Instructional Strategies

Introduction

English language learners are constantly having to function at high levels of cognition in order to participate and learn in the classroom environment. As a result, it is important that you as a teacher have an awareness of the language acquisition stressors that ELL's confront on a daily basis and know how to support and promote the language and literacy development needs of these students. Adjustments can and must be made to classroom instruction in order to promote students' understanding of the content. These and other key concepts will be reported in this learning module through a series of Texas Education Agency (TEA) powerpoint presentations and credible ESL web links. The powerpoint presentations may be printed for study purposes by accessing the Printable PowerPoints folder located on your homepage. After each powerpoint presentation and/or weblink, you will have the opportunity to work with the information through Check Yourself activities. Now begin the learning process by accessing the next item in your table of contents.
Enhancing Instruction for Second Language Learners
Literacy Development
Second Language Acquisition

Monitor

Motivation

Natural Order

Affective Filter

Comprehensible Input

(Krashen, 1985)
- According to Krashen (1985), there is a distinction between acquiring a language and learning a language. Acquisition is the subconscious process of attaining the subtleties of language and culture. Learning refers to the process by which learners become aware of the “rules” of the target language. Other factors involved in the acquisition of a second language include the following:

- **Input Hypothesis**: states that acquisition of a second language can only be promoted in one way—comprehensible input. Messages must be presented or encoded in a way that the message is easily understood, i.e.: pictures, visuals, gestures, and facial expressions work to make language more easily understood.

- **Affective Filter Hypothesis**: states that students must have a risk-free environment in which to acquire and learn a second language. The needs and emotional states of students will affect whether or not input will be readily available and comprehensible to them.

- **Natural Order Hypothesis**: states that students acquire the rules of language in predictable sequence. According to Lightbrown and Spada (1996, p. 29), developmental sequences are similar across learners from different backgrounds: “What is learned early in one language is learned early by others.”

- **Motivation**: The primary reason most of us learn our first language is grounded in the need to belong to the community in which we were born. A large portion of motivation to learn a second language comes from the same sense of need for acceptance and the desire to interface with the new community or culture.

- **Monitor Hypothesis**: states that the acquisition of a second language involves intuitive judgements about correctness of a language. However, in the process of learning rules are learned to monitor or merely polish written and oral responses. Through this hypothesis, Krashen (1996, p.27) emphasizes that “the focus of language teaching should be communication and not on rule-learning.”
Acquisition vs. Learning

• Acquisition is the subconscious process of attaining the subtleties of language and culture.

• Learning refers to the process by which students become aware of the “rules” of the target language.
According to Krashen (1985), there is a distinction between acquiring a language and learning a language. Acquisition is a subconscious, natural process such as when children learn their first language. Ideally, instruction should provide language acquisition activities in a low-anxiety setting which motivates the student and gives him confidence.

SLLs need a rich language acquisition environment and exposure to language, so that subconsciously they learn the grammatical structure.
Learning in a Second Language

Context Embedded (Concrete)
- Developing survival vocabulary
- Following demonstrated directions
- Participating in hands-on science and mathematics activities
- Making maps, models, charts, and graphs
- Solving math computational problems

Context Reduced (Abstract)
- Engaging in telephone conversations
- Reading and writing for personal purposes: notes, lists, sketches, etc.
- Understanding academic presentations without visuals or demonstrations: lectures
- Solving math word problems without illustrations
- Taking standardized achievement tests

Cognitively Undemanding

Cognitively Demanding

(Cummins, 1981)
Research conducted by Jim Cummins makes a distinction between language used in common interpersonal interactions and the language used in academics. Cummins referred to everyday speech as Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills or “BICS.”

- **BICS** are used most often when topics discussed are cognitively undemanding and context embedded. Gestures, facial expressions, pictures and a sense of “being there” all contribute to the meaning of the messages being shared between individuals.

- According to Cummins (1981), students develop basic interpersonal communication skills approximately within three years after initial exposure to the new language.

- Cummins referred to the use of academic, highly specialized language as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency or “CALP.”

  - **CALP** is used most often when topics discussed are cognitively demanding and context reduced. Few cues are provided to help one determine the meaning of implied messages. This includes the language of the disciplines, the specialized languages of all academic subjects: math, science, social studies...

  - Students develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency within 5-7 years without ESL methods. This process can be accelerated with the use of appropriate ESL teaching methodology.
BICS & CALP

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
BICS
• According to Cummins (1981), students develop basic interpersonal communication skills approximately within three years after initial exposure to the new language.

CALP
• According to Cummins, students develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency within 5-7 years, without ESL methods. This process can be accelerated with the use of appropriate ESL teaching methodology.
Language is Functional

We use it to

– communicate.

– interact.

– transfer important messages.

(adapted from TESOL, 1998)
Language Varies

Language is different for every person according to

• person,
• topic,
• purpose,
• situation,
• regional, social class, and
• ethnic group.

(adapted from TESOL, 1998)
Language Acquisition: An Interdependent Process
Importance of Native Language

The native language serves as the foundation for English language acquisition.

(adapted from the ELA/SLA TEKS)
• Many studies have found that cognitive and academic development in the first language have an extremely important and positive effect on second language schooling.

• (Collier, 1995)
Oral Fluency Levels

- Pre-production
- Early production
- Speech emergence
- Intermediate fluency

(Terrell, 1983)
During the pre-production stage of language development, students remain quiet for some time. They appear to be “sponging-up” the language and subtle processes involved in interpersonal interactions. This is most commonly known as “The Silent Period.” The student can show understanding by

• drawing or pointing.
• using movement or mime.
• During the **early production** stage, students may begin to use one word or short phrase descriptors to communicate. Students can show understanding by
  • answering yes/no questions.
  • providing one word answers.
• During the **speech emergence** stage, students will use short sentences and make more attempts to communicate complete thoughts. Students can show understanding by:
  • using three word phrases.
  • using complete sentences.
  • engaging in extended discourse.
During the **intermediate fluency** stage, students will speak in sentences and phrases with occasional errors in grammar, syntax, or vocabulary. Students can show understanding by:

- giving opinions.
- analyzing and debating.
- examining and evaluating.
- defending and justifying.
- creating.
Where Should SLLs Acquire English?

SLLs develop the four language skills within the context of all content areas.
• SLLs learn content while they are learning English. With knowledge and understanding of SLLs and strategies, content area teachers, as well as ELA teachers, can modify curriculum. They can facilitate language learning by increasing comprehension, interaction and teaching thinking and study skills.

• (Judy Jamison, CAL)
Enhancing Instruction for Second Language Learners
Beginning Stages of Literacy Development
• **Motivation**
  – Determines the extent of the learner's active involvement and attitude toward learning.
  – Increases learner’s desire to learn a language for utilitarian purposes.
  – Drives learner’s desire to learn a language to integrate successfully into the target language community.

  • **Transfer**
  – The application of prior knowledge to new learning situations.
  – The learner perceives what learning is relevant and transferable to other situations.
  – They will find learning meaningful, and the motivation to acquire the skill or knowledge will increase.

  • **The Challenge**
  – To simultaneously enhance transfer and motivation so that they both support learning.
  – To provide an optimal language learning environment.
Phonological Awareness Instruction

- focuses on the sounds in spoken language.
- is auditory and does NOT involve print.
- helps students understand the alphabetic principle.

(Adams, 1990; Ball & Blachman, 1991; Burns et al., 1999; Chard & Dickson, 1999; Snow et al., 1998; Uhry, 1999)
Phonological Awareness

- Phonological awareness is the ability to recognize the sounds in spoken language and how they can be segmented (pulled apart), blended (put back together) and manipulated (added, deleted, and substituted).
- Has been identified as a strong predictor of later reading success.
- An important component of beginning reading programs for ALL students.
- Particularly important for those students identified as at-risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties.
- Can be taught.
- Is related to significant gains in reading and spelling achievement.
Phonological Awareness Continuum

- Phoneme blending, segmentation, and manipulation
- Onset-rime blending and segmentation
- Sentence segmentation
- Syllable blending and segmentation
- Rhyme/alliteration
Phonological Awareness Continuum

• For each of the levels of the phonological awareness continuum, students play with the structures of language without print.

• **Rhyme/Alliteration:** At this level students work with rhyming words and play with similar consonant sounds at the beginning or ending of words. Ex. Dry/sky or Peter piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

• **Sentence Segmentation:** Students are able to “clap out” or discriminate between words in a sentence.

• **Syllable Blending and Segmentation:** Students are able to “clap out” or discriminate between syllables. They can put syllables together to form words, and they can separate words into syllables.
  
  – **Onset-Rime Blending and Segmentation:** Students are able to distinguish beginning sounds (onset) of words with common word endings (rime).
  
  – Ex. b /ig/  p /ig/  d /ig/  w /ig/

  – **Phoneme Blending and Segmentation:** Students are able to manipulate words by playing with segments or sounds. Ex. Change the “bet” in alphabetical to “pig”… “alpha / pig / ical”
Assessing for Phonological Awareness

A good place to start with each new recent immigrant in the ESL classroom is to assess his/her phonological awareness of the English language.
• If students appear to have difficulty with phonological awareness, the teacher can begin direct instruction to help students develop this needed pre-reading skill.

• Students can demonstrate their understanding of phonological awareness in English, thereby giving the teacher useful information to design appropriate instruction.
The Alphabetic Principle

- The sequence of letters in written words represents the sequence of sounds (or phonemes) in spoken words.
- This is the key to learning to read in many languages.
• The alphabetic principal supports the notion that all students should have a firm grasp of letter-sound correspondences. This will allow students to decode words readily and begin to move towards automatic recognition of words with practice.

• With sufficient word recognition, fluency will develop over time, thus increasing the likelihood of comprehension.

• Once they develop phonological awareness and understand the alphabetic principle, students may begin to learn and work with high frequency words with automaticity through a variety of word study strategies.
Word Study Strategies

- Identifying and blending together all of the letter-sound correspondences in words
- Recognizing high frequency and irregular words
- Using common spelling patterns
• Manipulatives can be used to help students blend words and practice letter-sound correspondences. In this procedure, students can move a manipulative for each sound or letter studied in words.

• High frequency words and irregular words should be practiced regularly through a variety of methods such as games, sky writing, cloze procedures.

• Direct instruction in spelling patterns can help students spell with greater accuracy.
Word Study Strategies

- Using structural clues such as compound words, base words, and inflections
- Using knowledge of word order and context to support pronunciation and confirm word meaning

(Adams, 1990; Chard & Osborn, 1999)
• Structural clues such as finding the base word can assist students in decoding words.

• The context of reading can be used to help students determine if they have the right word in mind while reading.
Other Early Strategies

- Decoding words
- Blending
- Making words
- Word sort
- Word walls
The following strategies can be used to help students become more familiar with words and meaning.

- **Decoding words:** Students may practice with manipulatives sounding out words through letter-sound correspondence.

- **Blending:** Students may work to blend letters into words, practicing onset-rime, segmentation and manipulation of words.

- **Making Words:** Students can play games such as Boggle or Scrabble to practice making words.

- **Word Sorts:** Students can take words and categorize them in a variety of ways. They might sort words based on beginning sounds, word meanings, structure or any other attribute.

- **Word walls:** Students can use word walls to find word spellings, share interesting words and to practice words that they are learning. The teacher can use the word wall to reinforce skills and lessons taught in class.
Spelling Patterns

- Spelling patterns are letter sequences that frequently occur in a certain position in words.
- Spelling patterns are also known as phonograms or rimes.
- Words that contain the same phonogram form word families (/ack/: back, jack, lack, knack).
• Common spelling patterns should be taught to help student decode words.
• These spelling patterns occur in words regularly in the same position.
  – The slide provides an example of common rimes. Other rimes may include:
  – at, ot, et, ut, it
  – ick, eck, uck, ock
  – am, im, em, um, om
  – dge, ough, ight
  – and, end, ind, ond, und
Communication Skills

Speaking Skills

You are going to visit a web site that will provide you with information about teaching conversational skills to English language learners. The strategy discussed is role playing. Your definition or idea of what role playing consists of will be expanded as you read the the short narrative and its examples. Now access the link below to learn about role playing teaching tips that increase the conversational skills of ESL learners.

http://esl.about.com/library/weekly/aa122299a.htm

Classroom Guidelines

Next, you will read about guidelines for mainstream teachers with ESL students in their class. These guidelines are informative and would be easy for a teacher to implement. After you have finished reading the guidelines, be sure to participate in the check yourself items. Now access the link provided below and read the guidelines in their entirety.

http://esl.fis.edu/teachers/support/guide.htm