiz on all 10 words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CORE @CABE 2016
Providing Corrective Feedback

• Students generally provide the shortest oral responses possible.
• Prompt students to use target vocabulary words in their responses.
• Prompt students to use complete sentences and academic vocabulary in their responses.
• When students respond with single words, ask them to rephrase their answers in complete sentences using the target word.
• When a sentence frame is provided, insist that students state the entire sentence in their response, not simply fill in the blank.
Corrective Feedback
Six Steps to Success

1. Choose the best words to teach.
2. Use an English learner’s dictionary to plan student-friendly definitions.
3. Create example sentences in multiple contexts.
4. Design activities for active engagement and deep processing.
5. Craft structured sentence frames for oral practice.
6. Design activities for review.
Do’s and Don’ts

• DO encourage students to connect their vocabulary learning to other classes and contexts.
• DO use an image web search to show students additional images relating to text passages and/or specific words.
• DON’T slow down your teaching- instead provide more practice at a brisk pace!
Schoolwide Efforts

• Vocabulary instruction in every content-area class
• Rich oral language in the classroom
• Multiple opportunities for oral practice
• Teacher read-alouds from a wide variety of cultural contexts
• A rigorous program to promote copious quantities of independent reading
Closure: Whip-Around

What new techniques, strategies, or practices will you implement?
Contact Information

For further information about vocabulary instruction, our Tier 2 vocabulary curriculum, or technical assistance, visit www.corelearn.com, or email ldiamond@corelearn.com or lgreenberg@corelearn.com.

Thank you for all your dedication and hard work!