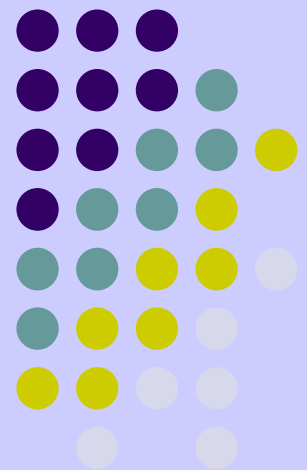


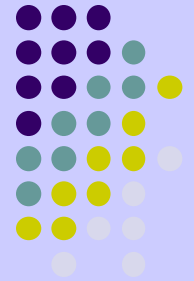


# Developing Literacy in Language Minority Students: Guidelines for Effective Practice

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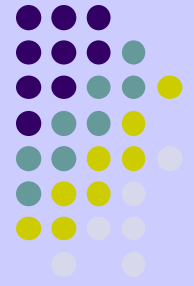
Diane August  
Center for Applied Linguistics  
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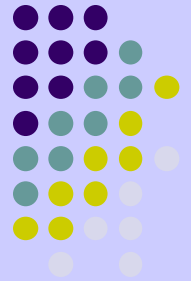
# Overview

- Guidelines based on findings from the National Literacy Panel on Language-minority Children and Youth (August & Shanahan, 2006)
  - The National Literacy Panel was charged with conducting a comprehensive review of the research literature to determine what was known about teaching literacy to second-language learners and to help establish a future research agenda on this topic.
  - The panel of experts conducted extensive searches of the relevant research literatures to identify all studies of the literacy learning of language-minority children ages 3 to 18.
  - Studies conducted between 1980 and 2002.
- To prepare these guidelines we updated the NLP review by including studies focused on instruction conducted between 2003-2007
- Guidelines based on experimental and quasi-experimental studies (a subset of studies reviewed in the panel report)



# Guidelines for Effective Instruction

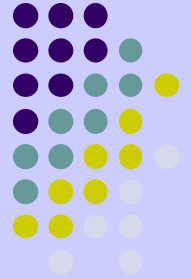
1. Effective Instruction for language-minority children emphasizes the essential components of literacy
  - Explicit instruction in key aspects of literacy – phonemic awareness, phonics, oral reading fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing – provides clear learning benefits for students.
  - Far fewer studies than located by the NRP
    - Phonemic awareness and phonics (9 versus 52 on PA and 38 on phonics for the NRP )
    - Fluency (5 versus 16 for the NRP)
    - Vocabulary (8 versus 45 for the NRP)
    - Comprehension (15 versus 205 for the NRP)



# Guidelines for Effective Instruction

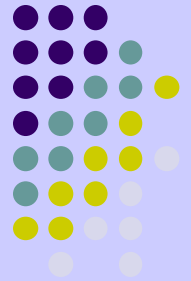
2. Effective instruction for language-minority students is similar to effective instruction for English-proficient students
  - The reason that common instructional procedures would be effective with English learners too is probably because students are very similar no matter what their language background (similar in perceptual skills, memory capacity, ability to learn, etc.), so the roles of modeling, explanation, and practice in instruction are alike in many ways.
  - For example, the phonics programs used published instructional programs or strategies found effective with monolingual English speakers (e.g. Reading Mastery, Corrective Reading, SFA, Jolly Phonics, and Fast ForWord Language).

# Guidelines for Effective Instruction



3. Effective literacy curriculum and instruction for language-minority students must be adjusted to meet their needs .

- However, as similar as learning mechanisms and capacities are, the role of background experience and prior knowledge in learning have been well documented, so the differences that exist in the language and background experiences of English learners must be reflected in the instruction designed for them.

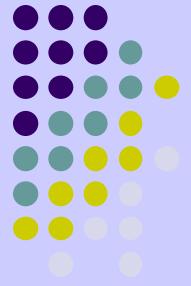


# Guidelines for Effective Instruction

3. Effective literacy curriculum and instruction for language-minority students must be adjusted to meet their needs (cont).

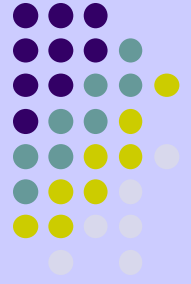
- Examples of adjustments:
  - Building background knowledge or providing experiences or the information students need to understand the lesson (e.g. shared interactive reading)
  - Scaffolding (e.g. using gestures, body language, pictures, objects, graphic organizers to accompany speech; providing a model of a process, task or assignment, before requiring students to undertake it)

# Guidelines for Effective Instruction

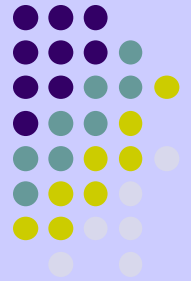


- 3. Effective literacy curriculum and instruction for language-minority students must be adjusted to meet their needs (cont).
  - Reinforcement or revisiting material in ways that differ from the initial encounter (e.g. concept maps)
  - Capitalizing on first language strengths (e.g., previewing content first in the L1; using cognate knowledge to help students access meaning of words in the L2)

# Guidelines for Effective Instruction



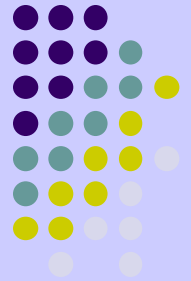
4. Effective literacy instruction for language-minority students is comprehensive and multi-dimensional.
  - Literacy instruction needs to be thorough and complete; that is to say, it should provide adequate instructional attention to all of the skills and knowledge that must be learned (all reading components, all content areas)



# Guidelines for Effective Instruction

4. Effective literacy instruction for language minority students is comprehensive and multi-dimensional (cont).
  - In a study that was part of a series of related efforts, an extensive array of improvements to literacy and language arts lessons were explored (Saunders, 1999).
    - Study examined the literacy learning of language minority students in Grades 2 to 5 who were participating in a Spanish transitional bilingual program
      - careful attention to use and sequencing of two languages
    - Instructional approach included: literature logs, instructional conversations, writing as a process, direct teaching of comprehension strategies, assigned independent reading, dictation, lessons in written conventions, English-language development through literature, pleasure reading, teacher read-alouds, and interactive journals.

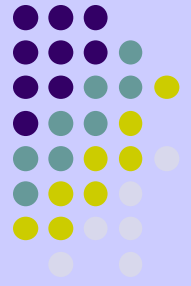
# Guidelines for Effective Instruction



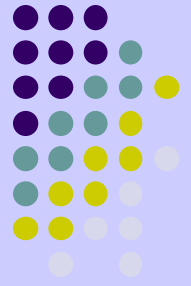
## 5. Effective literacy instruction for language minority students develops oral proficiency.

- It seems clear that, in order to provide maximum benefit to language minority students, instruction must do more than develop a complex array of literacy skills; it must also develop oral English proficiency along with basic literacy skills.
- Examples include: pre-teaching vocabulary prior to the lesson (Perez, 1981); grouping second language learners with fluent English speakers in peer response and conferencing groups and thus providing rich opportunities for students to interact with native English speakers (Carlo et al., 2004); providing additional time after school to read books in English with adult support (Tudor & Hafiz, 1989); using interactive shared reading (Saunders & Goldenberg, 1999; Silverman, 2007)

# Guidelines for Effective Instruction



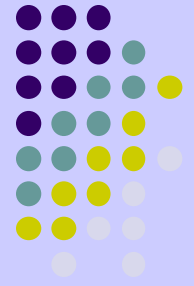
6. Effective literacy instruction for language minority students is differentiated.
  - English learners are a heterogeneous group (e.g., age of arrival in a new country, educational history, socioeconomic status, cognitive capacity, level of English proficiency, reading ability, interests, etc.), and instruction, if it is to be maximally effective, has to be differentiated to address their diverse learning needs.
  - Teaching that provides a variety of reading activities and resources matched to students' levels of second language proficiency and domain knowledge (though maintaining high expectations), and individual attention during instruction all benefit these students, as does increased amounts or intensity of instruction.



# Guidelines for Effective Instruction

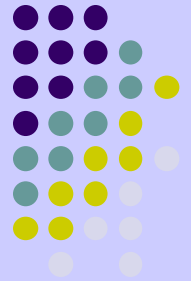
7. Effective literacy instruction for language minority students requires well-prepared teachers.

- Teacher knowledge and skills, the value of supporting teacher development, and the need for support systems that are intensive, elaborate, and enduring have been documented as important.
- For example, in the KEEP writing program (Au & Carroll, 1997), there was intensive mentoring by the KEEP consultants; each consultant worked with only one to three project teachers and observed and mentored in classrooms twice a week over two years.



# Guidelines for Effective Instruction

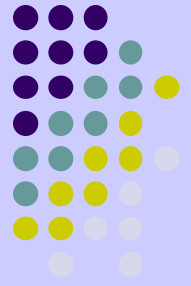
8. Effective literacy instruction for language minority students is respectful of the home language.
  - Five quantitative syntheses show that compared to immersing children in English, teaching them to read in their native language as well as English produces superior results in English reading achievement (Francis, Lesaux, & August, 2006; Rolstad, Mahoney, and Glass, 2005; Slavin and Cheung, 2004; Greene, 1997; Willig, 1985).
  - This does not mean we don't need to systematically teach these students English.



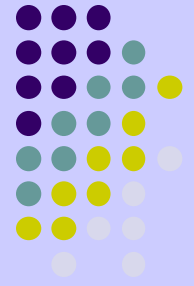
# Guidelines for Effective Instruction

8. Effective literacy instruction for language minority students respectful of the home language (cont).
  - Studies indicate that bilingualism itself does not interfere with academic achievement in either language (Yeung, Marsh, & Suliman, 2000) and has other probable benefits including cognitive flexibility (Nagy, Berninger, & Abbott, 2006; Galambos & Hakuta, 1988; Bialysotck, 2001) and improved family cohesion and self-esteem (Portes and Hao, 2002; Von Dorp , 2001).

# And, also



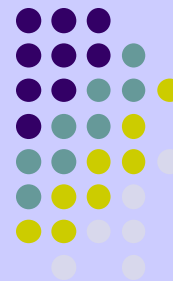
- A key focus of instruction should be on helping students master grade-level content
  - Recent research indicates that educators may not be teaching enough domain knowledge (Duke, 2000; Taylor, Pearson, Clark, Walpole, 2000).
  - Real leverage may be found in the continual, systematic, everyday ways we engage children in learning new knowledge and information, starting in the early years (Glaser, 1984; Neuman, 2001).
  - In an analysis of programs with long-term effectiveness for low-income children, Frede (1998) reported the presence of curriculum content and learning processes that cultivate knowledge and skills, with an emphasis on language development. Children who had a broad base of experience in domain-specific knowledge were likely to move more rapidly in acquiring complex skills.



# Additional Information

- Center for Applied Linguistics [www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org)
  - National Literacy Panel
  - Acquiring Literacy in English
  - Center for Research on the Educational Achievement and Teaching of English Language Learners (CREATE)
  - Optimizing Outcomes for English Language Learners: Project SAILL
  - Testing and Assessment: Diagnostic Assessment of Reading Comprehension (DARC)
- References
  - August, D. & Shanahan, T. (2006). *Developing literacy in second-language learners*. Mahway, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates
  - August, D. & Shanahan, T. (2008). *Developing Reading and Writing in Second-language Learners*. NY, NY: Routledge in conjunction with the International Reading Association and the Center for Applied Linguistics

# Question and Answer Break



Question and  
Answer Break