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HOW CAN CONTENT TEACHERS AND EDUCATIONAL STAFF BETTER
SUPPORT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE CLASSROOM?

By
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A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a degree of
Masters of Arts in English as a Second Language.

Hamline University

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DEDICATION

To my family for amazing love and support through a difficult time in my life- my children, Taylinn and Reece, my siblings, Angie, Nathan, and Mike D., and to my parents, Mike and Liz Brouse. I am here because of you. Special thanks to my students, who teach me more about this world every day, as well as the strength of perseverance.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Research Question

My career as an English as a Second Language teacher (hereafter referred to as ESL), now over a decade in length, has not been exactly what I expected. Always interested in language, cultures, and diversity, I pictured myself sitting in a room with a group of kids, teaching language- reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Later, as my knowledge of the second language acquisition process in the academic setting developed and matured, I moved my instruction to include the explicit teaching of the academic language functions I saw were necessary for my students' success in the mainstream and content classrooms. But I did not, at any point, envision myself teaching *teachers*. In this chapter, my research question is provided, along with my teaching background experience, rationale, and context for my project.

After my initial two years teaching ESL, I became increasingly aware that the one-hour a day lessons I was delivering were not enough to meet the needs of my students' success in their content classrooms. Content teachers themselves implementing some of the academic language scaffolds into their lessons would make a significant difference in the ability of my students to access the lessons and content. In addition, school districts were receiving increased pressure to meet the needs of failing EL students from families, the district, and the state on formal assessments. Administrators and

teachers started looking for solutions in unfamiliar territory, asking why typical classroom interventions weren't working for these students.

Theories and even laws regarding ESL education have changed, the role of ESL in schools has also evolved. Not long ago, when I began my teaching career in 2009, ESL was considered by many schools to be “English vocabulary support.” I, like many ESL teachers, was given my ESL curriculum- an ESL Support Manual that accompanied the current mainstream reading curriculum. It was full of vocabulary lessons for words in the story an EL student might not know- like “walrus,” for a story about an Alaskan expedition. Words that, honestly, were not going to be of much use to the student once the story was finished. The story was not even about a walrus, nor essential to understanding the story itself. Grammar lessons were sprinkled in here and there, usually in the form of a quick worksheet and one-paragraph lesson. When I moved to a new district, I was handed, coincidentally, the exact same manual for my instruction. Apparently this district used the same reading series, and unfortunately, and the same misconception of what ESL truly entailed. It had not occurred to anyone yet (certainly not the writers of the curriculum!) that, just like the mainstream language arts classes were teaching syntax, semantics, phonology, writing, and so many other language skills to English-only speakers, so should it be exposing English to English Language Learners with similar gusto.

As the district added ESL staff to accommodate their growing EL numbers, I found these teachers to come from similar experiences. Together we helped move the district forward in searching out a brand new, separate ESL curriculum, that not only

focused on *academic* vocabulary instead of incidental vocabulary, but also academic language functions and features in speaking, listening, reading and writing. The lessons and goals we created from this curriculum also accommodated the diverse needs of our learners, no longer a “one size fits all” mentality, but carefully scaffolded supports learners at various levels of the second language acquisition process.

I recently accepted a new position, teaching secondary (middle and high school) in a new district in a southern suburb of Minneapolis, MN. I was nervous, after teaching elementary ESL for 9 years, but excited to be closer to home and trying something new. After six months, I was approached by an administrator, asking if I would consider providing professional development for our content teachers. This led me to start questioning: Where do we start? Once I began considering what would be most effective for teachers to understand in order to reach these students, while delivering accessible content in the classroom, the list of topics quickly surpassed the one-hour time limit I was to be allotted. I looked realistically at where my middle school staff was at (I kept getting the answer, “Assume ground zero.”), where we wanted to be, and what steps would take us there. I do not have all of those answers yet, but I have chosen this topic- effective professional development for mainstream teachers: second language acquisition- stages, supports, strategies and accommodations- in hopes of beginning a process that will take time, adequate planning and support, and most of all commitment. Through this process, I will answer the question, *“How can content teachers and educational staff better support English Language Learners in the classroom?”*

Rationale and Context

I chose to start my professional development with this topic because I recognize that teachers, already invested in these students on so many levels, are looking for support- some that can be implemented immediately, while they build more skills over time. There is no “quick-fix,” but I believe that to create a culture of respect for these special students and their learning needs and processes, a certain buy-in must be established among their teachers first. To understand why this professional development is relevant, I believe we must first understand the “who” before we will understand the “why” and the “what.” The second language acquisition process is complicated and intricate. However, I intend to provide teachers an efficient overview of the stages, as well as very user-friendly classroom supports, scaffolds, and accommodations. It is not my intention to overwhelm already-stressed educators with the minute details my training has given me, but to empower them to better understand their students and to see how they themselves are in a very capable, and soon-to-be equipped position to help ELs (English Learners) through this process.

The objective of this project is to create an initial training for middle school teachers on the process, stages, teaching strategies, and accommodations of second language acquisition. This project addresses the need for content area teacher training on the skills necessary to effectively meet the needs of linguistically diverse learners. Research has shown (Johnson 2009 and Roberston, n.d.) that the instruction received in a sheltered ESL classroom alone is more effective when compared to the paired with basic academic language support in the mainstream.

Teaching Experience

I began my teaching career in 2008, with both my elementary and ESL (K-12) teaching licences, teaching half-day kindergarten and first grade ESL in the afternoons. The school district was 25 minutes south of Minneapolis, MN. The ESL curriculum was little more than vocabulary support for the reading series taught in the mainstream classroom. The only student-centered interaction I had with the classroom teachers was twice that year when I showed up to parent-teacher conferences I was never invited to.

The following school year, after my kindergarten/ESL position had been cut, I moved to a different school district (a suburb south of St. Paul, MN), teaching full-time ESL at an elementary school. I knew that I wanted my teaching experience to be very different from the previous year. I sought out interactions with the classroom teachers, trying to introduce myself as a support for their classroom teaching. I was not met with a “Welcome” mat. The classroom teachers, with a few exceptions, viewed teaching English as a second language as *my* job, and my job alone, in the 20-minute small groups I had them in. They had no idea what an ESL teacher did, other than help with reading, and that was the status they wished for me to continue.

The district quickly began questioning the ESL teaching (small pull-out groups) when their EL number increased drastically, over 100% in under 5 years. The change in emphasis resulted in bigger numbers of students with increased ESL time- 45 minutes, as well as a separate, ESL curriculum. While this was an improvement in many ways (for example, bringing attention to the needs of ELs and a curriculum that addressed academic language development and the four language domains), I found that teaching a class of 17

second graders, ranging in proficiency levels from one to four in all four language domains (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) did not, in fact, adequately address these students' overall needs. General education teachers were still not receiving any training on their role as language teachers.

I was also still encountering many situations with classroom teachers where I found myself advocating for my students in the same context again and again. One example is a kindergarten teacher who disagreed with my teaching methods, shouting that I needed to "make those kids talk." As I tried to explain the silent period of second language acquisition, and the importance of respecting it, she went to the principal and complained that I was not doing my job. She continued trying to force the two five and six year old EL students to speak in her class during sharing time, and was rewarded with the silent patience of a child not yet ready. The following year, she insisted that the principal not give her any EL students at all. It was to be her retirement "gift" for her final year teaching, or so she told me.

Another sad example of the repercussions of uninformed school staff that I encountered at the same school was the retaining of EL students in kindergarten thru second grade. After only having been there a year, I discovered eight students on my roster who had been retained during these first years of language acquisition. I was told it was "so they had time to learn the language" when I inquired as to the reason. The long-term effects of retention on a student's social-emotional well-being had never come up in the discussions. The well-researched and documented knowledge that EL students should, and have the right to, be exposed to grade-level content and language had also

never entered into these discussions. Parents were never informed of average time frames needed for students to experience and move through the different stages of language acquisition, as well as what to expect in each, in order to make a sound and informed decision regarding their child's education.

Although the retaining of EL students for the purpose of language development stopped (the phrase "against federal law" has an amazing impact during meetings with the principal, I've found), the district was soon being reviewed by the state for an over representation of Latino students in special education. I couldn't help but start seeing the bigger picture. How different would the experiences of these students have been if their teachers had been aware of the most basic principles of second language acquisition? How different could the experience of the (very frustrated) teachers have been if they had not only known what was "normal," but also how to use each student's strengths to help him or her succeed? Or just had a toolbelt of strategies to utilize with their content instruction?

I am happy to report that, before I left this district, staff development regarding the education of ELs, including the role of content as language teachers, was beginning to surface. I myself joined NUA (National Urban Alliance) and was part of cohorts for 2 years, where I learned and subsequently taught many effective learning strategies for diverse learners in general. I also gave two professional development trainings on some basic EL and language acquisition topics, which managed to peak interest, but were not nearly deep enough to be truly effective. As we were asked to cover several large topics pertaining to ELs, the training did not sufficiently delve into what I feel would have been

a start to understanding our EL students, their strengths, their journey in education, and how to help them.

There are many, many important topics concerning the education of ELs. I now teach middle school ESL in a southern suburb of the Twin Cities. I had just begun the new position, when, a few months into it, I was approached by an administrator asking if I would ever consider giving some professional development for the content teachers at our school. Due to increasing numbers of language minority students, and a new licensing requirement, many were asking the school to provide more training. I said, yes, I would be happy to help, and asked where the staff was “at” with their EL education training already. She smiled and said, “Plan for ground zero.” I smiled back, and replied, “I know just where to start.”

Stakeholders

This project will be of great relevance to several stakeholders, not just a gain in test scores and grades. Although the implementation of this professional development for content teachers will benefit teachers by providing useful and effective EL teaching strategies, the benefits of a school that recognizes and seeks to understand and respect the process of academic second language acquisition reach far beyond the daily lessons. Teachers and administrators who understand, even on a fairly basic level, the difficulties of second language acquisition and the incredible strengths these students possess have a different, appreciative perspective when planning for and addressing the needs of these learners. The empathy that comes with understanding is invaluable. The natural drive teachers have to see their students succeed is an unstoppable asset when paired with the

knowledge and tools to do so. Having a fundamental understanding of the process their students are engaged in on a daily basis in their classrooms will help teachers to better understand how to focus their efforts, using even simple techniques, to address them, as well as use students' strengths to better assess their learning.

In addition to the teachers and other teaching staff (paras, special education educators, technology staff, etc) who will benefit from this training, the families of our students will also benefit. Far too often I have listened to a parent-teacher conference while the teacher, unable to share much else other than "...is a really nice kid," spends 90% of the short allotted time detailing the struggles of the student, who is being compared to English-only peers. The parent, meanwhile, listens helplessly wondering how to fit "more homework" time into the evenings, as that is the only insight offered as a solution. How different these conversations could be if the teacher were able to acknowledge the challenging journey an English language learner experiences, and discuss how he or she is supporting that student? For these parents to hear that their home language is *valued* by a simple, "Research shows us that the better his home language is, the better his English will be. I'm so glad that he is speaking Spanish at home!" is a comfort beyond measure.

Lastly, but certainly not least of these, the stakeholders most affected by this project are the students themselves. Although the ones experiencing academic English language learning first-hand, these students are no more aware of their acquisition process than any of the adults. Just as we, as teachers, attend years of college training to learn about learning in order to teach students and meet diverse learning needs and styles

children may not be aware they have, we are also responsible for the same in the English language learning world. We take courses and seminars and ongoing training regarding learning styles- how to adapt our lessons to utilize the strengths of the individual. Why? To improve test scores. But also to improve the educational experience of the learner. To build confidence. To create life-long learners. Being aware of, and meeting the needs of various second language acquisition levels is no different. Realizing a student's strengths and abilities as they navigate the academic English world will communicate not only to educators, but the English language learner that these strengths exist and can help him or her to be just as successful in the classroom as his or her English-only peers. It communicates to ELs that they can be successful. It communicates that being bilingual is an asset, not a deficiency. Experiencing a classroom led by a teacher who is aware of the process, stages, and appropriate scaffolds and expectations for an EL student is empowering. They will not only experience triumphs, but also challenges. While there is a side of understanding second language acquisition that allows for important scaffolds, there is another side that allows for appropriate challenges as well. Both are equally important sides to the same coin.

An unexpected benefactor to training that utilizes more academic language scaffolds is the English-only student. Academic language functions are a necessary part of all classes. There is widely-documented research available showing the extreme discrepancy in academic language proficiency among the socio-economic classes. Creating a more academic language-rich environment benefits all students, not just those whose second language is English.

This Project

For my capstone project, I will create a professional development training for teachers and educational staff on English as a Second language acquisition, as is used in the academic field. I will focus on educating content teachers and other educational professionals on the stages of second language acquisition in the four language domains, key factors to consider with second language acquisition, strengths of students in each stage, and appropriate academic language scaffolds, strategies, accommodations, and modifications for teaching and assessing ELs. My project will also include a brief overview of academic language proficiency, in the contexts of academic language functions and vocabulary. My objective is to give school staff a fundamental understanding of the second language acquisition process, in order to build empathy, as well as empowerment as language teachers with classroom instruction and assessment tools and modifications.

Summary

My teaching experiences have ranged greatly, from elementary mainstream at various levels, elementary ESL at all levels, to middle and high school ESL. Throughout the last 10 years, I have gained incredible insight as to the demanding challenges my ESL students face daily on their academic journey with language acquisition. I have worked with students of largely varying linguistic, educational, and cultural backgrounds. I have also worked with many different educators and perspectives. The one constant that remains is that the educational experience of English Language Learners, and the experiences of their teachers, can shift into a positive direction when knowledge,

understanding, empathy and empowerment are combined. ESL teachers do not, effectively, have to be the only language teachers in the building during a student's school day. True academic language proficiency comes from appropriately, intentionally implemented opportunities throughout a variety of contexts, just as importantly in social studies, science, history, math, language arts, cooking, art, and music as it is in the English Language Development classroom.

The following chapters will discuss the various details of my project development. Chapter 2 will discuss literature reviews I have conducted on key components of my project, including:

- Second language acquisition stages- the process, descriptions, average time needed, as well as strengths
- Outside factors to consider- social-emotional factors, comprehensible input, home language and linguistic transfer, level of L1 (first language) spoken in the home, formal education language background, etc,
- Effective academic language support in the content classroom
- Appropriate assignment and assessment accommodations and modifications

Chapter 3 will detail my project, as it will be presented to teachers and other educational staff. Chapter 4 includes my reflections on the project, as well as what "next steps" will be taken in order to ensure the most effective implementation of the research and ideas discussed in this capstone project.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Chapter Overview

Chapter Two of my capstone project will provide a research-based answer to my question, *How can educational staff better support EL students in the classroom?* In this chapter, I will examine and discuss research regarding the following relevant topics: a brief history of second language acquisition theory, the second language acquisition process (descriptions of the stages and factors that affect the process), a small history of second language acquisition, the important distinction between social and academic language, and effective academic language scaffolds modifications, accommodations for English language learners at the various levels of language acquisition.

As my research is leading to my capstone project- professional development for middle school content teachers and general education staff- I have focused my research on information I feel will most benefit teachers, including social factors that may affect second language development for students this age. I have also included a large section on academic language, academic language functions, and academic literacy. This information will provide teachers with a better understanding of the complex cognitive tasks EL (English Learner) students are learning to accomplish in the midst of every day lessons, as well as how to support them in a safe, non-stressful way as they do so. By beginning with a small historical perspective, I hope to begin establishing an

understanding of the complexity of language acquisition education, that is far more than “just vocabulary.”

Important Terms and Acronyms: As stated in the Wikipedia Encyclopedia

- Second Language Acquisition (SLA)- The process by which people learn a second language
- L1 - First language
- L2 - Second language
- English as a Second Language (ESL) - the (English) language education of speakers of other native languages.
- Native Language - the language one has been exposed to since birth.

The Second Language Acquisition Process

Theories of Second Language Acquisition. Second language acquisition is a complex process, and so it is understandable that theories and research of methodology have evolved over the years. As most theoretical constructs dealing with language and language acquisition come from such areas as linguistics, psychology, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics, there is a history of conflicting theories. Still, many of the foundational theories have been consistent through the years, amended as new research and development are made. Language acquisition is a human phenomenon that has fascinated scholars, scientists, and anthropologists for centuries. To remain focused on that research which is most relevant to developing a foundational understanding of second language acquisition needed for classroom teaching, we need only review the most recent trends in theory.

Increased interest in the language acquisition of children- particularly second language acquisition- began during the second half of the twentieth century. This was largely due to the equal rights movement, new innovative approaches to the education of minorities, the advances in technology, and the new discoveries in the areas of pedagogy, psychology, sociology, linguistics, and related disciplines (Tan, 2016).

Theories have naturally had a wide range of focus throughout the years. Some insisted the best way to learn a new language was through reading (example: The Reading Method), others promoted the practice of drills rather than study of rules and patterns (example: Audio-lingual method). Theories vary across time for teaching vocabulary, grammar, semantics, and every other aspect of language. In the late 1950's, linguist Avram Noam Chomsky introduced his theory, known as Communicative Language Teaching. Later, in 1972, Hymes introduced his theory of Communicative Competence, which did not fully reject Chomsky's theories of innate language learning principles, but did give greater emphasis to the sociolinguistic and pragmatic factors guiding effective language use. This theory also emphasized that L2 vocabulary would gradually develop the same way it does in L1- naturally gained through experiences and contexts (Tan, 2016).

Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis is another concept that has found wide acceptance with both researchers and ELL instructors (Krashen, 1981; Krashen & Terrell, 1983). This theory suggests that an individual's emotions can directly interfere or assist in the learning of a new language. According to Krashen, learning a new language is different from learning other subjects because it requires public practice. Speaking out in

a new language can result in anxiety, embarrassment, or anger. These negative emotions can create a kind of filter that blocks the learner's ability to process new or difficult words. Classrooms that are fully engaging, nonthreatening, and affirming of a child's native language and cultural heritage can have a direct effect on the student's ability to learn by increasing motivation and encouraging risk taking (WIDA 2003).

Another theory that has directly influenced classroom instruction is Jim Cummins's distinction between two types of language: basic interpersonal communications skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). Research has shown that the average student can develop conversational fluency within two to five years, but that developing fluency in more technical, academic language can take from four to seven years depending on many variables such as language proficiency level, age and time of arrival at school, level of academic proficiency in the native language, and the degree of support for achieving academic proficiency (Cummins, 1981, 1996; Hakuta, Butler, & Witt, 2000; Thomas & Collier, 1997).

Several laws have also changed the education of English Language Learners across the country. Perhaps one of the most significant of our time, is *Lau vs. Nichols*. One result of the *Lau vs. Nichols* 1974 Supreme Court Decision is that students who do not speak English as their first language must be provided instructional and assessment modifications so they have the opportunity to be academically successful (Ovando, Collier, & Combs, 2006). NCLB (No Child Left Behind) requires that ELLs receive the same high quality content that mainstream students learn (Gottlieb, 2006).

Accomplishing these goals is a challenge for teachers who are typically not prepared in how to accommodate English Language Learners (ELLs) in assessment or instruction.

Eli Johnson (2009) discusses and addresses a widely-accepted and recent theory of our time regarding second language acquisition is less focused on the *what*, as it is about the *who*. Who is responsible for the education and academic language acquisition of ELLs? So much, if not all, past theories and trends have been ESL teacher-focused. However, more recent evidence and research suggests that second language learning in the academic setting is far better supported when classroom and content teachers use academic language support and modifications with instruction and assignments.

As theories regarding the best instructional approaches for second language teaching have evolved, studies have also revealed more about other essential factors as well, such as time needed. Formerly thought to take approximately 3-5 years, it is now widely known amongst second language experts that proficiency in academic English takes an average of 5-7 years or possibly more (Robertson, n.d.). Many students are considered proficient, as is measured by an academic language assessment tool sooner, depending on a host of factors later discussed in this chapter. Regardless of pace, second language learners progress through six stages of second language acquisition- pre-production, early production, speech emergence, beginning fluency, intermediate fluency, and advanced fluency. Each of the six stages has different characteristics, abilities and goals, as well as appropriate scaffolds and supports (Robertson n.d.)

Kristina Robertson shares the following descriptions of the stages on the Colorin

Colorado webpage. The organization promotes many scholarly articles and recent research in the interest of helping teachers of EL students.

Stages

Preproduction

Preproduction is also known by many educators as “the silent period.” During this stage of the SLA process, an EL student does not speak much, if at all. The student is taking in the language around him or her, utilizing listening skills to learn the language around him or her. A student in the pre-productive stage (approximately the age of 10 or older) may have a receptive vocabulary of more than 500 words. This period can last anywhere from a number of days to 6 months, depending on the individual student. Increased pressure to speak before they are ready may increase the length of time students spend in this stage, as anxiety can cause production to halt. In reference to my first chapter, the kindergarten teacher demanding her newcomer students *talk now*, teachers who are aware of the second language learning process would not only be aware of this important stage, but be respectful of it as part of the progress to proficiency.

Early Production

During this phase of SLA, the student begins to speak, but only uses single words, or short phrases and sentences to communicate. A student in this phase of language development may have developed nearly 1,000 receptive words, and can demonstrate comprehension of new material by responding with short answers, a simple yes/no, either/or, or who/what/where questions (Robertson, n.d.). The student is still primarily using listening comprehension to absorb the language, and many mistakes are

to be expected as he or she tries out the new language. Patient teachers who are aware of the learning that is occurring, even when the student is unable to produce the language to “show it,” are the greatest asset.

Speech Emergence

Normally in this stage of SLA, one can expect to see more frequent use of speech through longer phrases and sentences. The student is still relying heavily on listening skills, as well as context clues around him or her. Familiar topics are easier to discuss, and vocabulary is steadily increasing. Errors in speech are still common, but may become less frequent as the phrases and words become more familiar. This stage can last up to another year, and students have usually developed approximately 3,000 words.

Understanding that simple repetition can be of great value will help teachers to capitalize on the strengths of this stage (Robertson, n.d.).

Beginning Fluency

Beginning fluency is where teachers will notice much more development in the student’s social language (also known as BICS- Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills). Social language is more fluent with less errors. This phase is where some teachers may mistakenly assume the student knows more English in the academic setting than he or she does. Academic contexts are still very challenging at this stage, and the student will struggle to express knowledge in a subject area, even if he or she understands it a concept.

Intermediate Fluency

By now, communication in English is considered fluent. Social language is especially developed, as it does tend to progress more quickly than academic language. Again, teachers need to be aware that, although a student in this stage may speak English like, or close to, his or her English-only peers, and academic language production is increasing as well, there are still challenges. There may still be gaps in vocabulary, and correct phrasing in unfamiliar situations. However, the student is likely able to demonstrate higher order thinking skills, with fewer errors, especially if a teacher is mindful of appropriate language supports.

Advanced Fluency

Finally, the student is able to communicate fluently in all contexts- social and almost, if not all, academic. The student is able to easily maneuver successfully in new contexts when exposed to new academic information. The student may still have an accent (depending on age when introduced in the second language, time spent learning the language, etc), and idioms may continue to be a challenge, but English is essentially fluent, and the student is clearly more comfortable speaking the second language (Robertson, n.d.).

Factors Affecting Second Language Acquisition

As stated above, the rate at which students move through the various stages of SLA may vary. In addition to Krashin's theory regarding the affective filter, there are several other key factors that affect second language learning. These include, but not limited to, the following: societal attitudes toward the student's L1, especially the

surrounding community, level of L1 proficiency, and “language distance” (Walqui, 2000). A student’s individual personality may also be a contributing factor. It is essential for teachers to have some understanding of these factors, in order to best support the student’s journey through academic English.

Language Distance. Language distance refers to how similar or different a student’s L1 is from the L2. Some languages are much more similar to English in structure than others. For example, Spanish is also a Latin-based, phonetic language, but Vietnamese is tonal. A native Spanish speaker may have an easier time when beginning his or her journey with English than a native Vietnamese speaker, as the structures are similar, and there are many cognates that will sound familiar to the learner. The use of linguistic similarities to acquire a second language is called “language transfer.”

Teachers of ELs also need to be aware of the effects of loss of first language as the student acquires English (Rodriguez, 1993), as it relates to less language transfer for the student to draw upon. Proficiency in the L1 greatly supports his or her English learning.

Native language proficiency. Native language proficiency is a strong factor in second language learning, not only in speaking and listening, but reading and writing, as it relates to linguistic transfer. A student who is proficient in one language, especially in more than one of the modalities, already has a well-developed sense of how languages “work.” It is not uncommon for well-intentioned, but misled, teachers to suggest to parents that it is better if “Student A” speaks English as much as possible at home to improve his or her English. The fact is, the better a student’s L1 proficiency, the better the student’s English learning will be. According to Walqui (2000), an EL student's level

of proficiency in the native language (including not only oral language and literacy, but also metalinguistic development in formal academic contexts) affects acquisition of a second language. The more academically sophisticated the student's native language knowledge and abilities, the easier it will be for that student to gain proficiency in a second language. As most public schools are not currently offering bilingual education in every and all languages present in the school, it is important for teachers to support the continued development of each student's L1 at home.

Attitudes of the surrounding community. Another very important factor for teachers to be aware of is the attitudes of the surrounding (L2) community toward a student's native language. If a student's first language, and corresponding ethnic group, is viewed as lower in status by the school, peers, and community as a whole, the student may feel the need to give up the first language, as well as cultural background in order to "fit in" (Walqui, 2000). Loss of one's first (and family language) greatly impacts not only the second language acquisition process (as mentioned above), but also the family structure. If students feel ashamed of their home cultural identity, and refuse to continue speaking the native language, communication within the family will deteriorate as the child and parents become fluent in different languages. The breakdown of important familial conversations affects not only the child's second language acquisition, but the family unit and relationships. It is vital that content teachers and other education staff encourage students to maintain both linguistic and cultural identity, while closely examining their own attitudes and beliefs. When teachers communicate value in respect

to linguistic and cultural diversity, students themselves will be far more likely to do so, and see bilingualism as an asset, not a deficit (Walqui, 2000).

Individual learner differences. Individual learner differences also affect second language acquisition in a variety of ways. Each student's personality, goals, needs, peer groups, and home values also play a role in the English language journey. For example, an outgoing, eager-to-please student may progress more quickly through the process than a shy student lacking confidence, as he or she is often more willing to take chances, and make- and learn from- mistakes. A high school student whose ultimate goal is to graduate and move on to college may be far more motivated to learn and use the academic English register than a student whose goals at school are far more socially inclined. The needs of the individual learner vary just as greatly- perhaps even more. Some may struggle more in one area of language acquisition than others, such as reading more than speaking, or writing more than reading. There are many different needs that may arise as a student navigates the academic English learning process. Home values also play an important role, as with any student, as far as beliefs regarding education as well as pride in cultural and linguistic identity.

It is important for teachers to establish a relative understanding of many factors (not limited to those above) that can have an impact on second language acquisition. This understanding will not only lead to more comprehensive teaching strategies and lesson support, but a sense of empathy and respect for the journey our English language learners are on, the struggles they strive to overcome, and appreciation for the daily experience of these students each and every day in our schools.

Academic Language In the Classroom

Perhaps one of the most essential elements of second language acquisition in the school setting is the understanding of academic language. As mentioned in the descriptions above, it is not uncommon for educators to misinterpret full English proficiency based on the social language proficiency they hear a student speak daily. Social language, or BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) involves the language an EL student uses to converse with friends, and engage in non-academic topics. These can include any “hallway conversations,” such as sports, movies, friends, family, books, and anything typical students may find interesting that day. The language skills to fluently engage in this discourse is not typically cognitively demanding. In a tiered system, this language would be considered “Tier One.” It includes very common language that can be found almost anywhere, not specifically belonging to one place or setting. Academic language, or CALPS (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency), requires a different set of language skills not typically found in casual conversation. For the purpose of my study and project, I will focus on literature regarding CALPS (Johnson 2009).

CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) is a term developed by Jim Cummins (Wink, 1993), which refers to language features and functions used in a formal academic setting. As mentioned earlier, academic language acquisition is much more than just understanding content area vocabulary. It requires language skills for tasks such as comparing, classifying, synthesizing, evaluating, and analyzing. To better understand the

difference between the acquiring proficiency in BICS and CALP, Jim Cummins (1981) created the *iceberg metaphor*. The top of the iceberg is what we can see, what is “above the surface.” BICS is easy to see, understand, and follow. Below the surface, however, illustrates the immensely complicated, cognitively demanding world of academic language.

Another effective analogy for understanding academic language is the “bricks and mortar” relationship visual. Johnson (2009) distinguishes between content-specific language (the bricks) and academic language (the mortar) in *Academic Language! Academic Literacy!*. He first describes content language as that which sets specific academic areas, such as math, science, social studies, apart from each other. These are terms used in each specific content area. For example, in a social studies class, content-specific language may be *government, democracy, Civil Rights*. The content-language of a science class, on the other hand, may include words such as *cycle, stages, force, gravity*. Specific to a math class may be words such as *angle, multiply, percentage, prime number, etc*. As students progress through the grades, the specificity of the content language increases. This language provides students with the essential building blocks necessary for creating a foundational, conceptual understanding of increasingly complex information to come. In a tiered system, these words would be described as “Tier 3” words- they are much more technical and content-specific (Johnson 2009).

I have described, for the purposes of a tiered system, Tier 1 (social

language) and Tier 3 (content-specific language), and will now discuss the focus of my project and research- Tier 2 (academic language). According to Johnson (2009), academic language is essential for academic success. Academic language makes up the “mortar” between the bricks of content language. Instead of being content-specific, academic language flows through all content areas. It is also very different from social language- it is not often found on playgrounds or in living rooms or in the hallways. Academic language provides students with opportunities to connect concepts, outline transitions, and analyze relationships. It is the language used by teachers, as well as students, for the distinct purpose of gaining new knowledge and skills. It is the language that “cohesively connects the abstract concepts of school” (Johnson, 2009, pg. 5).

For teachers who work with English language learners, an understanding of the role academic language plays is essential- whether you are an ESL teacher, a math teacher, a science teacher, or an art teacher- because this language and its concepts are necessary for success in each and every class. Johnson (2009) states that there are three types of academic language:

- Actions: for example: *analyze, consider, differentiate, evaluate, require, examine, appreciate, motivate, strengthen*
- Transitions and Relationships: for example: *furthermore, first, correspond, finally, initially, however, therefore*
- Concepts: for example: *function, evidence, features, characteristics, abstract, repertoire*

To better understand the “mortar” side of the relationship, we can look at the word *compare*. The word *compare* may be used in a language arts class to analyze two characters, in a math class to determine values of numbers, and in a science class to distinguish between chemicals. In order to compare, students need to understand how to identify and describe elements and characteristics, as well as differentiate, depending on the task. Supporting the acquisition of such language in multiple contexts, multiple times a day, greatly increases a student’s ability to not only understand these vital language concepts, but also to apply them to learning in assessments as well as integrating new knowledge and skills. Added to the complexity of understanding the fluidity of academic language, students must also be able to utilize these language skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing contexts. Academic success relies on their ability to apply academic language in both productive and receptive modes of communication. The next section will review literature which will break down key academic language functions, their intents, tasks, and supports and modifications.

Modifications, Accommodations, and Language Scaffolds

Why do we accommodate English language learners? It is not to make the content, assignments, and assessments “easier.” The intention behind well-planned modifications is to deliver lessons that are accessible to all students, and in turn receive formal and informal feedback on what the student truly understands, without the language barriers involved in producing the desired product. The information in the following section will highlight modifications and accommodations such as cooperative

learning, language awareness and modification, lesson scaffolds, testing considerations, and language objectives.

Cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is an incredibly valuable strategy for teaching elementary, middle, and high school students, and especially beneficial for EL students. It creates a lower-risk environment for ELs who are still acquiring the academic language components, and offers increased opportunities for community building. The team-building and oral language activities can be used to familiarize students with the language required to discuss and learn the targeted concepts. It allows for language modeling by peers in a way that does not necessarily point out the lack of language skills of EL students. There are many different forms of cooperative learning. The following, from Holt (2003) are examples of cooperative learning. A more in-depth description of these strategies will be found in Chapter 3.

- Mix and Match
- Meet and Greet
- Inside-Outside Circle
- Reel
- Traveling Sorts
- Picture Sequencing
- Carousel
- Stations
- Talking Chips

Holt also recommends several important considerations when planning cooperative learning. For example, plan group configurations that ensure students will interact with students of various proficiency levels. To keep the discussions academically focused, grade level concepts and academic language must be an explicit part of the interactions. It is also important to provide language support (examples provided in the

next section) for EL students at various levels of English language proficiency to allow for scaffolded participation.

Language Scaffolding. Language scaffolding for lessons and assignments is a very beneficial way to meet the needs of students at various levels of second language acquisition. It allows a teacher to consider each SLA stage and can be implemented in lesson delivery, writing assignments, cooperative learning exercises, class discussions, and more. Language scaffolding can occur in a variety of forms. The principle purpose of each, however, is to take students where they are in their second language development, and give them the support needed to produce the desired language in order to communicate what they know or complete a given task. Scaffolding takes many forms, such as sentence starters, sentence frames, modeling, pre-teaching, questioning and metacognition reflections, visual aids, and signal words. Johnson discusses a variety of language support for all four modalities in *Academic Language! Academic Literacy!*

Modeling. Teachers model their thinking for students all the time to teach such skills as problem solving, process, and connections. We do it when we have read alouds or pretend to be stumped on a math problem to explain a common misconception or mistake being corrected. Teachers can use these opportunities to significantly impact second language acquisition opportunities for EL students when explicitly and intentionally using academic language to model the desired language for students. Other students can do so, as well. For example, when initiating a small group discussion with the content goal of appropriately comparing the two main characters in a story, a teacher may first practice using the language of compare and contrast to discuss two students,

being very mindful of the academic language the task requires. “I know that Mark and Abdi are *similar* in that they *both* like soccer. *However*, they *differ* when it comes to favorite foods- Abdi likes pizza, *but* Mark likes tacos best.

Sentence Frames and Sentence Starters. Sentence frames and starters are a simple and effective way to scaffold language for EL students, specific if necessary to their SLA level (Robertson, n.d.). For example, when considering appropriate scaffolding for a student in the Speech Emergence stage, a teacher might provide more support with a sentence frame of the appropriate academic language. When engaging in a retelling activity, the sentence frame may look something like, “First, he...because he was lost. Then, he...at the store. At the end, he _____.” However, for a student in the more advanced Intermediate level, although language support is still necessary, the student has more to build on and therefore requires less support. Therefore, sentence starters may be more appropriate in order to help the learner frame his or her thinking. For example, the retelling strategy, *Somebody...Wanted...But...So... Then...* will provide students with just one word to help them fill in the important events of a story.

Sentence starters and frames are useful for discourse, monitoring thinking with reading, and writing. Johnson gives several examples of Structured Discourse Skills, suggesting sentence starters for specific skills, such as “So you are saying that... In other words...” for paraphrasing. Sentence starters can be used to aid reading comprehension (What Content-Area Read-Alouds Look Like, 2009, p. 45), “As I look at the picture showing _____, it makes me think that _____ (predicting).” As writing is

often a particular struggle for many ELs, sentence frames and starters can be most beneficial, especially when tailored to the specific level of the student (Johnson, 2009).

Preteaching. Pre Teaching not only key vocabulary, but other key language functions, serves multiple purposes for EL students. Not only does pre teaching pre-expose students to essential vocabulary, but also to the contexts in which these words will be used in the upcoming lesson. It is also a way to introduce, and provide modeling of, common academic language functions which will be heard and implemented in the unit.

Visual Aides. The importance of visual aids can not be understated when teaching EL students. Not only useful for visual learners, they benefit EL students struggling to keep up with the auditory comprehension needed in the classroom. EL students can often feel overwhelmed and anxious in the classroom, as they work to maintain pace and often translate (what they can) as the teacher is speaking. Visual aides not only give them added connection and context to the language they are hearing, but help them to fit pieces together to make meaning. Visual aides also give a reference point when ELs are later trying to remember information and connections (Robertson, n.d.).

Signal Words. Teaching specific signal words that correspond to various academic language functions is vital for secondary English learners. In his book *Academic Language! Academic Literacy!*, Johnson explains that comprehension increases when learners are aware of the specific language associated with a text, discussion, or writing purpose (Johnson, 2009). For example, when planning for a unit requiring an EL student to use Sequencing or Time-Order, helpful signal words with

which to be familiar might be *before, after, first, second, next* for an Emerging Speech student and *eventually, during, recently, and while* for a more intermediate stage learner. Explicitly teaching signal words alert EL students to the types of tasks, processes, and purposes to expect, as well as shape writing and discourse language. They are better able to organize their thinking, as well as determine importance (Johnson, 2009)

Language scaffolding is flexible, adaptable, and well-suited for ELs at all stages of second language development. Scaffolding can often be planned in advance when considering the content objectives, especially if teachers are aware of using *language objectives* in their planning as well. Language objectives are different from content objectives, but the two can be used well together. The next section discusses the difference between content and language objectives, and how language objectives benefit teachers and students.

Language Objectives. Understanding the difference between content and language objectives can, at first, seem confusing. According to Jennifer Himmel (2012), of the Center for Applied Linguistics, the following are key reminders when using language objectives:

- articulate for learners the academic language functions and skills that they need to master to fully participate in the lesson and meet the grade-level content standards.

- Language objectives are beneficial not only for language learners, but for all students. Everyone can benefit from the clarity that comes with a teacher outlining the required academic language to be used, learned, and mastered in each lesson.

As content objectives focus on the content goals of the lesson, language objectives focus on the language necessary to access and produce the information needed to do so. Himmel states in her article that language objectives outline the specific type of language students will also need to learn to accomplish the goals of the lesson. They address the various aspects of academic language which will be developed and strengthened during the teaching of the content concepts. Language objectives may involve one or more of the four modalities- speaking, listening, reading and or writing. They may also involve language functions, vocabulary, grammar, and language learning strategies related to the content topic.

Himmel provides the following example of how a content objective and a language objective may be written for the same lesson. Her example content is a seventh grade social studies class. Below, she has listed the standard, content objective, and the associated language objective for a seventh grade Social Studies class studying colonial communities:

- Content Area Standard: New York: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the geography of the interdependent world in which we live.
- Content Objective: Students will be able show how geographic features have affected colonial life by creating a map.

- Language Objective: Students will be able to summarize in writing how geography impacted colonial life.

In her article, Himmel includes the following suggestions as considerations for writing comprehensive language objectives:

- Determine which key vocabulary, concept words, and other academic words students will need to know in order to talk, read, and write about the topic of the lesson. Those words could be taught as a language objective, and should include the content-specific terms (such as “habitat”), and cross-curricular terms (such as “factor”) . Other terms to highlight are those that language learners may know in one context (family- parents, siblings) and not be familiar with in another (family of elements in science).
- Consider the language functions related to the topic of the lesson (to meet the lesson objective, will students be asked to compare? Describe? Analyze?). If so, what language support will they need to do this successfully?
- Think about the language skills necessary for students to accomplish the lesson's activities. Will the students be reading a textbook passage to identify the sequence of events leading up to World War I? Are they able to read the level of text passage assigned to find specific information? Will they be reporting their findings to peers, and if so, have the necessary oral skills to do so? Acquiring the skills needed to carry out these tasks could be the focus of a language objective.
- Identify grammar or language structures common to the content area. For example, many science textbooks use the passive voice to describe processes.

Additionally, students may have to use comparative language to analyze two related concepts. Writing with the passive voice or using comparative phrases might be a language objective.

- Explore language learning strategies that lend themselves to the topic of the lesson. For example, if students are starting a new unit in the text, strategies that teach previewing the text may be appropriate language objectives.

Modifications for lessons and assignments are an important step in recognizing, understanding, and meeting the needs of second language learners in the content classrooms. So too, are the appropriate modifications and accommodations for assessing EL learning. As referenced earlier, sometimes a given content test appears to be more of a language test than actual content for our ELs. The next section discusses literature documenting appropriate test and assessment modifications for English language learners at various stages of the second language acquisition process.

Modifications to Assignments and Assessments

In order to accurately assess English Language Learners, specific modifications can be made to assignments and assessments alike, to reduce the linguistic complexity surrounding the content being assessed. In her article, “Differentiated Instruction for English Language Learners” Karen Ford (2016) states, “The goal of differentiated instruction is to create learning opportunities that make allowances for differences in how individual students learn in order to ensure equal access to important academic content. Content may be modified for students who need additional practice with essential elements before moving on; however, the expectation is that modifications in other areas

will ultimately allow all students to master the same key content.” Ford’s article reinforces the notion that EL students can be held to the same content standards as their mono-lingual peers, when content and expression of understanding is accessible to them.

She also provides the following suggestions in her article:

- Provide multiple types of assessment — matching assessment to students' learning profiles and language proficiency ensures that every student has an opportunity to demonstrate what he/she knows.
- Differentiate homework — If all students have the same homework assignments, some are doing busy work while others are struggling with work that they cannot possibly complete successfully (Tomlinson, 2005).
- Collaborate — Instruction is most successful when all of the professionals who work with ELLs work together
- Use flexible grouping — Small group instruction is a very effective way of making sure that all students can access important content, and keeping groups flexible allows teachers to match students with different peers for different types of activities.
- Make content comprehensible for all students (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008) — Providing ELLs with alternative ways of accessing key content (e.g., charts, books written in their first language, simplified text written by the teacher, discussion, etc.) allows them to learn the same material as other students as they continue to develop their English language skills.

Laureen A. Fregeau and Robert D. Leier (2008) suggest several considerations for teachers in their article “Assessing ELLs in ESL or Mainstream Classrooms: Quick Fixes for Busy Teachers.” Their article describes methods of preparing assessments for ELs at various levels of second language acquisition, and reaffirms the importance of getting to know individual learners in order to match the best accommodations to each. The article gives several examples and explanations for the following, which are found in greater detail in Chapter 3:

- Preparing students to take tests
- Accommodating the test
- Modifying existing tests

Accommodating the test. Of course, several accommodations can also be made to the actual test to better ascertain the content knowledge of EL students. Some examples include:

- Extended test time
- Essential questions only
- Read questions aloud

Modifying Existing Tests. Not all accommodations mean “recreating the wheel” from scratch. There are ways of modifying an already existing test to save on time and workload. For example,

- Multiple choice: eliminate one or more of the choices
- Discussion and essay: have ELLs label terms, draw and label diagrams and pictures

- Matching: reduce the number of matches required, give an equal number of possibilities in each column, and eliminate “trick” language matches

Prepare Students to Take Tests. Simple preparation tasks can make a big difference in EL performance on assessments. For example,

- Go through the test before-hand and highlight important key terms and phrases.
- Read the test directions aloud to the student as they follow along to assure understanding.
- Clarify important key words or “confusing” directions.

Summary

The research reviewed in this chapter is intended to provide a well-researched background for my capstone project, which is a professional development for middle school content teachers and education staff. My goal is to give staff not only a basic understanding of the second language acquisition process their students are experiencing, but also to aid the efforts of teachers and staff in supporting these students. The research I have shared reveals the important role content teachers have in the acquisition of academic language, as well as how they can create a welcoming and safe environment for these students. The research regarding academic language in particular is essential for educators working with ESL students, as it deepens one’s understanding of the cognitive tasks associated with the academic language functions. It also establishes methods of accurately assessing knowledge gained by students of various stages of the SLA process, which will then guide the next steps of teacher lesson focus and design. Second language acquisition is a complex, and demanding process, with many factors to

consider. My hope is that I can use the research provided here to create a teacher-friendly professional development for my colleagues striving to support these special learners.

The next chapter will provide an overview of my completed professional development project, focused on providing teachers with essential information regarding second language acquisition as can best be covered in a one hour presentation. I will discuss the context (where, when, and audience) in which my project will occur, the method used, and a detailed description of the project itself. The final project created will fact sum up my research question of not only why it is important for content teachers and staff to possess essential information on second language acquisition, but also how they can use this information to better suit their teaching, and students' learning, needs.

CHAPTER 3

Project Description

Introduction

The following chapter of my capstone will, in a descriptive manner, provide the answers to my research question, *How can content teachers and education staff better support English Language Learners in the classroom*. The chapter will provide information regarding the need for this staff development, as well as a detailed description of the staff development project itself. The staff development provided covers four main topics to be discussed in a section below. They are:

1. A basic understanding of the second language acquisition process experienced by ELs in their classes. This will include description of each of the stages (any or all of which may be found in any one class), and factors present in students' daily lives that may impact this process
2. Academic Language, its functions, relevance, and cross-curricular relationships
3. Academic language scaffolds that may be used in daily instruction and lesson interaction
4. Accommodations and modifications for assignments and assessments

Although there are many wonderful resources available, the two I most often referenced in my actual presentation are enclosed at the end. They include *Academic Language! Academic Literacy!* (by Eli R. Johnson, 2009), some resources found on the website Colorin Colorado by authors Robertson and Himmel (no specific date given), and

Assessing ELLs in ESL or Mainstream Classrooms: Quick Fixes for Busy Teachers (by Lauren A. Fregeau and Robert D. Leier, 2008).

Context and Audience

This staff development is created for middle school teachers and education staff-content teachers, special education and support staff, paras, and administrators (approximately 65 in total, however, the presentation was given in smaller groups of 15-20 staff). The district in which it was presented is a southern suburb of Minneapolis, MN. This district, like many other suburb districts, is experiencing a continuous growth in English language learner numbers, from a large variety in increasingly diverse linguistic backgrounds. EL students in this middle school currently range in levels of language proficiency from one to five.

Staff development in this school is normally conducted in a large group, face-to-face format. That was the intended format for this presentation; however, due to the current situation with COVID-19, the presentation was moved to an online format. The presentation, when implemented after a review by my Hamline Capstone advisors, as well as my administrative team, lasts approximately 50 minutes in length, allowing for a question-answer portion of time at the end.

Need for Project

The necessity for the project occurs on several levels, each of which I address within the topics shared. The first- a basic understanding of SLA- is intended to provide teachers with a fundamental comprehension of what behaviors and expectations may be considered “normal” during the various stages of the second language acquisition

process. The information is vital to teachers trying not only to establish appropriate classroom expectations and supports, but also to those trying to discern what academic concerns may be related to SLA or a potential learning disorder.

The second topic- academic language- provides teachers with a background of the incredibly complex nature of the language of school. In this section, I covered the difference between academic (CALP- Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) and social language (BICS- Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills), as the proficiency in one (social) can often be misleading in understanding proficiency in the other. As mentioned previously, a student's quickly developing proficiency in social language can lead educators to assume total English proficiency. As was covered earlier, it is important to understand that academic language takes much longer to develop, and requires much more explicit instruction and support.

The third topic- instructional scaffolds and supports- gives teachers quick, yet effective tools to support lesson delivery and classroom interactions for ELs at various levels of second language acquisition. Not only are these scaffolds essential to EL participation, but also for making the instruction given more accessible to them. Providing these scaffolds in daily lessons will enhance EL learning and relationship-building, and also aid informal assessments.

The fourth and final topic- assignment and assessment accommodations and modifications- provides teachers with the necessary means of answering the all-important questions, "How do I know what they truly understand of the content? How do I know they aren't stuck on the language of the test?" This section of the staff development is for

suggesting effective modification strategies for assessments and assignments, which allows teachers and students to focus on content knowledge learning more than linguistic requirements associated with each.

Project Description

The following section will provide a more detailed descriptive overview of the four topics addressed in my staff development presentation. As stated above, the presentation lasts approximately 50 minutes, allowing for questions during and after the presentation. I give examples of the content that will be presented in each section, as well as approximate time considerations.

Introduction of Presenter and Topic

I have found in previous staff trainings- both as a presenter and a participant- that beginning with a personal introduction and making connections is important. I begin with my own introduction, educational background, and teaching experience to establish some credibility. Although I have worked with some staff closely in the last year, I am still relatively new to many and feel it is respectful to give what assurances I can that I am not there to waste their time. My background as a classroom teacher, as well as ESL may help bridge that relationship with some, while others may connect with my being a mother of two teenagers, or my love of fostering rescue dogs. In my experience, sharing a few personal tidbits in the beginning helps to establish connection and relationship before the learning begins. The introduction will take 10% or less of the allotted time.

During the introduction, I will also establish the relevance of the topics covered in the next 50 minutes to their individual teaching goals. Knowles (1984) suggests the

following are important aspects of adult learning: personal connection to learning goal, authenticity, trust, and mutual respect between the facilitator and the learners. After establishing myself as a fellow teacher, I will ask each to take a moment to picture an EL student each knows. Perhaps a recent student, or one of the past. I will ask that each teacher picture this student from time to time as we cover the next 50 minutes, which I hope will give a worthy purpose, context, and goal for each individual participant. I will then communicate the four topics to be addressed, and set the purpose of better meeting the needs of the EL students in our school.

Foundational Understanding of the Second Language Acquisition Process and Affective Factors

The discussion describing the SLA process and factors which affect it will take approximately 15% of the staff development time. This section outlines, and describes characteristics typical of each of the six stages of second language acquisition. They are: pre-production, early production, speech emergence, beginning fluency, intermediate fluency, and advanced fluency. Along with descriptions of the typical characteristics, I also mention the typical (but not necessarily pre-determined) time spent in each before progressing to the next.

In addition to the descriptions of stages, I discuss some of the many factors that may affect a student's progress through these stages. During this portion of the presentation, I address such topics as language distance, native language proficiency, attitudes of the surrounding community, and individual learning differences. I also briefly mention and describe the theories of "affective filter" and other notable language

learning theories. Due to time constraints, I was not able to spend time discussing these in great detail. However, it is still important for staff who work with ELs to have a basic understanding of all of the many factors that individual EL students may be experiencing on their academic journey, and that not all EL students have the exact same experience with second language learning.

Academic Language

There could easily be an entire 45-minute staff training on the complexities of academic language alone, and I will create a follow-up training on just that in the future. However, for the time allotted (25% of the total time), I focused on the following subtopics of academic language teaching: BICS vs. CALP, cross-curricular implications, tier-leveled language, and the three types of academic language: action, transition, and concepts (Johnson 2009).

Instructional and Classroom Scaffolds

This portion of the staff development (also 25% of the total time) will center on those linguistic scaffolds and supports that are particularly effective during instruction and classroom activities. The suggestions given here are designed to increase EL participation ability as well as comprehensible input. The scaffolds discussed will be in one of two subcategories- cooperative learning techniques and language support strategies.

Cooperative learning techniques are widely useful for a variety of reasons, including community-building and language modeling by fluent English speaking peers, but also because cooperative learning often involves breaking down a much broader

learning objective into smaller, more focused portions, then piecing them back together as a group or class. These strategies allow for ELs to focus more on a specific area and the language surrounding it productively, and also use their usually stronger academic receptive skills to absorb the other pieces of information to better understand the whole. There are many creative ways to incorporate cooperative learning strategies, strengthening academic listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Some examples I will share are:

- Mix and Match
- Meet and Greet
- Inside-Outside Circle
- Reel
- Traveling Sorts

In the presentation, I describe two or three of the above activities for contextual purposes, and provide a list for participants to further explore on their own. In addition to the above activities, I include the following of Holt's (2002) suggested considerations: making academic language an explicit part of instructions, creating groups of varying English proficiency, and providing appropriate language supports (such as sentence starters or frames) for SLA levels as needed.

Language supports in the classroom also increase EL ability to participate in academic tasks and discussions. Johnson gives a variety of suggestions for language support for all four modalities in his book *Academic Language! Academic Literacy!* (2009), such as the following: sentence starters, sentence frames, modeling, pre-teaching, questioning and metacognition reflections, visual aids, signal words.

Definitions and examples of each are offered with short discussion. Also noted, that these supports are not intended to change the content learning, but simply allow students to focus on the content knowledge needed rather than the academic language tasks surrounding it.

Instructional Accommodations and Modifications

The last portion of the staff development leads staff through several modification techniques and accommodations for classroom assignments and assessments. As with language scaffolding, the intent behind using these tools is not to make assignments and assessments “easy.” It is to better support the linguistic needs of EL students lessen the linguistic interference involved in assessment tasks. Karen Ford offers a collective list of various common modification strategies in her article, *Differentiated Instruction for English Language Learners* (n.d.), which can be found on the Colorin Colorado website. The list, which includes such suggestions as simplified language versions and small group testing, are included in the presentation for staff.

Accommodations and Modifications for Assignments and Assessments

Accommodating the Test. Of course, several accommodations can also be made to the actual test to better ascertain the content knowledge of EL students. Some examples to be included in the presentation are (Ford 2016) accommodations such as extended test time and periodic check-ins for understanding.

Modifying Existing Tests. Not all accommodations mean “recreating the wheel” from scratch. There are ways of modifying an already existing test to save on time and workload. For example, Ford (2016) includes considerations such as eliminating one

multiple choice response and reducing the grammatical complexity of short-answer questions.

Prepare Students to Take Tests. Simple preparation tasks can make a big difference in EL performance on assessments. For example, preparing students for a test by previewing and highlighting key words within the instructions and defining essential testing vocabulary, such as *compare* and *respond*.

A more comprehensive list of suggestions will be provided with the training. If time allows, it would benefit teachers to have time to work together in their teams to view an existing assessment used in their classes from “an EL lens” and discuss together what appropriate modifications they could make.

Summary

The final project of my capstone, a staff development presentation, offers key information to educators looking to better understand, support, and assess English language learners in the classroom. By introducing, teaching, and discussing these four essential topics of EL learning in the academic setting, I am able to better equip these leaders to do so. The education of ELs creates language teachers of us all, regardless of content area of expertise. Content teachers and education staff have incredible opportunities every day to enhance the educational experience and language learning opportunities of these amazing students, changing the course of their academic lives forever. It is a privilege to be a part of that journey with them.

The final chapter of this project, Chapter Four, I provide a detailed reflection of the capstone writing process, project creating, literature review, project limitations, and

possible next steps in answering the research question, *”How can content teachers and educational staff better support English Language Learners in the classroom?”*

Although this project provides essential foundational information needed to support ELs in the classroom, there is still much that can be learned and expanded upon to better serve these students in all academic settings.

CHAPTER 4

Conclusion

Introduction

The final chapter of my capstone will provide reflection on my research question, *How can content teachers and education staff better support English Language Learners in the classroom?* This reflection will extend to the research I included in Chapter Two in order to answer this question, as well as the capstone project I have created to share the most beneficial information with fellow teaching staff. This chapter will include a reflection on the capstone process, the research involved, implications of this project for the intended stakeholders, and recommendations for further staff development opportunities that will extend the initial intention of this capstone.

Reflection on the Literature Review

There is much research available regarding the education of English Learners. While writing my literature review, it was difficult to select from the vast amount of information available, that which would be of most benefit to my audience of general education staff in the small allotment of time provided. This realization led me to make the understanding of the second language acquisition process a priority for this particular professional development project, with the inclusion of specific support areas that will be given more time and focus in upcoming professional developments.

Of the many sources providing relevant information in my literature review, I found four in particular that were particularly useful to my project. Kristina Robertson (Robertson, n.d.) provides comprehensive information regarding several relevant topics

related to teaching ELs (English Learners), including information pertaining to the second language acquisition process itself. The book *Academic Language! Academic Literacy!* provides not only strategies for teachers seeking to better support the literacy needs of their EL students, but also an explicit understanding and description of the role of academic language itself. Finally, Karen Ford's article, "Differentiated Instruction for English Language Learners" (Ford, 2016), and *Assessing ELLs in ESL or Mainstream Classrooms: Quick Fixes for Busy Teachers* (by Lauren A. Fregeau and Robert D. Leier, 2008) contribute significant suggestions for educators ready to take their understanding of the English as a second language process to the next level by creating appropriate modifications, supports, and accommodations for their instruction and assessment.

Implications for this Project

Implications for this project will affect several stakeholders, previously listed in Chapter One. Those invested in the education of English learners (administration, teachers, para-professionals, families, and the students themselves) will all benefit, in various ways, from a better foundational understanding of the information provided in this project. The educational experience of a student shapes not only knowledge in content areas, but how students view themselves as learners. To learn and exist in an environment that not only understands, but supports the linguistic needs of its diverse learners provides students with security, confidence, and a sense of belonging. When teachers better understand the second language process, they are better equipped to provide the most appropriate accommodations and supports for instruction and assessment. Providing this level of support through a better understanding of the needs

present also allows teachers to access what content knowledge a student has attained, rather than what the student is able to produce only *after* overcoming linguistic barriers. The implications of this project do not, as stated in the section *Recommendations for Future Use and Further Research*, end with this project. After reflecting on my Capstone Process in general, it has become clear to me that this project is only the beginning of the journey, which started at what my administrator so frankly referred to as “Ground Zero”- the day I decided on my capstone topic.

Recommendations for Future Use, Further Research, and Continued Work

As stated throughout this chapter, it has become obvious to me that this particular work will only serve as the starting point for what I hope to provide in the future as a means of equipping general education staff to better support English language learners in the classroom. As I will mention in the section *Reflections on the Capstone Process*, I do believe that a better understanding of the experiences of the learners themselves will lead to more invested teachers, which is why I chose to spend a significant amount of my project discussing the second language acquisition experience, as well as the role of academic language in the classroom. However, as an educator myself, I understand that it is one thing to give a teacher useful information, and another to then provide strategies and model how to use it. It is not my intent to provide the initial training, only to leave teachers and staff asking, “Now what?”

In my research, I discovered not only in-depth information regarding support for language learners, but also countless suggestions and examples of *how* to support them. As educators, many of us are internally motivated to take what we have learned and apply

it as soon as possible, lest the enlightenment be quickly forgotten in our mile-long to do lists, teaching demands, parent phone calls, and meetings. Therefore, it is natural to look to “next steps” in the journey. Once a basic understanding is established through the initial training, I intend to support education staff by providing such follow-up professional development as the following:

- WIDA and Can-Do Descriptors. A professional development opportunity for educators to learn more about interpreting WIDA levels, ACCESS testing (implications of scores, demands of the test, the collective investment), and utilizing the WIDA Can-Do Descriptors to emphasize student strengths, as well as monopolize them when creating appropriate modifications and accommodations.
- EL Student Plans. A training which provides an in-depth look at the information provided in the annually shared EL Student Plan for each EL student. This training would also provide modeling of how and when to use specific information in the plan to answer questions, create lessons, appropriate expectations, and determine modifications and accommodations for assignments and assessments.
- Language Modifications and Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment. Easily a two-part training, this professional development would focus entirely on introducing strategies and methods to support academic language development in the classroom, including cooperative learning strategies and academic signal words and frames, as well as modifications and accommodations specific to classroom assessments. The suggestions provided in this training as an additional

resource would serve as a starting point, but time would be allowed for teachers to work in groups on actual classroom assessments to give context, discussion, and guided feedback.

As stated above, the implications for extended work necessary to better support ELs in the classroom is extensive. To do so, we must first not only inspire, but also equip those directly connected with these educational experiences to the best of our ability. I am, after all, only one of the “EL Teachers” in the building— all staff who come into contact with each of these amazing students are teachers of EL students, no matter what their roles. They deserve to be given the tools to do that service justice.

Limitations of the Project

Although the information shared in this project can be applied to English Language learners in general, the professional development created for this capstone project was developed with a specific middle school setting in mind. Much of the driving force behind the creation of this training was based on the experiences of teaching staff in a school that was only starting to see an increase in EL numbers, and therefore based on meeting the needs of this staff. It may not, then, be suitable for a teaching staff that has long-since embarked on the journey to meet the needs of EL students, as they have already received similar training previously.

This project is also limited to a rather set time limit, and not meant to be a comprehensive EL training for teachers. As I have stated in the section *Future Use, Further Research, and Continued Work*, this particular training is intended to lay the groundwork for much more comprehensive and in-depth trainings on the various ways in

which education staff can support EL needs. It is intended to lay a foundation on which teachers can build from, with purpose and intention, as they continue to learn specific tools and strategies that will enable them to better support English Language Learners in the classroom.

When reflecting on the final project created, it is also important to note that educators will benefit from further training which does not simply allow them to gain more knowledge and insight into the learning experiences of second language learners. Further professional development will allow educators to not only learn about the topics covered here (second language acquisition levels and factors, the role of academic language, and appropriate modifications and supports), but to engage in opportunities for the modeling, discussion of, and practice with developing and applying them. Continued support by means of training, ongoing professional development, and coaching are all important assets to teachers and education professionals working with English language learners.

Reflections on the Capstone Process

The capstone writing process has been an incredibly reflective and expansive experience for me. Not only has it caused me to reflect on my various experiences as a teacher, as well as my own knowledge-base as an ESL teacher, but it has also guided me to a significant realization of work that is just beginning.

As I shared from my teaching experiences in Chapter One, my role has changed throughout my years in the field. I have been an elementary mainstream teacher, elementary ESL teacher, middle school content teacher (for non-traditional programs,

such as content recovery in the summer), and a middle and high school ESL teacher. Reflecting on these experiences consistently throughout the literature review and project creation offered several different perspectives when choosing what to include in this initial training for general education staff.

Also influencing the structure of my capstone project were the many interactions I have shared with educators from every area of the academic setting. Each interaction—some good, some difficult, and so many that added to my own understanding of the teaching profession- added to the information and the beliefs that guided this capstone process. When I began this project, I thought I would be focusing strictly on the complexity of the second language acquisition process, perhaps in an attempt to prevent some of the less-pleasant experiences my younger students encountered those first few years in my teaching career, experiences that would have been less common with teachers that had a better understanding of the process and appropriate expectations of second language acquisition. However, the longer I worked on the project, the more research I did, the more colleagues I talked to in and outside of class, the more my original ideas changed into a structured project that was not so much preventative as it was proactive. The mindset for me, as the writer, has shifted from “*know, so you won’t...*” to “*know, so you can...*”

Reflection upon this process has also brought reflection on my beliefs as an educator, which have also been incorporated into the project. I strongly believe in the impact each and every teacher and education staff member can have on any one student’s academic experience. I believe that students are able to demonstrate so much more

learning when doing so in not only a language-rich environment, but one that is accessible to them. It is also my belief that educators, when working together and collaboratively toward a common goal that is centered on student learning, can drastically change the experiences of their learners as well as that of their own teaching.

Summary

Reflection is an essential component of the teaching profession. As educators we have never “fully arrived.” Research is an ongoing endeavor as we continuously strive to meet the needs of our increasingly diverse student population. Consideration of the literature reviewed during this process has provided not only sources and information used in this project, but also that which may be used in further staff development training. Reflection on this project’s limitations and implications have shined a light on further research and support still needed, and a path that will lead there. It is more apparent now than ever, that standing at the center of our continuous reflection is the innate desire to improve the learning experiences of our students.

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Appendix A

Cooperative Learning Techniques

From: Colorin Colorado:

<https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/cooperative-learning-strategies>

1. **Round Robin**

Present a category of words or content from current study for discussion. Have students take turns going around the group and naming items that fit the category. This could be used for naming adjectives for character analysis, for example (Kagan, 2009).

2. **Roundtable**

Present a category (such as invertebrates). Have students take turns writing one word at a time. (Kagan, 2009)

3. **Write-Around**

For creative writing or summarization, give a sentence starter (for example, the start of a story or chapter summary). Ask all students in each team to finish that sentence. Then, they pass their paper to the right, read the one they received, and add a sentence to that one. After a few rounds, four great stories or summaries emerge. Give children time to add a conclusion and/or edit their favorite one to share with the class.

4. **Numbered Heads Together**

Ask students to number off in their teams from one to four. Announce a question and a time limit. Students put their heads together to come up with an answer. Call a number and ask all students with that number to stand and answer the question. Recognize correct responses and elaborate through rich discussions. (Kagan, 2009)

5. **Team Jigsaw**

Assign each student in a team one fourth of a page to read from any text (for example, a social studies text), or one fourth of a topic to investigate or memorize. Each student completes his or her assignment and then teaches the others or helps to put together a team product by contributing a piece of the puzzle.

6. Tea Party (or Inside/Outside)

Students form two concentric circles or two lines facing each other. You ask a question (on any content) and students discuss the answer with the student facing them. After one minute, the outside circle or one line moves to the right so that students have new partners. Then pose a second question for them to discuss. Continue with five or more questions. For a little variation, students can write questions on cards to review for a test through this "Tea Party" method.

Other cooperative learning activities (referenced from my own experience with many creative colleagues):

7. Tea Party Variation

To be used when introducing a new unit, topic, story, or content or making predictions: Strategically plan ahead by writing vocabulary words, key phrases, or other hints on pieces of paper. When introducing a story or article, cut parts of the article out that give some, but not sufficient information. Give each student a slip of paper. This strategy allows the teacher to make sure that EL students get a word or phrase that is appropriate for their language levels. Students read their paper and consider its meaning. They are then given time to mix around the room, stopping at a set timer, turning to an "elbow partner" nearest them. Each reads his or her paper. After hearing each other's, the students discuss how the two bits of information could be related. The timer sets them off mingling again and stops for them to find a new "elbow partner" with new information. The students repeat the process, only now when they discuss possible connections, each is not only bringing the information from just his or her paper, but also the information and discussion from the previous partnership. Continue for three or more rounds, allowing students to continue compiling their connections, getting introduced to relevant vocabulary and terms, as well as practicing listening and speaking skills. Bring students together, and have final pairs share out predictions as to what the new unit will be or article will be about, as well as how they arrived at that conclusion or prediction. For a writing variation, have students write

their own predictions based on their conversations and take turns sharing in class or in small groups. By the end of the activity, ELs will have been exposed to new language and vocabulary multiple times and heard peer modeled language from a variety of partners, which may increase their confidence in sharing.

8. **Carousel (also known as Museum Walk)**

Set posters around the room with an essential question, or broad themes relevant to the topic of study (ex. An anticipation guide style). Divide students into groups of varying language proficiencies. Assign each group a starting poster. Each group reads the question on the poster, and participates in discussion on how to respond. Responses are recorded on the poster (the teacher can set the parameters for responses: full sentences, words/phrases, one collective response, or a comprehensive response that includes more of the discussion held, etc.). After a set time, the groups rotate to the next poster, read the question as well as previous groups' responses, and repeat the activity for themselves. Continue until all groups have gone through each of the posters. Conclude with having groups "present" the various posters, sharing the responses written (great for ELs who are more comfortable reading already-written work), and allow groups to provide more insight to their written responses and explain their thinking, as well as connections to what other groups wrote.

9. **Talking Chips**

Discussion technique that is great for a variety of contexts, such as synthesizing and analyzing information, and insure each student is given the opportunity to contribute, as well as respond to the contributions of others. This activity is especially beneficial to allow equal sharing opportunities, so that the students who typically do all of the talking in groups or class contribute no more or less than others. It also allows for these more proficient speakers to model the desired language output for lower language level ELs. Divide students into groups of varying proficiency levels. Give each group a preselected set of questions or prompts. These questions and prompts may contain sentence starters and frames to aid students in producing the desired academic language. Each student takes turns responding, placing a chip in the center. Once a student has contributed all of his or her chips, that student is done speaking for the duration, which allows all

students equal contribution to the discussion. Many modifications can be used with this activity, such as assigning specific categories of responses to colors of chips (example: yellow is an initial response to the question, red in a response to another group member's response, etc), language supports of varying levels can be provided, students may be allowed to write before responding, etc.

The strategies listed above are just a few examples of cooperative learning activities. Keep in mind that these activities are intended to provide students with feelings of support, respect, and teamwork, so considerations must be made to provide ELs the appropriate supports to equally participate. Providing language scaffolds, such as sentence starters and frames, not only help ELs to produce the desired academic language, but also help to keep all students on task and engaged.

Appendix B

Tips For Assignment and Assessment Modifications

The following are examples of how an assignment or assessment can be modified or accommodated to meet the needs of varying levels of EL students.

Accommodating the test. Of course, several accommodations can also be made to the actual test to better ascertain the content knowledge of EL students. Some examples include:

- Extended test time
- Essential questions only
- Read questions aloud
- Offer a reduced-language option
- Allow students to use modified texts

Modifying Existing Tests. Not all accommodations mean “recreating the wheel” from scratch. There are ways of modifying an already existing test to save on time and workload. For example,

- Multiple choice: eliminate one or more of the choices
- Discussion and essay: have ELLs label terms, draw and label diagrams and pictures. Depending on a student’s written language level, accept phrasal responses. Do not count grammar and spelling against a student unless it is the specific learning target.
- Matching: reduce the number of matches required, give an equal number of possibilities in each column, and eliminate “trick” language matches
- Provide a word bank
- Provide multiple ways of answering (pointing, use of pictures and diagrams, etc.)

Prepare Students to Take Tests. Simple preparation tasks can make a big difference in EL performance on assessments. This includes simple strategies such as,

- giving students explicit overviews of what content will be assessed
- previewing the forms of assessment (matching, fill in the blank, multiple choice, short answer, etc.).
- Go through the test before-hand and highlight important key terms and phrases.
- Read the test directions aloud to the student as they follow along to assure understanding.

- Clarify important key words or “confusing” directions.

Also consider allowing EL students to take a test one-on-one or in a small group. Encourage ELs to ask clarifying questions- reassure them that there is no harm in asking (many will not because they are afraid it may be like “asking for the answer”), and that you will clarify what you are able to.

Appendix C

Script for Google Slides **Educators Supporting English Language** **Learners**

Slide 1

Title

Slide 2

- Personal Introduction: Share any personal information here, for the participants to get to know you. Consider sharing information about family, interests, travel, etc. It is an opportunity to connect with the participants.

Slide 3

- Professional Introduction: Share educational and professional background experience. Highlight content teaching or co-teaching experience to further connections and validate information.
- The goal of this presentation was to help educators understand the “who,” so that time and energy spent on the upcoming “why” and, so importantly, the “how” will have relevance and meaning. THEY are a worthy investment of an educator’s all-too precious time and energy.

Slide 4

- Today’s Objectives: Share slide
- This presentation touches on many topics related to the experiences of our English Language Learners. However, it is not intended to give a fully comprehensive understanding of each complex topic. It is my intent that it will provide you with a better understanding in general of the English language learner experience, as well as suggestions for improving that educational experience for your students.

Slide 5

- Read slide.

- Initiate a Turn and Talk: What do you know about second language acquisition? Why understand the process, and not just take a few suggestions on strategies?
- After a minute, ask participants to share out any responses.

Slide 6

- Second language acquisition, especially in the academic setting, is a complex process. Today, we will discuss two of those topics: the stages of second language acquisition, and some of the factors that can affect the second language acquisition process.

Slide 7

- First, we will look at the six stages of second language acquisition, and what an educator may typically see in each.
- It is important to note that every student progresses through the process differently depending on a variety of factors.

Slide 8

- Pre-production is the first stage (Discuss information on slide).
- It is important to note that students in the pre-production stage, or, “silent period,” not be pressured to speak before they are ready. Although encouragement can be beneficial, pressure will increase a student’s production anxiety and could result in a prolonged silent period.
- Early Production is the second stage (discuss slide).

Slide 9

- Discuss slide content

Slide 10

- Discuss slide content

Slide 11

- How long does it take? Families and teachers alike often ask why one student is “still” in English Language Learner programs, while another who started at the same time has exited.
- 5-7 years approximately, possibly longer for those without strong L1 (first language) skills.
- To better understand how to answer this question, we will discuss some of the factors that can affect second language learning.

Slide 12

- As stated on the previous slide, a strong proficiency in a student's first language is an incredible asset to learning English as a second language
- Discuss slide content.

Slide 13

- Second language acquisition is so much more than learning words in another language! Language is the foundation of all of our social interactions- academic as well as personal.
- Discuss slide content.

Slide 14

- Discuss slide content.

Slide 15

- Affective Filter examples: heightened emotional responses could be from anywhere; an incident at home, an exchange with another student in the hallway or at lunch, or a negative exchange with a teacher
- Comprehensible Input: discuss slide, also mention that even language that is easy, but delivered disjointedly can be difficult to follow. "One level above" keeps students more engaged, but the learning within reach.

Slide 16

- Academic language: It is more than just vocabulary1
- Share a personal connection if applicable. For example, "When I began teaching ESL 13 years ago, I remember the 'ESL Support Curriculum' I was given to use in my ESL groups. I will never forget one story support lesson in particular- I was to teach the word 'walrus.' After reading the story, I saw that the word 'walrus' was used only once, and was of absolutely no significance in understanding the story, and was not likely to have any real significance to my students in the future. It was simply a word the curriculum writers chose as one that ELs may not know. We have come a very long way in our EL vocabulary education since then."

Slide 17

- BICS vs CALP: social and academic English
- BICS: Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (social language)

- CALP: Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (academic language)
- BICS and CALP DISTINCTION EXAMPLE: BICS - “Oh my gosh!!!! That new sweater is soooo adorable! That blue matches your eyes! Ooooo, it’s so soft!” CALP - “The sweater that you recently acquired is aesthetically pleasing. I appreciate the similarity between the ocean-blue hues of your sweater and your oculus. The fabric is clearly an equal-part combination of cotton and rayon, which contribute to a strong, durable, yet pleasant feel when in contact with one’s epidermis.”

Slide 18

- Discuss slide content.

Slide 19

- Discuss slide content. Then, ask participants to do the following with one or two people near them:
- Describe an orange to the person next to you, as a **farmer** would (give a few seconds for discussion). What words would a farmer use to describe an orange (stages of development, crop, seasons, ripeness, market value, etc.)
- Repeat exercise from the perspectives of a nutritionist, a grocer, a scientist, a mathematician, and a seven-year-old child. Give just a few seconds before sharing out examples of the descriptive language used.

Slide 20

- We will be focusing on General Academic Language for this presentation, but first, we will distinguish between the two different Categories all academic language falls into: Specific Content and General Academic.

Slide 21

- Discuss slide content.

Slide 22

- Discuss slide content.

Slide 23

- Discuss slide content

Slide 24

- Introduce next content: Accommodations, Scaffolds, and Supports.

Slide 25

- Discuss slide content.

Slide 26

- Discuss slide content.

Slide 27

- Discuss slide content.

Slide 28

- Discuss slide content.

Slide 29

- Discuss slide content.

Slide 30

- Discuss what is to come. I am not intending to give them a lot of good information without following up on what to do with it!

Slide 31

- Time for questions, discussion.
- Consider using this slide to also share your contact information, upcoming professional development on some of the topics covered today (such as academic language, assessment support and modification, etc)
- Consider posting what additional support you can offer to educators, such as collaborative efforts, observations, etc.

Slide 32

- Share your contact information

Slides 33 and 34

- References for information shared in presentation and additional materials