Teaching English Language Learners to Read

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Two Research Projects

Development of English Literacy with Spanish Speakers
(Funded by NICHD)

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Project ELLA: English Language and Literacy Acquisition
(Funded by IES)

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• Patricia G. Mathes (Southern Methodist University)
Intervention: Three Tier Reading Model

Tier 1: Quality Core
Enhanced general education classroom instruction.

Tier 2: Secondary Intervention
Child receives more intense intervention in, presumably in small groups.

Tier 3: Tertiary
Intervention increases in intensity and duration. Support typically needed across years.

If progress is inadequate, move to next level.
DELLS Study

- Examined Tier 2 Intervention in both English and Spanish in First-Grade
- Only included the most struggling readers (i.e. struggling to read in native language and in English)
Hypotheses

• Some Spanish Speaking children will struggle to become readers, regardless of the language of instruction (English or Spanish).

• What we know about teaching reading to native English speaking struggling readers should apply to teaching native Spanish speaking struggling readers.

• Thus, intervention built on what we know about teaching reading should be effective in either Spanish or English.
The Interventions*

- Primary focus on reading.
- Parallel in Spanish and English.
- English version previously validated as effective.
- 50 minutes per day October-May.
- 1:4 Teacher to Student ratio.
- Provided in addition to normal language arts instruction.

*English = Early Intervention's in Reading (SRA/McGraw-Hill).
Spanish = Proactiva (SRA/ McGraw Hill)
Lesson Cycle

• Story Retell (@10 Minutes)
• Reading Lesson (@35 Minutes)
• Embedded Language Support (@5 minutes)
Story Retell

- Preview the book and assess prior knowledge.
- Make predictions or build background knowledge.
- Introduce 2-4 vocabulary words.
- Read the book out loud.
- Students retell what was read.
- Teacher writes student responses and summarizes.
Early Interventions in Reading Reading* / Lectura Proactiva

- Explicit instruction in synthetic phonics, with emphasis on fluency.
- Integrates decoding, fluency, and comprehension strategies.
- 100% decodable text
- Carefully constructed scope and sequence designed to prevent possible confusions.
- Every activity taught to 100% mastery everyday.

*Researched under the prepublication name of Proactive Reading
Daily Lessons

- Includes multiple strands.
- Amount of new information is kept to a minimum so that children can assimilate it.
- Most of each lesson is review and generalization.
Intervention Comparison

English

• Focus on phonemic awareness segmenting and blending until children are sensitive to phonemes within blends.

• Focus on reading single syllable cvc words before moving into multisyllabic and other syllable types.

• Sounding-out is the primary decoding strategy.

• Children are taught to be "flexible" decoders since English has many irregular words.

• Much time allocated to reading connected text fluently through the reading of decodable stories.

• Basic comprehension strategies are taught and practiced daily.

• ESL inserts ensure that children have the necessary concepts and vocabulary to fly participate in each lesson.
Intervention Comparison

Spanish

• Significantly less phonemic awareness instruction.
• The cv syllable type is given major emphasis.
• Reading multisyllabic words begin almost immediately.
• The phoneme is focused on within syllables within words, but children don’t sound out an entire multisyllabic word phoneme by phoneme.
• Processing words syllable by syllable is the primary decoding strategy.
• Children read much more complex word structures much sooner than they do, in English.
• Spanish text becomes richer much more quickly allowing for the inclusion of more advanced comprehension strategies.
DELLS Outcomes

Significant posttest differences in
• phonological awareness
• listening comprehension
• word attack
• word identification and
• passage comprehension

average $d = .62$ – English
average $d = .50$ – Spanish
Goals for Project ELLA

• To determine which of 2 instructional delivery models (SEI or TBE) is most effective in promoting English language acquisition and literacy.

• To study under what circumstances certain students respond more favorably to a specific model.

• Follow children from kindergarten through grade 3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhanced</th>
<th>Structured English Immersion (SEI)</th>
<th>Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100% English</td>
<td><strong>ESL intervention each year</strong></td>
<td>• Kinder: 70/30*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced</td>
<td></td>
<td>• First: 60/40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical</td>
<td><strong>100% English</strong></td>
<td>• Second: 50/50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Third: 50/50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• ESL intervention each year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Spanish/ English
A 3 Tier Model

• **Tier 1:**
  Regular Language Arts
  (Spanish and/or English)

• **Tier 2:**
  Structured ESL instruction

• **Tier 3:**
  Intervention for struggling readers (started mid first-grade)
Kindergarten and First-Grade Structured ESL instruction (75 Minutes)

- 45 minutes--*Santillana Intensive English*
- 10 minutes--Daily Oral Language using *Question of the Day*
- 15 minutes-- *Story Telling for English Language and Literacy Acquisition* [STELLA]
Second Grade
Structured ESL instruction (90 Minutes)

- 45 min: SRA’s Early Interventions in Reading - Level II
- 35 min: Story Telling for English Language and Literacy Acquisition [STELLA]
- 10 min: Daily Oral and Written Language [DOWL]
Early Interventions in Reading – Level 2

- Moves children from beginning 2\textsuperscript{nd} grade skills to end of 4\textsuperscript{th} grade skills in one year.
- Uses Social Studies content for both expository and narrative text.
- Uses both an anthology and novels.
- Build fluency of multisyllabic word recognition.
- Teaches morphology systematically.
- Continues timed Partner Reading for fluency development.
Level 2 -- continued

• Builds background knowledge carefully, Unit to Unit.
• Uses a few Big Ideas repeatedly (Problem-solution-effect)
• Teaches a few powerful comprehension strategies.
  – Inferencing
  – Main idea (paragraph Shrinking)
  – Self-Questioning
  – Plot Structure
  – Content Webbing
Tier 3:
SRA’s Early Interventions in Reading Level 1*

- Replaced Level 2
- Taught by highly trained paraprofessionals
- Small Groups of 3-5 students.
- 40 minute sessions.
- 5 days a week.
- In addition to core reading instruction.

*Mathes & Torgesen (2005). Listed on What Work Clearing House for ELLs as Proactive Reading – it’s research name
Third-Grade Structured ESL instruction

55 min: Content Reading Integrating Science for English Language Learners [CRISELLA]

35 min: Story Telling for English Language and Literacy Acquisition [STELLA]
Picture Vocabulary Performance

Pre-test | K | 1 | 2 | 3 (proj)
---|---|---|---|---
SEI-E | | | | |
SEI-T | | | | |
TBE-E | | | | |
TBE-T | | | | |

-celebrate our rising stars summit v
"strategies to close the achievement gap"

smu the institute for reading research
Picture Vocabulary Performance: Growth Controlled by Initial Status

Pre-test (proj.) | K | 1 | 2 | 3 (proj.)

- SEI-E
- SEI-T
- TBE-E
- TBE-T
Listening Comprehension Performance

![Graph showing the performance of different groups over time.](image-url)
Listening Comprehension Performance: Growth Controlled by Initial Status
Letter Word Identification (English) Performance

![Graph showing performance over time for different categories: SEI-E, SEI-T, TBE-E, TBE-T. The graph indicates an upward trend in performance from pretest to projected scores.]
Word Attack (English) Performance

Pretest 1 2 3 (proj)

SEI-E SEI-T TBE-E TBE-T
Letter Word Identification (Spanish) Performance

![Graph showing performance over time for different conditions: SEI-E, SEI-T, TBE-E, TBE-T.](image)

- **SEI-E**: Solid black line
- **SEI-T**: Blue triangle line
- **TBE-E**: Red square line
- **TBE-T**: Green triangle line

X-axis: Pretest, 1, 2
Y-axis: 0 to 50
Passage Comprehension (Spanish) Performance

[Graph showing performance over time for different groups: SEI-E, SEI-T, TBE-E, TBE-T]
Work Attack (Spanish) Performance
So what have we learned

• There is substantial applicability about what we know from experimental studies on teaching beginning reading to native English speakers at-risk for reading failure to teaching native Spanish speakers at-risk for reading failure.
Instructional Content

Same categories of early reading content shown are effective for promoting reading competence with ELLS

– phonemic awareness
– letter-knowledge
– word recognition
– vocabulary
– comprehension
Instructional Design

• Strands of instruction are integrated together.
• Prerequisite skills taught before they are needed.
• There logical progression of skills from easiest to hardest
• Easily confused content is separated for a while.
• Skills from various strands become cumulatively more complex in a logical manner
• There is built in cumulative practice
Language of Instruction Determines Sequence of Instruction

• While content categories are the same the way in which instruction is sequenced, and the elements emphasized are different based on differences in each language.

• We are in no way advocating that effective English curricular materials simply be translated into Spanish, or any other language.
In Bilingual Programs -- Teach with an Eye toward Transition

Students being taught in Spanish benefit from:

– some phonemic awareness work
– being taught to read words grapheme by grapheme
In Transitional Bilingual Programs

• Start teaching English sooner than has been typical.
• Provide **Structured** English Instruction starting in Kindergartner.
• Provide careful instruction on how the two languages are alike and different.
  – Sound-symbol relationship
  – Variant spellings
  – Syllable patterns
  – Cognates
Transitioning to English

• English is more obtuse.
• English requires the need to teach more complex strategies for word recognition.
• English has many orthography to phonology inconsistencies
  – silent e-rule
  – 6 Syllable types
  – 18 vowels
  – digraphs representing 1 phoneme,
  – variant spellings for 1 phoneme
  – the need to be flexible with slightly irregular words
Transitioning to English

• Leverage Latin!
  – Show children the connections between English and Spanish directly (i.e., cognates)
  – Spanish is Modern Latin, English is 60% Latin.
  – Leveraging this can greatly facilitate vocabulary learning.

• Morphographs
  – Most prefixes and suffixes are the same or very close between English and Spanish.
  – Using morphographic information also facilitates vocabulary learning.
Instructional Delivery

• Same instructional principals are true for small group and large group instruction.
• Fast paced instruction
• High levels of academic engagement.
Overarching Teaching Routine

• Modeling new content,
• Providing guided practice for students,
• Implementing independent practice.
• consistently monitoring students’ responses,
• Providing positive recognition for correct responses and
• Providing feedback if an error occurred.
Large Group Modifications

• Everybody questions for basic facts.
• Every student paired with a partner for the entire period.
• All question asked to the pair first, then “pair share.”
• Text read chorally and/or as a timed “Beat the Clock Partner Reading” activity.