CAPACITY
BUILDING RTI

Supporting Spanish-Speaking Students with Reading

Desirée Pallais, M.A.

Marty Hougen, Ph.D.

Lisa Drummond, Project Coordinator, HEC

OTER Annual Meeting
IRA 55th Annual Convention
Chicago, April 27, 2010

The Meadows Center
FOR PREVENTING EDUCATIONAL RISK
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

© 2009 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency

Questions

- Do students who fail to respond to research-based instruction have some sort of learning problem or internal deficit, and perhaps even a learning disability?

- What are alternative explanations for lack of response at this level?

(Klingner, 2009)

BUILDING RTI CAPACITY   © 2009 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency   2

Objectives

- Identify basic differences between Spanish and English as it applies to reading acquisition
- Examine how these differences are reflected in the reading behaviors of Spanish-speaking students
- Review research and instructional tips supporting these students

BUILDING RTI CAPACITY   3

Basic Facts

- Students whose first language is Spanish: 79% of ELLs (Klingner, 2009)

- Population of English Language Learners is very diverse (August, 2007)

- Transition to mainstream classrooms is a problematic time (Gersten, 1996)

Critical Concerns

- Language Acquisition versus Reading Disability
  (Klingner, 2009)

- Inappropriate referrals to special education due to school system's failure
  (Ortiz, 2009)

- Instructional adjustments within an RTI framework
  (Vaughn et al, 2008)

Oscar's Story

Vowels in the Spanish Language

Vowel types: open: /a/; semi-open:/e/,/o/; closed /i/,/u/

Each vowel letter has a distinct and relatively consistent sound

Near one-to-one correspondence between 21 phonemes in Spanish and 29 letters they represent

Beginning Spanish readers learn vowel correspondences first

(Moats, 2008)

The Five Spanish Vowels

a-----> short-o like watch and father

e-----> long-a in eight

i------> long-e in machine

o-----> long-o in no, old, rose

u-----> long-u in July, tube

The Spanish Vowels

i			u
	e	o	
	a		

The Spanish Vowels

i→beet and bit			U→put, boot and cute
	E→ bait and bet	O→ Bottle, but, bought, boat	
	A→bat and bite		

Spanish Literacy Instruction

- Syllabic awareness
- Syllabic stress patterns
- Spelling patterns within syllables
- Open and closed syllables
- Fewer monosyllabic words
- Multisyllabic words less demanding
- Word Structure

Let's Read Spanish Words!

mono	gitano
luna	Guadalupe
dime	Jacinto
lea	comales
pie	guacamole
puede	llano
diablo	manchaca

Language Comparisons

- History
- Sounds
- The role of the vowel
- The role of the syllable
- Phonics Components
- Spelling
- Inflections: Morphology
- Word Order: Syntax

Vowel Phonemes Specific to English

sit	oil
make	cow
bet	
cat	
cry	her
cup	cart
saw	sport
put	

Consonant Phonemes Specific to English

Voiced Stop	/d/	spider
Nasal	/ng/	sing
Fricatives		
Voiced	/v/	give
Voiced	/th/	that
Voiced	/z/	zoo
Unvoiced	/sh/	machine
Voiced	/zh/	vision

(Moats, 2008)

Consonant Phonemes Specific to English

Voiced Affricate   /j/   jam

Glides
    Unvoiced   /wh/   whether
    Voiced   /w/   weather
    Unvoiced   /h/   happy

(Moats, 2008)

16

Reading Behaviors: Phonemes

/aw/   dog   /h/   hat
/ih/   gym   /jh/   jam
/uh/   mother   /z/   zoo
/zh/   pleasure   /r/   rose

17

Instructional tips: Phonological Awareness

- Initially select words that include sounds that are common to both languages
- Separate auditorily similar sounds
- PA instruction can be effective even when ELL are not fully proficient in English
- Phonological tasks more difficult with unknown words
- Accept the use of native language sounds
(Arguelles, 2005)

18

Phonic Elements with Negative Transfer

- g before e and i
- h is a silent letter
- ll is a consonant digraph
- v is pronounced /b/
- z is pronounced /s/ in Latin America

BUILDING **RTI** CAPACITY
© 2008 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency
19

Phonic Elements with Zero Transfer

- All short vowels and schwa
- Long vowels with silent e
- Most long-vowel digraphs and double vowels
- /j/ spelled j and g
- /k/ spelled k
- /w/
- /v/ spelled v
- digraphs sh, th, wh, ph, gh, gh, -ng
- S-blends
- Consonants in final position
- Final consonant blends
- Three-letter consonant blends

BUILDING **RTI** CAPACITY
© 2008 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency
20

Phonemic Awareness and Phonics

- If phonemes and graphemes are unfamiliar decoding will be hard

- If limited English proficiency, may not be able to use word meaning to figure out how to read a word

- For Spanish readers, English graphemes may have different sounds
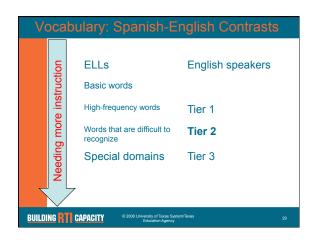
BUILDING **RTI** CAPACITY
© 2008 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency
21

So many ways to write one sound

me	read
sit	people
tree	machine

Decoding the Spanish way

sit	read
student	pie
van	once
Tod	singing
cake	cup

Reading Behaviors: Spelling

van	ban
show	chou
spell	spel
sing	sin
happy	japi
that	dat
when	wen
how	jau

Vocabulary and Oral proficiency

1. Vocabulary knowledge
2. Narrative ability

• A special vulnerability in the population of Spanish/English bilingual students
(Uccelli & Páez, 2007)

Vocabulary: A Look at the Research

• Academic language takes 5-7 years to develop
(Snow & Filmore, 2002)

• Enduring finding from research that vocabulary relates to comprehension
(Cunningham & Stanovich 1997)

English/Spanish Cognates

flexible	aventura	bicibleta
banana	causa	blusa
cafeteria	cultura	común
chocolate	diferente	difícil
coyote	familia	fruta
doctor	historia	líder
extra	insecto	objeto

English/Spanish False Cognates

arena	arena (sand)
once	once (eleven)
pie	pie (foot)
red	red (net)
exit	éxito (success)
lecture	lectura (reading)
rope	ropa (clothing)
soap	sopa (soup)

BUILDING **RTI** CAPACITY
© 2008 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency
28

Vocabulary: Spanish-English Contrasts

Needing more instruction

ELLs	English speakers
Basic words	
High-frequency words	Tier 1
Words that are difficult to recognize	**Tier 2**
Special domains	Tier 3

BUILDING **RTI** CAPACITY
© 2008 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency
29

Instructional tips: Vocabulary

- Use cognates appropriately
- Provide frequent opportunities for oral language with academic discourse
- Teach word meanings within content areas or build context
- Offer concrete systems
- Consider supplementary instruction

BUILDING **RTI** CAPACITY
© 2008 University of Texas System/Texas Education Agency
30

Reading behaviors: Vocabulary

- Gonzalo doesn't understand and demonstrates uncommon reluctance to participate in Zoo Phonics and Queenie Quail activities.
- Gabriel gets very confused when he is told "embarrased" is a cognate
- Maria seems to lack ability to pay attention or understanding when the teacher gives verbal explanations
- José has difficulty with words like " trunk", "model", and "point", when he reads texts

Reading Behaviors: Fluency

- Ricardo seems to have difficulty with repeated practice reading words containing vowel combinations, like "bread", "boat", "raw"
- Mauricio 's reading is very slow and flat, lacking expression and prosody, even with decodable texts.

Spanish Traces…

- He gave me a bat in the back?
- Women's lip or women's lib?
- Gone are the good old days
- I will pass out the colors
- I not know that
- She is a girl big
- I have my homework in my desk

Comprehension Issues

- Structural differences between languages can mislead ELLS

- Culturally unfamiliar text more difficult

- Strategy instruction may be insufficient

- Few empirical studies focused exclusively on comprehension and ELLS.

Reading Behaviors in Comprehension

- Ramona remains silent and just stares at the teacher when prompted to respond in English as part of a Read Aloud.
- José seems to be deficient in attention skills: he doesn't show understanding of simple directions in English.
- Juanita provides a seemingly inaccurate prediction during a Before Reading Activity dealing with weddings in the United States.

National Literacy Panel 2006

- Instruction in the key components of reading benefits language-minority students
- The above is necessary but not sufficient: oral proficiency in English is critical
- Oral proficiency and literacy in first language useful but English-only classrooms can be effective too
- Individual differences: a significant impact
- Assessments provided inadequate information

Will ELLs require Tier 2?

- Regular classroom instruction is usually insufficient for meeting the needs of all ELLs
- Tier 2 instruction may prove to be a necessary feature of instruction in order to promote literacy
- ELLs may need more time to reach benchmarks

> (Linan-Thompson, Vaughn, Prater & Cirino, 2008)

Contact Information

Desirée Pallais
desiree.pallais@mail.utexas.edu

Marty Hougen
mhougen@mail.utexas.edu

Lisa Drummond
ldrummond@mail.utexas.edu

Building RtI Capacity Project

BUILDING RTI CAPACITY
http://buildingRTI.utexas.org