



English Language Learners

Program Research Base



Wright Group

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English Language Learner

Executive Summary

For an English language learner to graduate successfully from school, he or she must master a variety of text genres, across a wide spectrum of disciplines. There is not only poetry and prose within the standard English curriculum, but a great number of types of informational texts as well, presented in all other disciplines: scientific reports, historical documents, and reference texts. The English language learner must master vocabulary, content, form, syntax, pronunciation, and writing to succeed in education and beyond.

The difficulty for the school system comes into even clearer focus when the diversity of the English language learners' group is taken into account. These students span the full social and world political spectrum, having come from every continent. Some students have been in the American school system for many years and are still unable to pass tests to move beyond the ELL classroom. Other students are literate in their native language and in many respects have more content knowledge than their native English-speaking peers, but are simply new in the country. Within this range are still others who have had interrupted schooling from their native countries and have come to the United States seeking political asylum. All of these students enter the school system at various ages, and all are expected to master English as well as curriculum content.

In addition, the same skills that native speakers master to learn English, must be mastered by the ELL: phonemic awareness, vocabulary, syntax, fluency. And although they must master these skills quickly, they actually need more time than the native speaker because for the ELL, English is a second language. However overriding all other needs, the first need is to master vocabulary. The English language learner cannot master any content unless the student understands the vocabulary first.

For this reason, **Wright Group LEAD21** introduces a six-step Vocabulary Routine to address all of the major components of second-language mastery. The routine magnifies the time spent on vocabulary acquisition so that students gain background for the words, develop phonemic awareness for correct pronunciation, acquire linguistic knowledge to master inflected endings and derivative forms of words, and practice using the words to master syntax.

LEAD21 follows up this vocabulary work with a pedagogically sound instructional model to teach reading comprehension. The gradual release of responsibility model begins with explicit instruction and moves students to independent use of skills to engage comprehension. After pre-teaching key vocabulary, an important character trait, or a step in a science experiment, **LEAD21** practices the following steps to ensure reading comprehension and establish a foundation for writing: Explicit Instruction; Teacher Modeling/Thinking Aloud; Collaborative Use of the Strategy; Guided Practice; Independent Use.

Finally, **LEAD21** incorporates many scaffolding supports for the English language learner to guide the teacher and reinforce student learning.

Developing Language, Literacy, and Knowledge for English Language Learners

Upper elementary, middle and high school students are expected to read and write a wide variety of texts. As students enter middle school, they are expected to read and comprehend not only the variety of literary genre (poetry, novels, essays) but also scientific and technical writing, historical documents, mathematical texts, as well as internet sources and reference texts. This type of reading and writing is complicated enough for mainstream students, but it triples in complexity for English language learners (ELLs) since they are learning new vocabulary, reading skills, and content.

To be successful in school—to graduate with a high school diploma, to successfully enter an institution of higher education, or to find significant employment—ELLs must become proficient in language, literacy, and content knowledge. The challenges facing these students, their teachers, and their schools are tremendous and need to be addressed with comprehensive curricula and instruction.

A recent report from the National Literacy Panel titled “Language Minority Children and Youth” (August and Shanahan 2006) found that the same components necessary to

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successful reading comprehension for mainstream students also become the building blocks for ELL language and literacy development: phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary and background knowledge, and comprehension. However, this panel, as well as the Carnegie Panel on Adolescent ELL literacy, found that ELLs need more time for learning vocabulary and for connecting new words to comprehension of different texts (Short and Fitzsimons 2007).

Reading is about coming to a deep understanding and appreciation of the nature of the subject matter and learning to read texts within content areas from the perspective of a scientist, a mathematician, or an artist (Deshler et al. 2007). Because the demands of text are specific to each discipline, the building blocks of comprehension skills are not automatic and must be taught explicitly to ELLs in order for these to transfer.

Unfortunately, not all ELLs arrive in schools when the basic skills are being taught in the early primary grades. Some arrive in later grades and the building blocks need to start there.

The Diversity of ELLs

English language learners are not a homogeneous group. The students differ in various ways, including level of oral English proficiency, literacy ability in both their native language and English, and cultural backgrounds. English language learners born in the United States often develop conversational language abilities in English but lack academic language proficiency. Newcomers, on the other hand, might need to develop both conversational and academic English.

The amount of education previous to entering U.S. schools helps determine students' literacy levels in their native language. Some learners have limited or no literacy because of the quality of previous schooling, interrupted schooling due to wars or migration, and other circumstances.

Categories of English Language Learners

- Long-Term ELLs
- Newcomers who are well-schooled
- Newcomers who can be classified as Students with Interrupted Formal Education
- Migrant students
- ELLs in Special Education

Given the wide range of English language learners and their backgrounds, it is important that all teachers take the time to learn about their students, particularly in terms of their literacy histories. One similarity these groups share is the need to develop academic English, reading comprehension skills, and content knowledge.

Long-term ELLs. Long-term ELLs (LT ELLs) are students who are in school systems for seven or more years without passing tests that would get them out of the category. These are ELLs who have been in and out of various instructional programs (for example, sheltered English, ESL/content based ESL, ESL pull out/push in, transitional bilingual education, structured English immersion, bilingual special education, and so on) without having benefited from any kind of continuous and sustained instructional support program. They were born and raised and attended U.S. schools since kindergarten. Some might have missed school for extended periods at different times. They are usually below grade level in reading, writing and math, and do poorly on standardized tests.

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Most LT ELLs have the English conversational, social fluency in English but lack the grade-level academic language proficiency (vocabulary, high literacy levels, grammar, and writing) in English to compete with native English speakers and to succeed in mainstream English classrooms.

proficiency (vocabulary, high literacy levels, grammar, and writing) in English to compete with native English speakers and to succeed in mainstream English classrooms. They are often socially, psychologically, and educationally isolated from mainstream students and in urgent need of effective approaches, strategies, and curriculum that will help them catch up to and compete with mainstream students. Their motivation may have been hampered, but can be brought back as soon as they see they can be successful students.

Newcomers. While the LT ELLs are anywhere from 60 to 80% of ELLs in U.S. schools, the remaining ELLs are newcomers. Newcomers are refugees, immigrants, or recent arrivals. Some newcomers have high literacy skills in their native language and can benefit from accelerated language proficiency skills. These well-educated newcomers sometimes know more math, science, world history, and geography than their English-speaking peers. They expect to be challenged through a rigorous curriculum. Other newcomers have had no or very little schooling.

Students with Interrupted Formal Education. Some newcomers at the 3rd through 12th grades are also called Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE). SIFE students usually have limited or interrupted formal schooling from their home countries. They have low levels of literacy and content background knowledge in their home language. Their needs surpass the resources of regular ESL or bilingual programs. The older SIFE will need intensive interventions to catch up with basic skills.

The background knowledge newcomers and SIFE bring to school greatly affects their performance. For this reason, teachers of English language learners should be sure to build background for content lessons rather than assuming that newcomers come with the same background knowledge as mainstream students.

Migrant Students. These students have been migrating from state to state with their parents, following harvesting schedules. In many cases, these are the brilliant students who have so much worldly knowledge that they learn quickly and become the recipients of scholarships to top universities. Their parents have a focused goal of helping them succeed, no matter the cost. In other cases, the struggles for day-to-day living are too overwhelming and students may not have the privilege of systematic

school attendance. Thus, migrant students can be either SIFE, LT ELLs, or the class valedictorian.

Special Education Students. Some ELLs may bring exceptional education needs, as their mainstream counterparts. Recognized disabilities include, among others: specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairment, mental handicap, hearing impairment, serious emotional disturbance, multiple disabilities, visual impairment, and autism.

There continues to be an overrepresentation of ELLs in special education programs and there are still cases in which ELLs are placed in special education programs due to their lack of English proficiency and not due to a learning disability. ELLs experiencing academic difficulties are sometimes placed in special education programs without any specialized services. There are some disabilities that are difficult to define and identify. Unlike physical conditions that are more objectively verifiable, many learning disabilities are still assessed through observation, judgment, or ambiguous tests. The intertwining of English language proficiency with perceptions of disability is deeply embedded. Consequently some ELLs are diverted from opportunities while others fail to get the help they need.

Differentiated Instruction for ELLs

Because of the range of language, reading, writing, and subject matter knowledge that ELLs bring to the classroom, it is absolutely necessary to provide differentiated instruction at every grade level. Their oral language proficiency will vary considerably but so will their reading and writing skills. The speed of learning also varies widely. Notwithstanding, each student will need ample vocabulary instruction, reading strategies, and writing mechanics. Most states categorize ELLs across these English language proficiency levels: pre-emergent, emergent, intermediate, advanced, fluent with monitoring. The States using WIDA (World-class Instructional Design and Assessment) use the categories of entering, beginning, developing, expanding, and bridging. These categories help teachers differentiate their instruction.

Elements of Linguistics	Corresponding Elements of Literacy
Phonetics, phonics	Phonemic awareness, phonics, spelling
Morphology, semantics, syntax, contrastive linguistics	Word study, spelling, vocabulary, grammar/usage/mechanics, cognates
Discourse	Fluency, writing strategies, formal vs. informal speech writing
Sociolinguistics	Appropriateness of language, cultural factors
Pragmatics	Understanding idiomatic language, using comprehension strategies, such as making inferences, drawing conclusions, and making connections

For this reason, the **LEAD21** program integrates elements of linguistics and corresponding elements of literacy, along with key vocabulary for a particular theme or subject matter.

The main goal of the ELL strand in LEAD21 is to help students learning English develop the vocabulary, language and literacy skills needed for academic success. The four language domains, listening, speaking, reading and writing are based on the findings that “language, literacy, and knowledge accelerate when they are integrated, and a large chunk of instructional time is given to vocabulary development” (Calderón, 2007a 2009).

Vocabulary Instruction for Reading Comprehension

The main difference between literacy instruction for mainstream students and ELL instruction is the attention given to vocabulary instruction. Extensive explicit vocabulary instruction is the basis of ELL learning. Without knowledge of words, there can be no comprehension, and no meaning derived from any lesson that is presented. Without understanding 80 to 90% of the words in a sentence, or in a paragraph, a student cannot grasp the story grammar or concepts to be learned, much less enjoy reading or being read to. Without academic vocabulary that deals with science, math, social studies, and literature, ELLs cannot keep up with their subject-matter classes.

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Word knowledge correlates with comprehension (Beck et al. 2002; Snow et al. 2007). Comprehension correlates to learning in all subjects, and that correlates to test results. The larger the vocabulary, the deeper the comprehension, and consequently, the higher the test scores (Calderón et al. 2005). Research has shown that vocabulary and background knowledge are robust predictors of reading comprehension (Nagy and Stahl 2006; August, Dressler, and Snow 2005; Hiebert and Kamil 2005; Calderón 2007a; 2007b).

Word knowledge is also the basis of background building. Vocabulary must be introduced before discussing student background knowledge or introducing a topic, so that ELLs will have words to share their background knowledge and to learn the new information being presented.

In summary, when key words are taught at the beginning of a lesson, ELLs:

1. Understand and can express in simple terms the background knowledge for a specific topic or text to be read.
2. Understand the words they read and think clearly about the context in which those words exist as they read the text.
3. Understand and use the key vocabulary that will be used throughout the lesson in discussions, which includes understanding grammatical structures.
4. Use those key words in their writing.

Instructional Strategies

Many of the instructional strategies used to teach vocabulary to mainstream students are also effective with ELLs; however, they must be adapted to meet the strengths and needs of ELLs (August and Shanahan, 2006). Adaptations to ELLs include the following steps:

- Teach important words before reading, not after reading.
- Teach as many words as possible before, during and after reading.
- Teach simple everyday words (Tier 1 words), along with information processing words (Tier 2), and content specific/academic words (Tier 3).
- New words must be used within the context of reading, talking, and writing as soon as possible (Calderón et al., 2005; Calderón, 2007b).

LEAD21 integrates vocabulary throughout each segment of the lesson. The following elements of instruction enable a cycle of effective, explicit instruction and subsequent ability of ELLs to immediately apply content for mastery.

- **Background building for the inquiry.** Before presenting a lesson or discussing background knowledge, or the purpose of the lesson, ELLs need key vocabulary to understand what the teacher is saying. Three or four words can be presented that will benefit all students. Additional words can be on cards, props, or small scenarios at students' desks to follow along as the teacher is presenting the lesson. It is important for ELLs to be part of the whole-group presentation -they need to be exposed to academic English and use discourse strings, questioning patterns, and more vocabulary. Teacher think-alouds are very helpful here, not just to model strategies, but to expand on concepts and words.
- **Time frames.** ELLs will need more time with the teacher to master the key words for a lesson. They also need more time to practice those words in context during discussions, when they are reading, and when they are writing.

- **Vocabulary.** Explicit instruction on vocabulary for ELLs becomes a seven-step process, and is better taught in small groups for the benefit of whole-class time and ELL individualization:

1. Teacher says and shows the word.
2. Teacher asks students to repeat the word 3 times.
3. Teacher states and shows the word in context from the text.
4. Teacher provides the dictionary or glossary definition(s).
5. Teacher explains meaning with student-friendly definitions.

Example of Seven-Step Process for Teaching Vocabulary	
Teacher Directions	Example
1. Say the word.	1. One of the highlighted words in this lesson is <i>environment</i> .
2. State the word as it is found in the context of the text.	2. The text says, "Plants have adapted to many different environments."
3. Provide the glossary or dictionary definition or key definitions.	3. The glossary defines it as, "the living and nonliving things that surround organisms."
4. Provide another example of the word in a way that clarifies the word's meaning in student friendly terms.	4. Our environment is everything around us.
5. Ask students to repeat the word at least three times to build phonological representation of the word and model pronunciation.	5. Say <i>environment</i> with me three times.
6. Provide students with an oral language activity to build understanding of the word's meaning and use. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to talk to a partner about the word. Call on volunteers to share their partner's responses. • Ask students to use pictures or gestures when describing a word's meaning to a partner 	6. Look around the classroom. Use complete sentences to tell a partner what items are part of our school environment. (Provide wait time.) What did your partner say?
7. Highlight an aspect of the word (e.g., spelling, pronunciation, tense, cognate, affixes).	7. Let's spell the word together. Now, let's pronounce it. Do you see how the pronunciation of this part /viornment/ is different from the spelling? Let's pronounce it again.

6. Teacher engages 100% of the students in ways to orally use and own the word/concept (turn to your partner and share how...; who wants to tell me what your partner said, and so on). Writing the word, drawing, or other word activities can come later after reading. First, students need to use the word orally, several times in a variety of ways.
7. Teacher ends by highlighting an aspect of the word: spelling, multiple meanings, cognates/false cognates, prefixes, suffixes, base words, synonyms, antonyms, homophones, grammatical variations, and so on. Students will come back to do more word study on what was highlighted later on. The seven steps should be mainly oral production on meaning, and exposure to the written word in context.

After Pre-Teaching Vocabulary, Students Need to Read It and Discuss It

ELLs need to read, discuss, and start some writing right after the vocabulary instruction in order to support student recall and anchoring of the new words just learned. For ELLs in beginning stages, the text to be read should be chunked into smaller segments than those being read by mainstream students. This way, students are reading something different every day but are engaged in greater analysis and application as they learn and apply new vocabulary, grammar, and writing. Repetitive reading of the same long passages does not help ELLs develop fluency nor comprehension. Reading needs to be processed in smaller chunks in order to focus on strategy development. Some comprehension strategies, such as making predictions are very difficult for ELLs without the words, sentence starters, or discourse protocols for making and testing predictions.

- **Teacher Modeling Think Alouds.** When teachers do think alouds on strategic reading (for example, rereading, decoding, self-questioning) ELLs apply a strategy immediately with a partner. This reinforces the knowledge of the strategy and gives teachers an opportunity to check the appropriate use of those strategies.
- **Teacher Modeling Reading Aloud.** As teachers model reading aloud, ELLs can shadow read to practice fluency and prosody. Modeling and shadow reading a few lines or one paragraph is sufficient, but not for a whole story or text. ELLs need modeling for intonation, pronunciation, word recognition, but they need to try it on their own as well. Poetry is a great resource for ELL fluency and appreciation of the language.
- **Partner Reading** is most effective immediately after the teacher models, when a strategy or flow of the narrative is fresh in their minds. Partner Reading is effective with peers of either similar or more capable abilities. Either way, it works. Teachers first model how to conduct a partner reading strategy that works best for a specific text (for example, alternating sentences, summarizing after a paragraph).

- **Cooperative Learning** gives students opportunities to practice their new language in safe contexts with peers. Students can work in pairs, triads, or fours. Most activities lend themselves to cooperative learning.
- **Writing.** Small pieces of writing need to be introduced on a daily basis—story-related writing or expository-related writing after having read a text. Lots of patterns and free writing using the same topic and vocabulary are also helpful.

Small-Group Instruction

- **Vocabulary instruction.** In small-group work, the teacher can elaborate and expand on key vocabulary for the inquiry.
- **For example:** Tier 1 words that native English-speaking students typically already know as a result of their exposure to English from early childhood (*butterfly, bug, find, home, school*), may be unknown to ELLs. They often have concepts for these words in the native language and can learn English labels for them through routine ESL (English as a second language) instructional techniques (pointing to a picture of a butterfly while naming it).

The teacher can also highlight the Tier 2 words that make up the general academic vocabulary ELLs will need to access the concepts and knowledge, and that have the same or similar meanings across multiple content areas: such as, *function, system, conclusion, cumulative, evidence, represent, predictions, characteristics*. They can also be divided into several more specific linguistic and contextual categories that cause particular difficulty for ELLs:

A. Polysemous words: Words that sound and are spelled alike, but have a precise and specific meaning in an academic context (the 7 meanings of trunk; argue as in scientists argue that there is more than sufficient evidence for global warming, contrasted with a general or less precise meaning in everyday usage; for example, *He argues with his dad often*).

B. Homophones: Words that sound the same but are spelled differently and have different meanings (*sum/some, cell/sell*).

C. Compound words and phrasal words or idioms: Compound words are difficult to pronounce (output, highlight), and phrasal words or idioms which have figurative meaning (*no matter what; break a leg*).

D. Multisyllabic words: (*analytical, unrecognizable*).

E. Word derivations: (*analyze, analysis—which are also cognates: analizar, análisis*). Derivations include prefixes and suffixes (inconsistent, interdependence).

F. Transition words/connectors: due to, since, besides, therefore, for instance.

G. Spanish/English cognates: These words can be helpful for Spanish-speaking ELLs. However, if the concept of cognates and how to use them is not explicitly taught, then students tend to ignore their value (*process/proceso; osmosis/osmosis; interdependent/interdependiente*).

Ensuring Reading Comprehension

LEAD21 uses an instructional model based on sound research to teach comprehension strategies. The gradual release of responsibility (Pearson and Gallagher 1983) begins with explicit instruction and moves students to independent use of the strategy. The components of the **LEAD21** instructional model for effective reading comprehension include sample instruction for each step. These steps are summarized here with specific strategies, which help ELLs develop language and reading skills.

After pre-teaching key vocabulary that will help the ELLs understand the plot, an important character trait, or a step in a science experiment, the following instructional steps help ensure reading comprehension and a foundation for writing.

Step 1: Explicit Instruction. In this first step, the conversation is teacher-led, while students listen. In Step 1, the teacher explains what the strategy is (that is, its name and its definition), why it's important, and when readers might choose to use the strategy. There should be some sort of accountability built in for their listening, and at least twelve production opportunities, such as a pair/share or a whiteboard response. This step takes place within the whole group or within the small group during small-group reading.

Step 2: Teacher Modeling/Thinking Aloud. Seamlessly flowing from Step 1, the teacher shares an example of what the strategy looks like in actual operation. The teacher does this using a common text that is visible to everyone: big book, transparency, shared little books. Teacher modeling takes place within the whole group or within the small groups during small-group reading. Thinking aloud is an important part of modeling, as it makes one's thinking audible. A think-aloud is a demonstration of thought processes: the person says what he or she is thinking as he or she performs a task. During the think aloud, the teacher also emphasizes key words that ELLs will need to remember and use, or provides additional background knowledge. The teacher models with a small text sample, then asks students to do the same with the following sentence or two.

Step 3: Collaborative Use of the Strategy. With Step 3, the teacher invites students to contribute their questions and observations to the modeling. The teacher guides them carefully through questions and comments that lead readers to effective use of the strategy. Teachers should encourage students to think aloud and share their use of the strategy. Research shows that when students think aloud, they maintain focus. It is most important that ELLs also practice this strategy right away with a peer while the teacher listens or asks for students to share examples.

Step 4: Guided Practice. With this step, the teacher begins to release the responsibility for using the strategy to the students. The teacher supports students as they begin to use the strategy. He or she monitors and evaluates students' level of proficiency, determining when they seem ready to move on to doing this on their own with a new segment of text or new text. The teacher may set students to read independently or in pairs (small groups at the beginning of the year for newcomers may be overbearing), and then listens in while they read and use the strategy and the pre-taught vocabulary for that strategy. Teachers might also ask readers to write down their questions or other indications of strategy use and then review them to monitor their use of the strategy.

Step 5: Independent Use. Unlike Steps 1–4, independent use of a strategy will occur in independent reading settings. In principle, the teacher should never simply assign independent work to the whole group. The teacher uses the whole group and guided reading sessions to teach, model, and guide practice of the strategy. Teachers then give students encouragement through important tips, questions, and reminders, which help them effectively apply the new skills and strategies.

The Teacher	Mainstream Students	ELLs
I do steps 1 and 2	You watch	You watch, then do
I do step 3	You help	You help and use my words
I do step 4	You do	You do with peers, I watch
I do step 4-5	You do	You do

As the teacher and students move along, instruction and practice with a particular strategy changes. The instructional periods become shorter, while students do more and more of the work using the strategy. ELLs need to be challenged to apply the strategies on longer and more challenging texts. The following chart is a quick way of thinking about how the Gradual Release model of instruction works.

The reading comprehension strategies that benefit native English speakers are the same strategies ELLs need to develop: *predict, determine important information, summarize, make inferences, visualize, ask and answer questions, make connections, and monitor comprehension*. However, ELLs cannot be expected to make predictions, inferences, or visualize if they don't know 85–90% of the words necessary to understand or to express that prediction/inference or to form mind-movies. They will probably also have difficulty making connections to certain prior knowledge that is not part of their culture or schooling experiences.

Essentially, it is easier for ELLs to begin with *asking and answering questions, determining important information, summarizing, and monitoring comprehension* while they are practicing the former three strategies.

Grammar, Word Study, and Writing

Writing is the fourth component of second-language instruction. It is not to be left for a later time when students are more proficient in English. On the contrary, ELLs need to begin writing from the moment they begin their English instruction. Even at the pre-emergent, emergent, or entering, beginning stages, students can begin to practice writing the words, phrases, and sentences they are learning and reading. They will mostly follow the models they are seeing, but eventually, they will find their own voices and begin to be more original in their writing. In order to progress efficiently from one level to the other, they will also need explicit explanations of the structure of English along with patterns of writing.

Writing is the fourth component of second-language instruction. It is not to be left for a later time when students are more proficient in English.

Structures That Make Speaking and Writing Difficult for ELLs

Grammar. The grammatical structures, spelling, and arrangements that may pose difficulties for ELLs can be highlighted in small groups on a daily basis rather than on only one day:

- a. Spelling
- b. Long or multiple prepositional phrases
- c. Compound and complex sentences
- d. Nominalization and long noun phrases
- e. Passive voice structures

Spelling. As ELLs are progressing through language and reading proficiency, they are also going through stages of spelling development. Misspellings reveal the following characteristics that help to determine the emphasis of your instructional strategy:

- phonemic contrasts between the student's primary language (fit for feet),
- substitute with a word they know (fish for faith),
- may omit middle and ending syllables (the ng from sing, or the ed from rushed)

Long noun phrases or prepositional phrases. A prepositional phrase is a preposition followed by a noun phrase. These are also categorized as Tier 2 words/phrases. In the upper grades, academic texts typically contain several prepositional phrases within a complex sentence (sentence with multiple clauses). Simple sentences with prepositional phrases such as: *according to, aside from, away from, because of, due to, in front of, instead of, such as, up to* need to be broken up for students to understand.

Frequently used phrasal prepositions:

- according to
- aside from
- away from
- because of
- due to
- in front of
- instead of
- such as
- up to
- at least
- before long

Idioms ELLs might encounter in content texts. Idioms are very culture specific. Idioms such as *make up your mind, hit the books, break a leg*, may seem obvious to native English speaking students but not to ELLs because they can convey different interpretations.

Passive voice. In a passive voice structure, the verb phrase includes a form of “be,” “get,” or “become” plus a past participle verb form.

Interaction and Cooperative Learning

Teacher-Student Talk. One of the most important features of research-based instruction for ELLs is ample opportunities for teachers and students to discuss the ideas in texts. These discussions are largely directed and modeled by the teacher who poses meaning-based questions for the students to answer. The teacher’s questions reflect what the teacher anticipates to be challenging about the text (complex or unfamiliar ideas, other vocabulary, support features such as maps and graphs that require interpretation). Discussion-based approaches to text comprehension should not be the typical “elicitation, response evaluation” pattern, but instead, open questions that invite multiple

responses. The teacher's responses are contingent upon the students' contributions to the discussion, and there is a preponderance of student, rather than teacher, talk.

Peer-Discussions. Using strategies such as Think-Pair-Share or Buddy-Buzz gives ELLs an opportunity to clarify their thoughts, practice their language structures, and help each other construct better responses to teacher questions. Carefully designed cooperative learning strategies for teams of four or more provide a safe context where students can learn from each other and from fluent English speakers. Heterogeneous groups for inquiry projects are ideal for accelerating language and knowledge. One must be cautious in ensuring that ELLs are not assigned menial tasks but instead are assigned challenging and exciting tasks that engage them in learning and practicing their English.

Other Scaffolding Supports for ELLs

There are several types of supports that teachers can use to help students comprehend and build a strong knowledge base. These are some of the most common:

- **Sensory:** Use real-life objects, manipulatives, pictures/photographs, DVDs, internet.
- **Graphic:** Use charts, graphs, cognitive organizers, semantic webs/maps, timelines, tables.
- **Use of primary language:** when possible and necessary use the primary language as a scaffolding strategy; however, do not create a dependency on translation. Once the student has been assisted with the primary language, either by an adult or a peer, it is important that the ELL also be held accountable for using the appropriate word or phrases in English for the concept that has been translated. Cognates are words that come from the same roots, such as observation in English and *la observación* in Spanish. Cognates are a great tool because they illustrate contrasting sounds of two languages, spelling conventions, and help to clarify meaning. A student might recognize a cognate such as substitution/*substitución* but may not know the concept. Therefore, it is important to teach the meaning.
- **Interactive:** Form pairs, triads, foursomes, whole-group interactive activities where everyone is participating in cooperative learning strategies such as jigsaws, concentric circles, treasure hunts, and so on.

ELL instruction and support is embedded throughout the program—in student materials, and in the Teacher’s Lesson Guide.

- **Student materials** provide strong visual support for concepts, labels to support language acquisition, and on-page word substitutions to support comprehension.
- Within the **Teacher’s Lesson Guide**, ELL instruction is embedded within the main instruction. Whole-class instructional strategies that are particularly effective for students learning English are identified at point of use. Sidebar notes provide additional support for skills, strategies, and cognates.
- The **ELL lessons** that appear in the Teacher’s Lesson Guide, provide cooperative learning strategies, general strategies for ELL instruction, and strategies for working with students from several primary language backgrounds and who subsequently have a range of proficiencies in English. The lessons also include a lesson for every leveled selection for the Differentiated Readers (Intensive, Strategic, Benchmark, and Advanced). These selection-specific lessons use the following routine:
 - 1. Introduce:** background and concept building, taking into account cultural differences; vocabulary instruction using Calderón’s seven-step model
 - 2. Model:** teacher reads the selection aloud, modeling strategies, new language structures, and on-the-spot vocabulary at point of use; ELLs then immediately apply the think aloud with a peer
 - 3. Guide:** students read selection in pairs, and individually as teacher guides and coaches
 - 4. Respond:** partner and group discussion of selection using basic and open-ended questions to address ELL diversity, and these are accompanied by discourse protocols/question stems that ELLs will need in order to respond or formulate questions

Conclusion

Today's English language learner enters school with wide varieties of school, social, and political backgrounds. Too many of these students end up in special education classes because their needs are misunderstood. While a certain percentage of this population is certainly in need of special education, this number is no greater than the numbers from the native-speaking population. The vast majority of English language learners cover the same range of abilities as their native English speaking counterparts. Therefore, addressing the broad needs of today's English language learner is central to educators' concerns and as such is addressed throughout LEAD21. No matter what background the student comes to school with, no matter the depth of his or her native-language literacy level, LEAD21 offers support at that level. The student materials at every level offer labeling to increase accessibility to the content. Support for the teacher is provided at every grade level throughout the Teacher's Lesson Guide with point-of-use notes. Broader support is supplied through the ELL lessons. LEAD21 addresses the needs of English language learners at every level of proficiency and no matter what age the student enters the school system

LEAD21 English Language Learners Instructional Pedagogy

Research Says	LEAD21 Delivers
A recent report from the National Literacy Panel titled “Language Minority Children and Youth” found that the same components necessary to successful reading comprehension for mainstream students also become the building blocks for ELL language and literacy development: phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary and background knowledge, and comprehension (August and Shanahan 2006).	<p>Features to address all these components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preteach Differentiated Vocabulary heading supports students’ vocabulary acquisition. • The 7-Step Vocabulary Routine includes in Step 3 glossary definitions for all vocabulary. • Step 4 in the Routine provides a student-friendly definition to aid comprehension. • In Step 5 students repeat new words three times to develop phonological awareness. • Step 6 of the vocabulary routine develops background knowledge for vocabulary.
The National Literacy Panel, as well as the Carnegie Panel on Adolescent ELL literacy, found that ELLs need more time for learning vocabulary and for connecting new words to comprehension of different texts (Short and Fitzsimons 2007).	The 7-Step Vocabulary Routine magnifies the teaching of vocabulary so that students get the amount of time they need to absorb new words.
The four language domains, listening, speaking, reading and writing are based on the findings that “language, literacy, and knowledge accelerate when they are integrated, and a large chunk of instructional time is given to vocabulary development” (Calderón, 2007a 2009).	An ELL lesson that incorporates all of these strands. Speaking and listening are covered under the headings Build Background and Preview/Set Purposes. Reading is supported with Guide Comprehension and Check Comprehension. Writing is often required under the Respond headings’ activities.
Vocabulary and background knowledge are robust predictors of reading comprehension (Stahl and Nagy 2005; August, Carlo, Dressler, and Snow 2005; Hiebert and Kamil 2005; Calderón 2007a; 2007b).	A unique 7-Step Vocabulary Routine addresses the specific needs of English language learners.
Many of the instructional strategies used to teach mainstream students are also effective with ELLs; however, they must be adapted to meet the strengths and needs of ELLs (August and Shanahan, 2006; 2008).	<p>An ELL-specific lesson presents the same steps of the instructional plan as presented to native English speakers, but the steps are broadened and deepened to meet the pedagogical needs of ELLs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare to Read: Build Background, Preteach Differentiated Vocabulary, Preview/Set Purposes • Read: Model, Guide Comprehension, Check Comprehension • Respond and Write
The gradual release of responsibility (Pearson and Gallagher 1983) begins with explicit instruction and moves students to independent use of the strategy.	LEAD21 ELL instruction begins with explicit (Introduce Comprehension Strategy) and guided instruction (Guide Comprehension) and releases responsibility to the students in Respond and Write.

Author Biography

Dr. Margarita Espino Calderón has spent forty years concentrating on ESL education both in the classroom as a high school teacher, at the administrative level as a professional development coordinator, in the field as translator at the American Embassy in Mexico City, and at the university level researching and teaching. She is currently Senior Research Scientist and Professor of Education at Johns Hopkins University and a visiting lecturer at the Universities of Hawaii and Guam. She is the recipient of numerous honors including a 1990 Outstanding Accomplishments in Excellence in Education award, conferred by President George Bush. In 1994 she was cited for Outstanding Contribution to Educational Leadership by the University of Texas, and in 1998 she was the International Business and Professional Women's Woman of the Year. Dr. Calderón has been honored to serve on numerous professional research panels: The National Carnegie Panel on Literacy for Adolescent English Language Learners; The National IRA Panel on Literacy for English Language Learners; the Reading Is Fundamental Multicultural Advisory Group; The National Literacy Panel for Language Minority Children and Youth, by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, and the National Institutes of Health; The George Washington University's Advisory Board Preparing All Administrators, Counselors, Teachers to Work with Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students. Dr. Calderón's recent publications include articles in the Handbook of Literacy and Research on Literacy Instruction: Issues of Diversity, Policy and Equity. The International Reading Association has published her writings in English

Learners: Reaching the Highest Level of English Literacy. She has also published articles in AccELLerate, in ESL Magazine, The Elementary School Journal, and in Applied Linguistics.

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