

Problem



I was not prepared to teach English Language Learners.
After completing teacher preparation programs, teachers are not adequately prepared to work with these students (Coady et al., 2016; Hadjioannou et al., 2016)

- I didn't understand the second language acquisition process and language learners
- I didn't know what to assess ELLs on
- I didn't know how to assess ELLs



Agenda



- »» Identifying English Language Learners (ELLs) and the Second Language Acquisition process (SLA)
- »» Understanding levels of English proficiency and TESOL Standards
- »» Factors to consider for instruction and assessment
- »» Identifying the differences between Content and Language Objectives
- »» Designing accessible formative assessments

English Language Learners (ELLs)

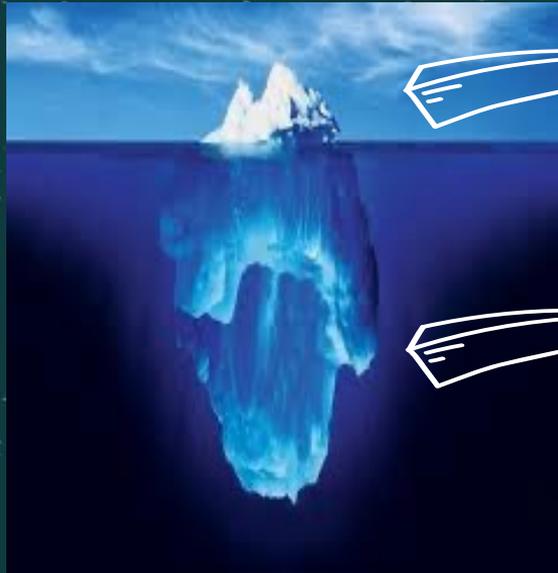


- Are students whose first language is not English. They are in the process of learning.
- Serviced by the English as a New Language (ENL) or English as a Second Language (ESOL) teacher, and content area teachers.

The Second Language Acquisition Process



Incremental process with 5 stages



BICS- Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills

Roessingh (2006) the language of "here and now" (p.94)



CALP- Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

Roessingh(2006) the language of "then and there" (p.94)

Levels of English Proficiency



New York state divides English language proficiency to five levels similar to TESOL:

- Entering- Level 1
- Emerging- Level 2
- Transitioning- Level 3
- Expanding- Level 4
- Commanding- Level 5





TESOL Standards



- Standard 1:** English language learners communicate for social, intercultural, and instructional purposes within the school setting.
- Standard 2:** English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the area of language arts.
- Standard 3:** English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the area of mathematics.
- Standard 4:** English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the area of science.
- Standard 5:** English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the area of social studies.

Things to consider before teaching..



*“Classroom teachers must not underestimate the importance of becoming familiar with the background profile of each ELL prior to beginning classroom instruction”
(Fairbairn & Jones-Vo, 2010, p. 21)*



Educational Background



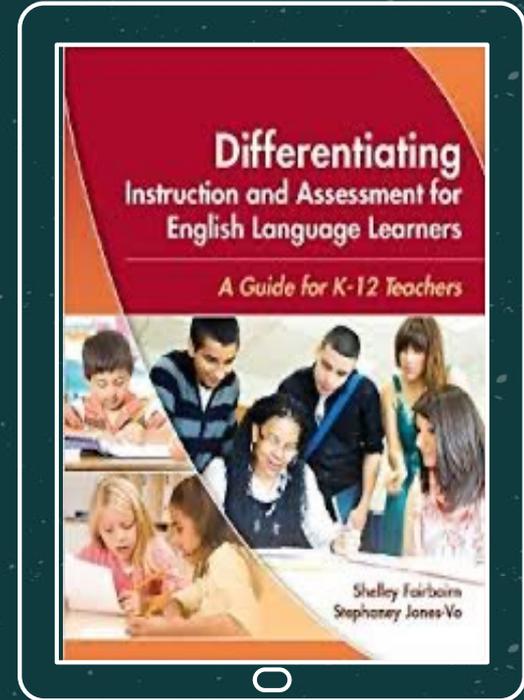
Immigrant and Refugee status



Cultural background and difficult experiences



Age



Educational background



What type of schooling experiences does the child have?

- Uninterrupted schooling with grade level skills
- Interrupted schooling
- No formal schooling



Take into account culture and language

Immigrant and Refugee Status



»» What is the students' immigration status?

*“ Knowing details about each student's background contributes greatly to the quality and appropriateness of support provided to individual students and their families.”
(Fairbairn & Jones-Vo, 2010, p.10)*

Differences between:

- Immigrant- own accord
- Refugee- fear of persecution



Cultural and Difficult Experiences



»» What is the child's cultural background?

- Importance of the Individualism to Collectivism Continuum
Individualistic-personal
Collectivistic- group
- Knowledge of prior emotional and physical trauma



Age



»» What role does age play in language acquisition?

- Younger students have more time to acquire and learn the language
- Older students-have more experience and strategies



Content Objectives



The objectives we are most familiar with, we convert them to “I Can” statements for our students.

Derived from standards

For example:

Students will be able to identify details from the text to support the main idea of the text.

I can cite text evidence to support the main idea of a text.

English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Informational Text » Grade 4

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Standards in this strand:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.1	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.2	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.3
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.4	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.5	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.6
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.7	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.8	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.9
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.10		

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.1

Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.2

Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.3

Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text.

Language Objectives



»» What are language objectives and why are they important?

“Implementing language objectives can be a powerful first step in ensuring that English learners have equal access to the curriculum” (Himmel, 2012)

- Emphasize academic language functions across the 4 language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking)

For example if the content objective is: Students will be able to cite details from the text to support the main idea of the text, the language objective could be:

Students will be able to read a text in order to identify the main idea and supporting details.



Assessment



»» Why are assessments important?

“When teachers of ELs fail to understand the nuances of general language assessment and the intersection of language and content assessment, factors such as inappropriate curriculum and lowered expectations, interact to diminish the academic performance of ELLs.” (Tellez & Mosqueda, 2015, p. 88)

- Assessments are pivotal to learning. They help us support learning and modify teaching to meet a student's need. (Greene, 2019)
- Formative and Summative assessments. Formative assessments allow opportunities for feedback to modify learning. Summative assessments provide final data (Tovani, 2011)



Formative Assessment



Why focus on formative assessment and not summative?

“Formative assessments nurture hope to students, ‘you might not get this yet but you will. Here is something else you can try that might help you understand and improve’.
(Tovani, 2011, p.13)

Essentially, formative assessments are feedback.

Accessible for all students.



“ELLs often find content specific texts difficult to understand; not because they cannot read, but because they are not familiar with the specific content related terminology and writing format” (Smith et al., 2018, p.19)

Accessible Assessment



How do we make assessment and instruction accessible to ELLs?

(Fairbairn & Jones-Vo, 2010; Faulkner-Bond & Sireci 2015; and Ortiz et al., 2018) all concur that these are key to providing access for ELLs:

- Make connections to prior knowledge
- Cultivate vocabulary
- Teach for comprehension
- Provide visual and verbal cues



“When grading, avoid comparing students with each other; grade students according to predetermined standards for success that are aligned with students’ language proficiency level.”
(Fairbairn & Jones-Vo, 2010, p.59)

Conclusion



The overall goal of this professional development was to provide a starting point for teachers of language learners.

3 Important take aways:

- English language acquisition is a process we are all responsible for taking part in.
- Accessibility to instruction and assessment is fundamental for ELLs success in mainstream classrooms.
- Building relationships with families grants us access to the student as a whole.

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Thank you!

