

CELLA Research Base

Informing Assessment and Instructional Decisions

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Assessment of Listening and Speaking (Oral Language)

- Screening, Diagnostic, Progress Monitoring
- Oral proficiency skills for ELL students are important in and of themselves. In addition, however, the NLP suggests that in order to fully understand the reading and writing performance of an ELL student it is essential to have valid and reliable information about their oral language skills (with a focus on oral vocabulary and listening skills) and how those strengths and weaknesses interact with learning to read.
- A student's oral language skills are likely to develop faster than their reading and writing skills; oral language skills provide a foundation for reading (and writing). Thus, if there are gaps in certain oral language areas, then reading and writing will most likely be impacted.
- For ELL students, oral language proficiency is directly connected to reading and writing proficiency.
(August, D. & Shanahan, T., 2006)

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Listening Vocabulary

Reporting Category	Research Base
Listening Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Listening recognition vocabulary of over 3,000 word families is needed to understand “every day” conversations--(Handbook on Research for Second Language Teaching and Learning, 2005). •Studies show oral language vocabulary proficiency for ELL students is directly connected to reading comprehension skills. (August, D. & Shanahan, T., 2006) •Studies show oral language vocabulary knowledge for ELL students is related to writing proficiency. (August, D. & Shanahan, T., 2006)

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Listening Comprehension

Reporting Category	Research Base
Comprehension: Sentences (A) Comprehension: Short Talks (A, B, C, D) Comprehension: Extended (B, C, D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The quantity and complexity of receptive language (often called cognitive load or working memory) should be adequately assessed to determine how much and what type of oral information the ELL student can comprehend. The length of the oral prompts should vary from a few multiple connected sentences which require for example, following teacher directions and understanding common conversational features, to longer passages (200-300 words) that have either academic content or literary narratives. •Studies indicate that for ELL students listening comprehension skills are strongly correlated to writing skills (August & Shanahan, 2006).

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Speaking

Reporting Category	Research Base
Speaking Vocabulary (A, B, C, D)	<p>Academic Vocabulary</p> <p>Most scholars believe that instruction in academic English vocabulary—done early, consistently, and simultaneously across content areas—can make a difference in English learners’ ability to understand the core curriculum and that its importance increases as children enter the upper grades. August & Hakuta (1997); Bailey (2006); Francis, Rivera, et al. (2006); Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian (2006); Goldenberg (2006); Scarcella (2003); Schleppegrell (2001, 2004); Snow & Fillmore (2000).</p> <p>Correlational research supports this position. Proctor et al. (2005).</p>

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Speaking

Reporting Category	Research Base
Speaking Vocabulary (A, B, C, D)	<p>Academic Vocabulary</p> <p>Even in the primary grades, instructional time should focus on the explicit instruction of academic English vocabulary. August & Hakuta (1997); Bailey (2006); Callahan (2005); Diaz-Rico & Weed (2002); Francis, Rivera, et al. (2006); Genesee et al. (2006); Goldenberg (2006); Meltzer & Haman (2005); Scarcella (2003); Schleppegrell (2001, 2004); Snow & Fillmore (2000).</p>

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Speaking

Reporting Category	Research Base
Speaking Vocabulary (A, B, C, D)	<p>Everyday Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction for English learners should also emphasize the acquisition of meanings of everyday words that native speakers know and that are not necessarily part of the academic curriculum (August, Carlo, Dressler, & Snow, 2005) • Studies show oral language vocabulary proficiency for ELL students is directly connected to reading comprehension skills. (August & Shanahan, 2006). • English vocabulary and word reading skills are related, suggesting that vocabulary knowledge supports partial phonological recoding skills in beginning readers (Gottardo, 2002). • Researchers conclude that an enriched vocabulary development program can substantially close the gap between native and non-native speakers in vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension (Carlo, et al., 2004). Studies show oral vocabulary knowledge is related to writing proficiency. (August & Shanahan, 2006)

Speaking

Reporting Category	Research Base
Asking Questions (A, B, C, D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •ELL students need practice in using specific features of academic language related to tense agreement, plurals, and proper use of adjectives and adverbs in the context of meaningful oral communication (Celce-Murcia, 2002; Fillmore & Snow, 2000). •Studies indicate that ELL students must learn to use oral language accurately in a range of situations—to tell stories, describe events, define words, explain problems, retell actions, summarize content, and question intentions (Francis, Rivera, et al., 2006; Fillmore & Snow, 2000). •Academic Oral Language: Instruction focused on academic English should not wait until students are able to read and write in English. Before English learners are reading, the development of age-appropriate academic English—morphology, syntax, vocabulary—can be accelerated orally through planned and deliberate daily instruction. Francis, Rivera, et al. (2006); Saunders, Foorman, & Carlson (2006); Schleppegrell (2004); Fillmore (2004); Scarcella (2003).
Extended Speaking (A, B, C, D)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Personal Opinion •Story Retell •Explaining Graphs and Charts 	

Reading Assessment Content Recommendations

- According to the National Literacy Panel's recommendations to develop literacy in second-language learners, the content and skills tested in reading should be aligned the National Reading Panel (NRP) recommendations. Specifically, the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension should be provided as breakout categories (August & Shanahan, 2006).
- Diagnostic information for instruction: CELLA standards cover reading performance K-12 in key NRP areas. The items were not only designed taking into account the reading research, but they were also developed with an emphasis on areas that are problematic for ELL students (e.g., idioms in vocabulary, oral reading error types). Miramontes, O. B. (1987). Oral reading miscues of Hispanic students: Implications for assessment of learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 20(10), 627-632.

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Reading

Reporting Category	Research Base
Print Concepts & Phonemic Awareness (A, Ax)	For beginning readers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print Concepts is an important predictor of early reading achievement, helping children understand how language looks in printed form and teaches that print carries a message. Print knowledge plays a critical role in early reading development and influences language development, phonemic awareness, phonics, and reading and writing development (Cosgrove, McLemore, & Wood, 2009). • Measures of phonological awareness, such as segmenting the phonemes in a word, sound blending, and rhyming—are useful determining beginning reading skills. Chiappe, Siegel, & Wade-Woolley (2002); Geva, et al., (2000); Lafrance & Gottardo (2005); Lesaux & Siegel, (2003); Limbos & Geva (2001); Manis et al. (2004).

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Reading

Reporting Category	Research Base
Decoding/Word Recognition (A, Ax)	<p>Measures of familiarity with the alphabet and the alphabetic principle help determine beginning reading skills. Chiappe, Siegel, & Wade-Woolley (2002); Geva et al. (2000); Lesaux & Siegel (2003); Limbos & Geva (2001); Manis et al. (2004); Swanson et al. (2004).</p> <p>Measures of reading single words and knowledge of basic phonics rules are useful for determining beginning reading skills. Limbos & Geva (2001); Swanson et al. (2004).</p>

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Reading

Reporting Category	Research Base
Vocabulary (A, Ax, B, C, D) (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, idioms, vocabulary in context, roots and affixes)	<p>The vocabulary demands placed on students are intense. The reading materials used by children in school include more than 180,000 words (Block & Mangieri, 2006).</p> <p>Researchers concluded that an enriched vocabulary development program could substantially close the gap between native and non-native speakers in vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. Carlo, M. S., August, D., McLaughlin, B., Snow, C. E., Dressler, C., Lippman, D., Lively, T., & White, C. (2004).</p>

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Reading

Reporting Category	Research Base
<p>Fluency (A, Ax, B, C) i.e., rate, accuracy, and expression in oral reading.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Scientifically-based research reviews of native English speakers have established that reading fluency is a critical component of learning to read and that an effective reading program needs to include instruction in fluency (Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler, 2002; Kuhn & Stahl, 2000; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). •Major studies demonstrate that oral reading fluency measures are valid screening measures for English learners and are positively associated with performance on comprehensive standardized reading tests. (Gersten, R., Baker, S.K., Shanahan, T., Linan-Thompson, S., Collins, P., & Scarcella, R. (2007).

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Reading

Reporting Category	Research Base
<p>Comprehension (A, Ax, B, C, D) (passages include fiction and non- fiction; answering questions to literal and a range of inference item types)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •There are numerous studies that demonstrate the positive role that certain reading strategies have on ELL student's reading comprehension; strategies, such as, finding the main idea, summarizing, paraphrasing, determining the characters motives, attending to longer passages, etc., (Grabe, 2003). •The ability for an ELL reader to make appropriate inferences is seen as critical for reading comprehension (Grabe, 2003). •Successful reading comprehension depends not only on readers' ability to access appropriate content and formal schemata. It also depends on their ability to monitor what they understand and to take appropriate strategic action (Casanave, 1998)

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Writing: Component Skills

Reporting Category	Research Base
Dictated Letters and Words (A & Ax)	Effective writing development depends in part on decontextualized component skills such as grammar, punctuation, spelling (August & Shanahan, 2008).
Dictated Sentences (Ax)	Just as reading comprehension is dependent in part on fluent, automatic decoding, effective writing development depends in part on automatization of low level transcription skills (Berninger et al., 1992). Specifically, skills such as letter production must be fluent so that cognitive resources can be devoted to integrating all the other processes involved in creating written output (August & Shanahan, 2008).
Punctuation & Capitalization (B-D)	Spelling development parallels the process of learning to read and is in fact an application of sound-symbol relationships in a written format. Research with native English speakers has shown that reading and spelling draw on common cognitive-linguistic processes, as well as, unique orthographic processes (August & Shanahan, 2008).
Editing (Ax, B, C, D)	Instruction should focus on teaching English learners to use specific features of academic language related to tense agreement, plurals, and proper use of adjectives and adverbs. Goldenberg (2006).

Writing: Sentences and Paragraphs

Reporting Category	Research Base
Writing Sentences (A, Ax, B, C, D) Writing Paragraphs (B-D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing requires integrated skills and processes (NLP, Lessons, 2008) • Students need practice in using component skills in the context of meaningful written communication (Celce-Murcia, 2002; Fillmore & Snow, 2000). • ELL students must learn to use language accurately in a range of situations such as, to tell stories, describe events, retell actions, summarize content, and question intentions (Gersten et al., 2007)