



Using Comprehensive Vocabulary Instruction to Build Academic Language

Presented by Jacqueline Bourassa

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Who's in the room?

- Administrators
- Teachers
- Support staff, such as coaches



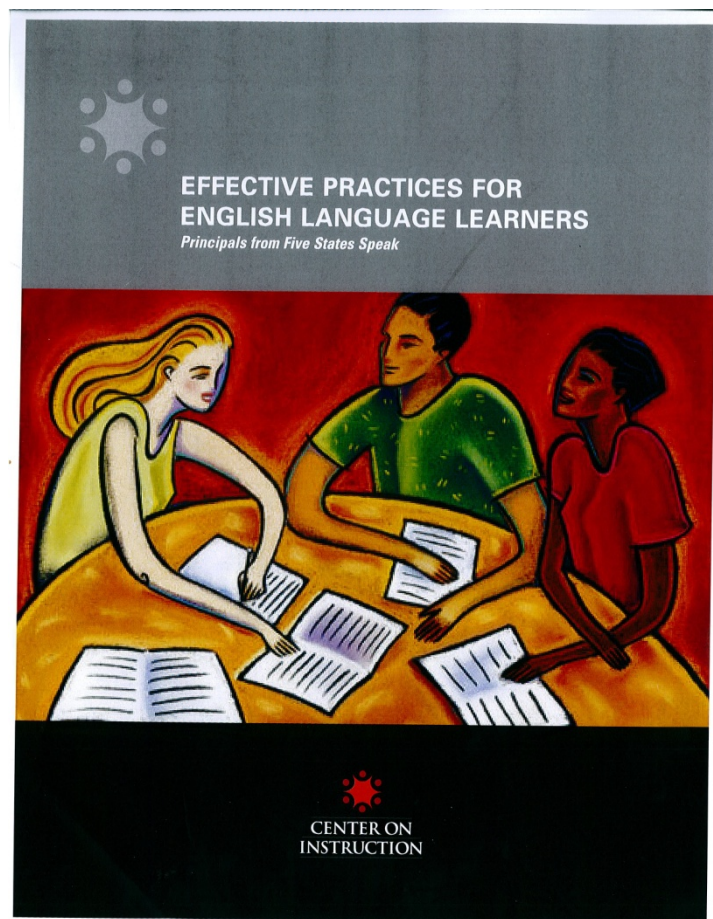
Objectives

To gain a better understanding of the research supporting vocabulary acquisition for diverse secondary students

To build and expand knowledge base of content-based practices that scaffold learning for diverse learners

To review content area vignettes that employ effective strategies for vocabulary acquisition in content classrooms

Foundational document

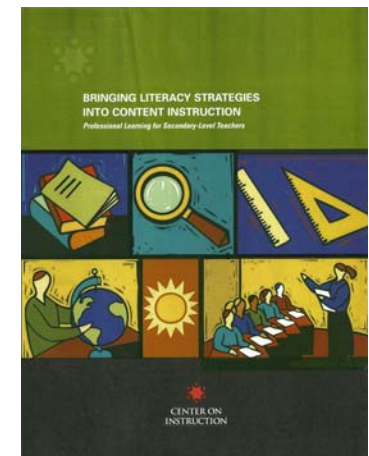


Vocabulary knowledge

- Recognizing words and their meanings
- Pronouncing, understanding, and using words effectively and appropriately

Types of vocabulary

- Oral (speaking & listening)
- Print (reading & writing)



Bringing Literacy Strategies into Content Instruction, p. 13

Language of schooling

Words used in formal, educational setting:

- High-frequency, everyday words (reason, understand)
- General academic words that occur across content areas (respond, category)
- Specialized content-area words unique to a specific discipline (polygon, onomatopoeia)

Feldman & Kinsella (2008)

Specialized academic words

- Used across disciplines
- Not taught in content-based classrooms
- Presumed to be common knowledge

Dutro & Kinsella (2010)

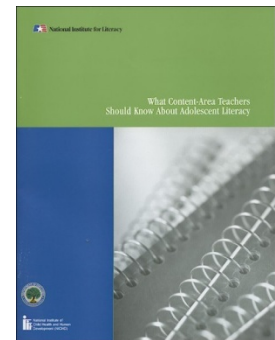
Demands of content subjects

- Literacy demands of each content are unique
- Work is more complex
- Greater demands on student's ability to understand:
 - technical terms
 - sophisticated non-technical language
 - discipline-specific means of communicating information

Shanahan & Shanahan (2008)

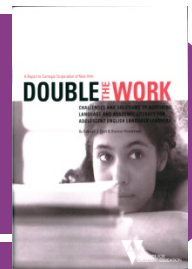
Implications

- Students possess insufficient knowledge of technical and abstract terms
- Students develop misunderstandings about multiple meanings based on context and/or content



What Content Area Teachers Should Know about Literacy, p. 15

Reflection Activity



Individual:

Read/review *Academic Literacy Development for Adolescents: Native English-Speaking Struggling Readers and ELLs* (Figure 3)

Discussion Partner(s):

Discuss the traits your students exhibit

Adolescent English learners

Must develop a broad and deep vocabulary to navigate language:

- Conversations
- Content instruction
 - Texts
 - Writing

Vocabulary knowledge

Highly reliable predictor of English learner academic achievement across subject area domains

Marzano (2004)
Saville-Troike (1984)

Areas of academic vocabulary

- High-frequency, everyday words
- General academic words
- Specialized content-area words

Indirect word learning in content classrooms

- Independent wide reading
- Structured read alouds
- Class discussions

Cunningham (2005)
Kamil (2003)

Research-based recommendations

What Content Area Teachers Should Know about Literacy (2007)

Effective techniques incorporate repeated exposures to unknown word meanings

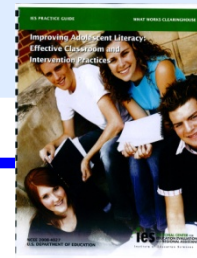
- Use students' prior knowledge
- Teach words directly and explicitly
- Build morphemic knowledge



Improving Adolescent Literacy (IES Practice Guide, 2008)

Provide explicit vocabulary instruction

- Dedicate a portion of lesson to explicit instruction
- Provide repeated exposure to new words in multiple contexts
- Allow sufficient practice
- Teach students word learning strategies



Strategies for word learning

- Dictionaries and related reference tools to confirm and deepen knowledge of word meanings
- Morphemic (word parts) analysis to derive word meanings
- Contextual analysis to infer word meanings
- Cognate awareness (English learners)

Comprehensive vocabulary instruction

Includes:

- Teaching specific words
- Teaching students how to learn words independently
- Helping students to develop an understanding and appreciation for words in many contexts

Baumann, Kame'enui, & Ash (2003)

Direct, explicit, and systematic vocabulary instruction

Instructional steps for teaching difficult content area words:

1. Explain the word meanings.
2. Model usage in sentences that are relevant to the subject matter concepts.
3. Guide students to practice using the words in different sentences and contexts.

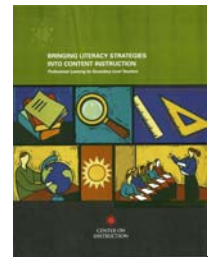
Instructional steps (continued)

4. Provide corrective feedback.
5. Provide time for independent practice.
6. Repeat these instructional steps until students are able to use the new vocabulary independently in their reading, discussions, and writing.

What Content Area Teachers Should Know about Literacy, p. 17

Activity: Instructional Practice

- Select one content area vignette:
 - English Language Arts (p. 25)
 - Mathematics (p. 29)
 - Science (p. 35)
 - Social Studies (p. 42)
- Use the handout to guide your review and note taking



- Share your findings with a colleague who reviewed a different vignette



Effective vocabulary instruction

- Teach individual words
- Teach word-learning strategies
- Provide rich and varied language experiences
- Develop word consciousness

Bringing Literacy Strategies into Content Instruction, p. 14

Valuable tools

Computer technology can be helpful in providing support and reinforcement:

- Hyperlinks
- Online tools – dictionary and thesaurus
- Content-related websites

What Content Area Teachers Should Know about Literacy, p. 18

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