Setting a powerful early foundation of language and literacy for English Learners

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Definition

• Six or more years in U.S. schools
• Not yet reclassified
• Stuck in progressing towards English proficiency
• Tend to be orally fluent in social English
• Reading and writing below grade level
• Insufficient development of primary language
• Struggling academically

Resulting in typical profile

• High functioning socially with weak language
• Often English dominant – think they are fluent
• Discouraged and struggling in classes
• Don’t ask for help
• Don’t complete homework
• Are not readers
• Either stay under the radar, invisible and silent or act out
• Non-engaged and non-participants in class

The continuum: learning English as a second language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 – 3 years</th>
<th>5 - 7 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LTELs STUCK HERE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No English</th>
<th>Oral, social English</th>
<th>CELDT Proficient</th>
<th>CST Basic Proficient for Academic work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Review: Contributing conditions

- Weaker forms of English Learner programs
- No ELD
- Just ELD and no other special instruction or services
- Mainstream placement
- Reliance on core E.L.A. program for language development
- Supposed to be “SDAIE” but doesn’t really happen
- Inconsistent program placements
- Inconsistent program implementation
- Narrowed curriculum
- Use of interventions that aren’t designed for ELs

Review: Need to ensure....

- Clearly defined EL program models (ELD plus access), consistently implemented
- Consistency in placement and EL language approach (no ping-pong)
- Full academic curriculum
- Strategies that promote student engagement as active learners
- Scaffolding instruction
- Interventions designed for ELLs

From the research.....

- Begin with preschool programs
- Active outreach/recruitment to English Learner communities
- Attention to supporting the transition from preschool into kindergarten
- Articulation, alignment between the two systems (preschool and K-12)

From the research.....

- Multiple and frequent structured opportunities for students to be engaged in producing oral language
- Emphasize complex vocabulary development
- Model rich, expressive, amplified oral language
- Identify key academic vocabulary and discourse patterns – and explicitly teach them
- Monitor the rigor and complexity of the language used in text and instruction
- Set a high bar for sophisticated, complex, precise language in both social and academic domains
From the research......

- Intentional language development across the curriculum
- Full curriculum
- Language objectives for content lessons based on analyzing the linguistic demands
- Identify key academic vocabulary and discourse patterns and explicitly teach them
- Home language support
- Home language instruction when possible

Echoing Common Core

- More focus on structured, rich oral language
- More focus on writing
- More emphasis on language in and through social studies and science - a full academic curriculum
- More focus on interaction, collaboration, discussion
- More focus on academic vocabulary and discourse
- More engagement with complex, rigorous text

The SEAL Model

Sobrato Early Academic Language
PreK-3

A Case Example

The Sobrato Early Academic Language (SEAL) model is......

- A PreK-3 model – piloted for Spanish-speaking English Learner children
- Research-based
- Age-appropriate, coherent and articulated preschool through third grade approach that prepares children for academic success in elementary school and beyond.
- The vision is children with high level cognitive, language and literacy skills - and who are confident, motivated, engaged
FOUR PILLARS

Alignment of PreK and K-3 systems
Focus on Academic Language & Discourse
- Oral language
- Biliteracy
- Language development through enriched thematic curriculum
- Text Engagement
Parents and Teachers Working Together: Parent Engagement
Affirming Environment

FIRST PILLAR

Alignment of PreK and K-3 systems
- Summer Bridge programs
- Joint professional development
- Articulation of instructional strategies
- Observation and classroom visits
- Transition activities for students and families
- Outreach from elementary campus to preschool families
- Pre LAS/LAS assessments

SECOND PILLAR

Focus on academic language and discourse
- Development of rich and complex oral language
- Simultaneous development of English and home language whenever possible
- Text-rich curriculum and environments
- Academic language developed through an enriched and full thematic curriculum

Language development throughout an integrated curriculum

High leverage strategies
Academic vocabulary

Thematic Connection
High Leverage Instructional Strategies

- Complex, precise, academic vocabulary
- Structured oral interactions
- Read Alouds
- Narrative/Story Retell
- Children as Readers
- Checks for Comprehension – Adapting Instruction
- Graphic Organizers and visuals
- Dramatic Play
- Children as Writers/Authors
- Collaborative practice/ skills of teamwork
- Language through Arts Infusion

Thematic planning

- Begin with core program themes
- Sort the grade level Science and Social Studies standards
- Develop a yearly thematic plan

Professional development

- CC and ELD Standards
- Standards based planning
- Language assessment (PreLAS/LAS)
- GLAD and PreK GLAD; Dialogic reading; Anti-bias curriculum; writer’s notebook; selecting literature and expository reading materials to support research, inquiry and rich language

THIRD PILLAR

- Environment bridges home and school
- Home-school connection in the curriculum
- Family Science and Literacy Nights
- Parent education
- Book bag/book loan program
- Cadre of parent volunteers focused on language and literacy
FOURTH PILLAR

- Environment reflects children and families
- Parents in the classroom
- Bilingual authors/illustrators
- Focus on building community within classroom – and the language to talk about feelings and experience
- Climate supportive of bilingualism and cultural diversity

SEAL has had a significant impact on parents and on literacy activities in the home

- Majority of SEAL parents participate in literacy-related activities at least a couple of times a week – read books with their child on a daily basis.
- SEAL parents are more likely to engage in literacy-related activities than a national study of parents
- SEAL parents were more likely than Non-PreK (“Partial”) SEAL parents to participate frequently in parent-teacher conferences
- SEAL parent involvement was highly correlated with various measures of children’s language development.

STUDENT IMPACTS

- Statistically significant achievement gains in all academic, cognitive and social areas
- High gains in language and literacy
- Significant rate of progress towards English proficiency (34% moved two levels; 79% one)
- Significantly greater growth than comparison groups of demographically similar in district and state
- Close gap (equal or higher) achievement outcomes
- One year of SEAL provides benefits; benefits are cumulative

English CELDT first grade entry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>318.9</td>
<td>295.7</td>
<td>278.8</td>
<td>357.0</td>
<td>307.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/S</td>
<td>310.8</td>
<td>292.5</td>
<td>272.2</td>
<td>338.9</td>
<td>301.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transfer from L1 to English, and benefit of strong foundation of home language shows by end of kindergarten year
Spanish PreLAS
First Grade Entry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Not fluent</th>
<th>Level 2-3 limited</th>
<th>Level 4-5 fluent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/S EI</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

L1 language loss/gap significant by end of K

English (CELDT) correlated to proficiency in Spanish

The Common Core and SEAL – the match

- Language addressed across the curriculum
- Emphasis on building rigorous, complex academic language
- Oral language skills are important
- Active engagement in discourse, and collaborative/team academic tasks
- Career ready emphasis
- Standards based planning

Infrastructure of support is essential

- Professional development
- Planning and collaboration time
- Materials to supplement (e.g., informational, hands-on, enrichment, bilingual)
Steps

- Put definitions, expectations, data and identification system in place
- Program definition and coherence
- Select a few high-leverage strategies to go school-wide
- Support professional development and collaborative planning
- Ensure adequate materials
- Build by grade-level
- Link CCS and EL work

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