

The Changing Face of the Classroom: Understanding and Teaching English Language Learners

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“Change does not necessarily assure progress, but progress implacably requires change. Education is essential to change, for education creates both new wants and the ability to satisfy them.”

HENRY STEELE COMMAGER



Have you heard this?

“When my father came here there were no classes for him and he did just fine.”

“Those children know more than they let on. They have you fooled. I hear them talk on the playground.”

“ELLs are not that much different from the other students. I’ll have a mainstream student sit with Juan and he’ll pick up just fine.”



The Challenge...

- The current wave of immigration has drastically reshaped the nature of education in the United States.
- How do we provide effective language and reading instruction that aligns to the diverse needs of our students?



Who are ELL Students?

1. Discuss with a shoulder partner your definition of an ELL student.
2. Identify 2-3 characteristics and/or behaviors of an ELL student during the reading block.



Definition:

Students who come from language backgrounds other than English and whose proficiency is not yet developed to the point where they can fully profit from English-only instruction.

(August & Hakuta, 1997)



The opportunities for your learning today include:

- Review recent research on English Language Learners and the implications for reading instruction
- Provide you with tools that will enhance the literacy opportunities for English Language Learners
- Strengthen your knowledge of the stages of language development in ELL students and plan for instruction in oral language development, fluency and comprehension



Now that we've discussed who they are, let's take a look at some U.S.

STATISTICS....



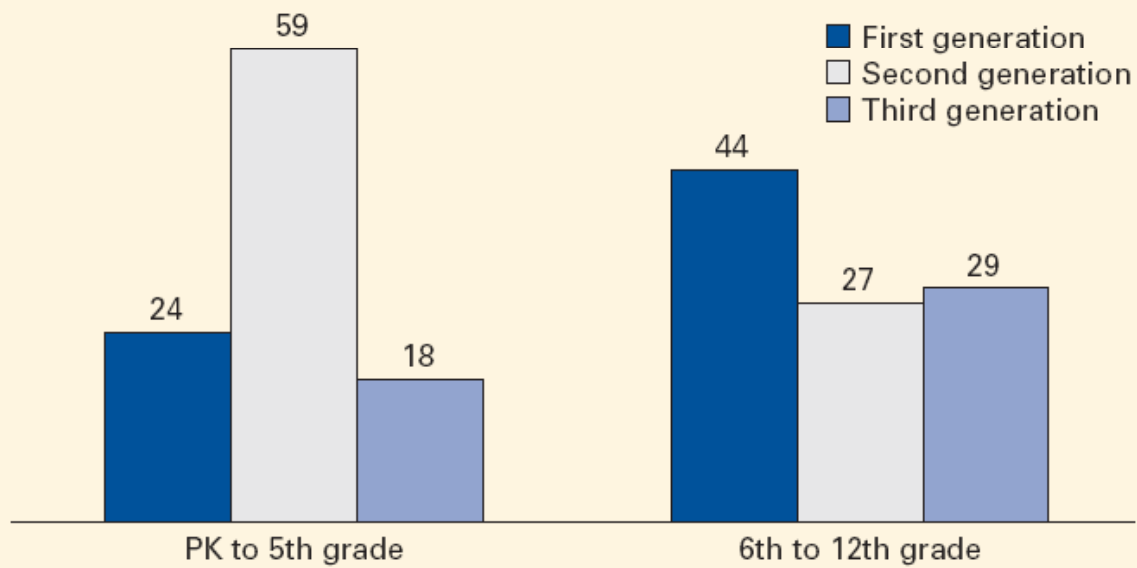
Enrollment.....

- 1 in 5 students in pre-kindergarten through grade twelve are children of immigrants.
- because immigrants have most of their children after arriving in the US, about 3-quarters of children of immigrants are native-born, while about 1-quarter are foreign-born.

(The New Demography Of America's Schools)



FIGURE 12. Nativity and Generation for Limited English Proficient Children by Grade Level, 2000 (percent)



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.

ELL Trivia...

- Ells are concentrated in 6 states, but increasing rapidly in others.
- Top 10 immigration states are.....



They are:

- California
- Texas
- **Florida**
- New York
- Illinois
- Arizona
- Colorado
- Washington
- North Carolina
- New Mexico



Demographic Impact

State	LEP 95-97	LEP 03-05	% Change
California	1,322,714	1,596,534	20.7%
Texas	483,123	658,287	36.3%
Florida	156,809	291,163	85.7%
New York	242,865	232,845	-4.1%
Illinois	113,076	174,626	54.4%
Arizona	87,970	149,763	70.2%
Colorado	27,104	89,424	229.9%
Washington	53,961	70,346	30.4%
N. Carolina	19,472	67,125	244.7%
New Mexico	77,909	63,590	-18.4%

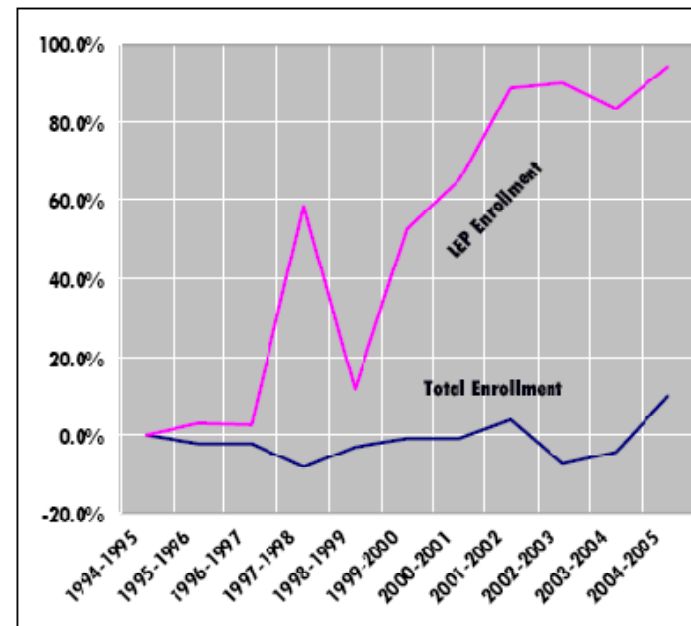


FLORIDA

OFFICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION, LANGUAGE ENHANCEMENT, and ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT for LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS

RATE OF LEP GROWTH 1994/1995-2004/2005

	Total Enrollment	Growth from 94-95	LEP Enrollment	Growth from 94-95
1994-1995	2,405,539	0.0%	153,841	0.0%
1995-1996	2,356,015	-2.1%	158,563	3.1%
1996-1997	2,356,369	-2.0%	158,032	2.7%
1997-1998	2,200,726	-8.5%	243,766	58.5%
1998-1999	2,331,958	-3.1%	171,859	11.7%
1999-2000	2,381,396	-1.0%	235,181	52.9%
2000-2001	2,379,701	-1.1%	254,517	65.4%
2001-2002	2,500,161	3.9%	290,024	88.5%
2002-2003	2,231,758	-7.2%	292,077	89.9%
2003-2004	2,296,777	-4.5%	282,066	83.3%
2004-2005	2,639,960	9.7%	299,346	94.6%



Sources: U.S. Department of Education's Survey of the States' Limited English Proficient Students and Available Educational Programs and Services, 1991-1992 through 2000-2001 summary reports; state publications (1998-1999 data); enrollment totals from the National Center for Educational Statistics Core of Common Data, 1998-1999 through 2004-2005; FY 2002 Consolidated State Applications for State Grants under Title IX, Part C, § 9302 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (P.L. 107-110); 2004-2005 Consolidated State Performance Reports; and additional 2002-2005 data reported by state.

August 2006



Is it possible to design instruction that will close the language experience gap?

YES!

Students who struggle with a language deficit will need many language-rich experiences, as well as systematic and explicit instruction to help them catch up to their more verbal peers.



“ELLs can learn, and will learn, if the instruction we provide them is carefully designed, delivered, and monitored, and addresses specific language needs.”

“Language issue is not a potential issue”

(Alejandra Rodriguez-Galindo)



**What are the
instructional
implications based on
the data presented?**



"Reading is essentially the same process whether reading English as a first or second language. In other words, both first and second language readers look at the page and the print and use their knowledge of sound/symbol relationships, word order, grammar, and knowledge about the text's topic and structure along with their linguistic knowledge and reading strategies to arrive at an interpretation and to achieve their purpose for reading."

(Peregoy and Boyle, 1999, pg. 259.)



English Language Learners and Oral Language Development



It All Begins With Oral Language....

The National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth found a high correlation between oral proficiency in English and reading comprehension skills in English.



Oral Language & ELLs

“ It is not enough to teach language-minority students reading skills alone. Extensive oral English development must be incorporated into successful literacy instruction”

(August & Shanahan, 2006, p.5)



Research Point:

“Not all children are fortunate to be born into homes where parents or caregivers provide rich language experiences. These disadvantaged children enter our kindergartens lacking oral language skills.”

Louisa Moats, 2001



What is Language?

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) defines language as:

- a code made up of rules that include what words mean,
- how to make words,
- how to put them together, and
- what word combinations are best in what situations.

Speech is the oral form of language.

www.asha.org/public/speech/development



Defining Oral Language Development



The Duality of Learning Language

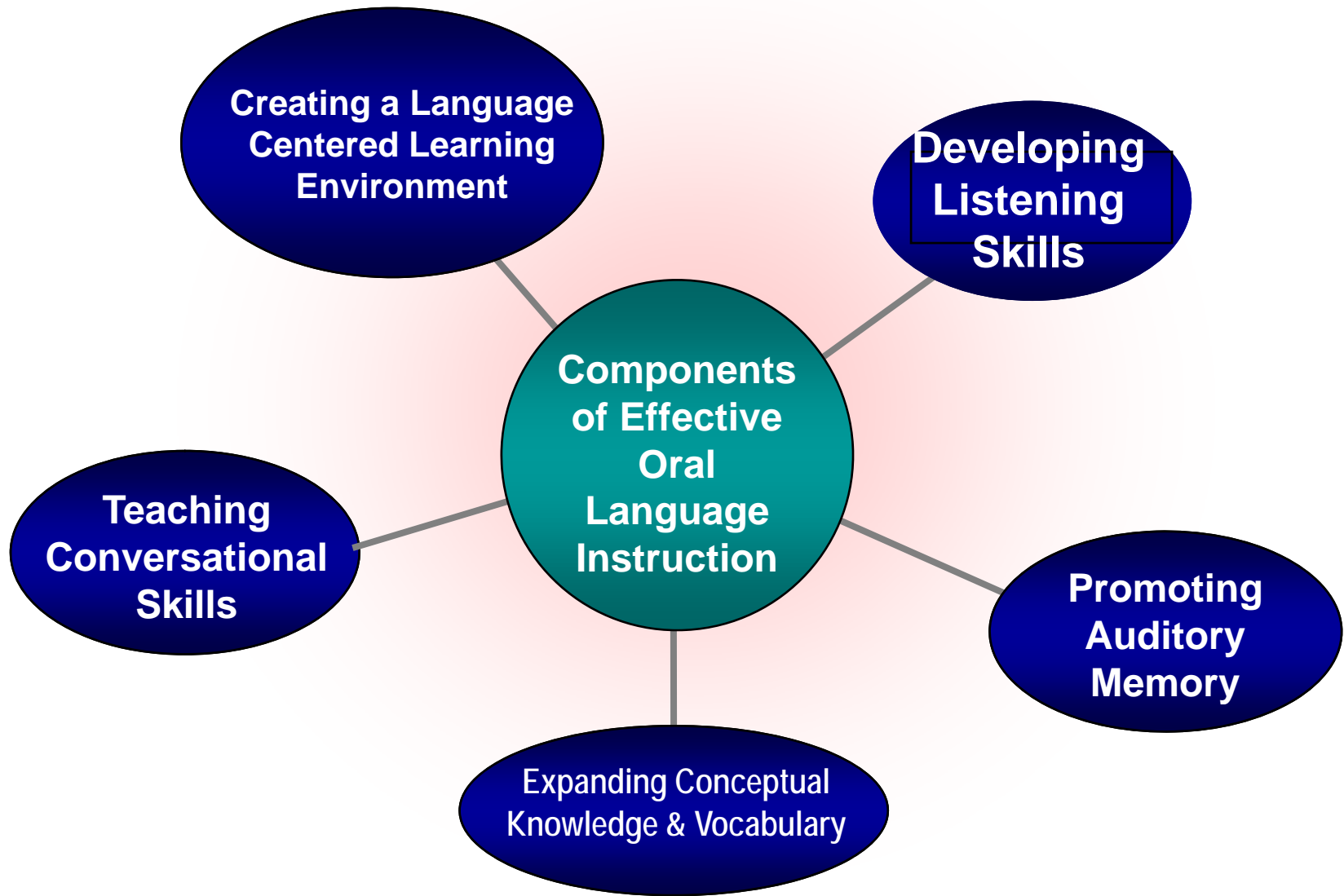


Receptive Language

The ability to understand spoken language

Expressive Language

The ability to use words to convey meaning



A Language- Centered Environment

Teachers should:

- Prepare lessons so children are actively involved in learning
- Maintain a classroom that stimulates student interest and discussion
- Provide rich contexts for learning
- Encourage language play
- Engage children in extended conversations
- Encourage children to interact and discuss topics of interest with others
- Encourage children to use language to problem solve and resolve conflicts



A Language-Centered Environment

Teachers should:

- Discuss a wide range of topics and word meanings
- Respond to students using new and “sophisticated” words
- Ask questions that encourage and sustain meaningful conversations
- Encourage children to tell and retell stories and events
- **Provide explicit instruction that promotes vocabulary development, effective word use, correct grammar, and clear articulation.**



A Language -Centered Environment

Children should . . .

- Explore and experiment with language
- Speak in complete sentences
- Develop an interest in learning new words
- Expand conceptual knowledge and vocabulary
- Use new and “sophisticated” words in daily conversations
- Practice good listening skills
- Practice good conversational skills
- Use language to solve conflicts
- Ask and answer *why* and *how* questions
- Discuss topics of interest
- Engage in activities that promote auditory memory



English Language Learners and Fluency.....



Fluency

Fluency represents a level of expertise in combining appropriate phrasing and intonation while reading words automatically.

Valerie Ellery



The NRP report defines fluency as:

“the ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with proper expression”

(NICHD, 2000, p.3-1)



What do you think?

- Discuss with a shoulder partner what a fluent reader sounds like.
- How do you know a child is reading fluently?
- Listening to a fluent reader, how do you know they are comprehending the text they are reading?



“Becoming a fluent reader has as much to do with constructing meaning as it has to do with attending to words on a page.”

(Forbes & Briggs, 2003, p. 3)



Building Blocks for Fluency

- Teacher read-alouds
- **Language experience**
- Phonemic awareness
- Basic sight vocabulary
- Word identification



"Having a repertoire of fluency tools readily available allows the maximum amount of cognitive energy to be directed to the all-important task of making sense of text."

(Rasinski, 2003, p. 26)



Shared Reading Fluency Strategies:

- Shared book experience
- Echo Reading
- Choral reading
- Rereading leveled texts
- Pausing with punctuation
- **Phrase strips**



Assisted Reading Fluency Strategies:

- Paired reading
- Books on tape
- Model selecting "Just Right Books"
- *Neurological Impress Method*
- **Repeated reading**
- Reading while listening



Performance Reading Fluency Strategies:

- Reader's Theater
- Say it like the character
- Guess the emotion



Importance of Goal setting for Fluency

- Set incremental and reachable goals for learners
- Monitor how they are accomplishing their goals
- Move the bar to another reachable goal



English Language Learners and Comprehension.....



What is Reading Comprehension?

- “Intentional thinking during which meaning is constructed through interactions between text and reader.” (Durkin, 1993)
- “The construction of the meaning of a written text through a reciprocal interchange of ideas between the reader and the message in a particular text.” (Harris and Hodges, 1995)
- “Reading comprehension is thinking guided by print.” (Perfetti, 1995)



If first and second language learners follow similar paths when developing literacy skills, then we need to integrate our knowledge of scientifically based reading research strategies into the reading instruction of English Language Learners.



Think about this:

“ . . . comprehension skills develop simultaneously with basic language skills and have their roots in early narrative comprehension . . . in terms of interventions, a clear implication is that we should be careful not to focus on the teaching of decoding skills to the exclusion of other skills . . . ”



That is . . .

“. . . we should not wait until children are proficient in decoding before beginning instruction in oral language skills such as vocabulary, syntax, inference making and comprehension monitoring.” (pp.30-31)

Cain and Oakhill, 2007



Comprehension and ELLs

- With every technique, it is vital that teachers explain and model directly, guiding students on how the technique builds the corresponding strategy. Teachers need to make the strategy a part of our unconscious reading process, so that students are able to combine any number of strategies to problem solve before, during, and after they read” (Routman, 2003, p.129).



Comprehension and ELLs

- Discuss with a shoulder partner what comprehension strategies can and should be woven into everyday teaching to address problem solving before, during, and after reading.
- Which do you feel would greatly benefit ELLs in particular and why?
- In your experience, which do you feel teachers rely on the most? Why?



Building Blocks for Comprehension

- Set clear goals for learning and provide feedback that focuses on meaning.
- Provide support to students by “thinking aloud.” Build on and clarify input of students.
- Provide opportunities to speak and encourage active participation of all students.
- Activate or provide adequate prior knowledge.
- Use visuals, manipulatives, and non-verbal cues.



Building Blocks for Comprehension

- Preview and teach key vocabulary and concepts.
- Explicitly teach new skills and English language structures.
- Provide practice and application.
- Frequently monitor comprehension
- Challenge!

(Adapted from Garcia, Pearson, & Jimenez, 1990; Gersten & Baker, 2000)



Comprehension Strategies Are...

Plans or procedures that readers use and apply when they hear text read aloud, when they read text with a teacher, or when they read independently.

(Duke & Pearson, 2002; Moats, 1999; Morrow, 2001; National Institute for literacy (NIFL), 2001; National Reading Panel (NRP), 2000; Pressley, 2002; Smith, 1999)



Metacognitive strategies: Listening to the voice in your mind that speaks while you read

- Monitoring for meaning
- Using and creating schema
- Asking questions
- Determining importance
- Inferring
- Using sensory and emotional images
- Synthesizing

Keene & Zimmermann,
"Mosaic of Thought" 2007



Comprehension Strategies

- Interactive Read-Alouds and Literature Discussions
- Guided Reading to Teach for the Comprehending of Fiction & Nonfiction Texts
- Shared and Performed Reading



"The struggling reader thinks it's his job to answer questions. The good reader knows it's his job to ask questions." (Kinsella, 2001).



Comprehension Strategies Cont'd.

- Question-Answer Relationships (QARs)
- Reciprocal Teaching



Stakeholders

- Who is responsible for the success of English Language learners?
- What are their roles and responsibilities?



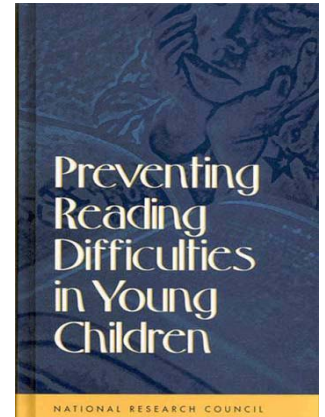
Principal's Responsibilities

- Build a language-rich school community
- Support instructional practice that promotes oral language development
- Model effective language skills
- Take the time to genuinely listen to children
- Talk with children, limiting "Principal Talk"
- Demonstrate sensitivity to language and cultural differences
- Plan differentiated professional development to assist teachers in establishing and maintaining language rich learning environments
- Monitor instructional practices for systematic and explicit instruction that builds oral language development
- Highlight positive classroom practices that promote oral language skills

Reading Coach's Responsibilities

- Provide suggestions and ideas to assist teachers in establishing and maintaining language rich learning environments
- Provide suggestions for instructional practice that promotes oral language development
- Model effective language skills
- Take the time to genuinely listen to teachers and children.
- Model talking with children, limiting "Teacher Talk"
- Demonstrate sensitivity to language and cultural differences
- Monitor instructional practices for systematic and explicit instruction that builds oral language development
- Highlight positive classroom practices that promote oral language skills

Teachers' responsibilities



Teachers' Knowledge base should include an understanding of:

- How to provide rich conceptual experiences that promote growth in vocabulary and reasoning skills
- Lexical development, from early referential (naming) abilities to relational and abstract terms and finer-shaded meanings
- Early development of listening comprehension skills
- Young children's sensitivity to sounds of language
- Patterns of emergent reading
- How to instill motivation to read

Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children
(1998), p. 332.

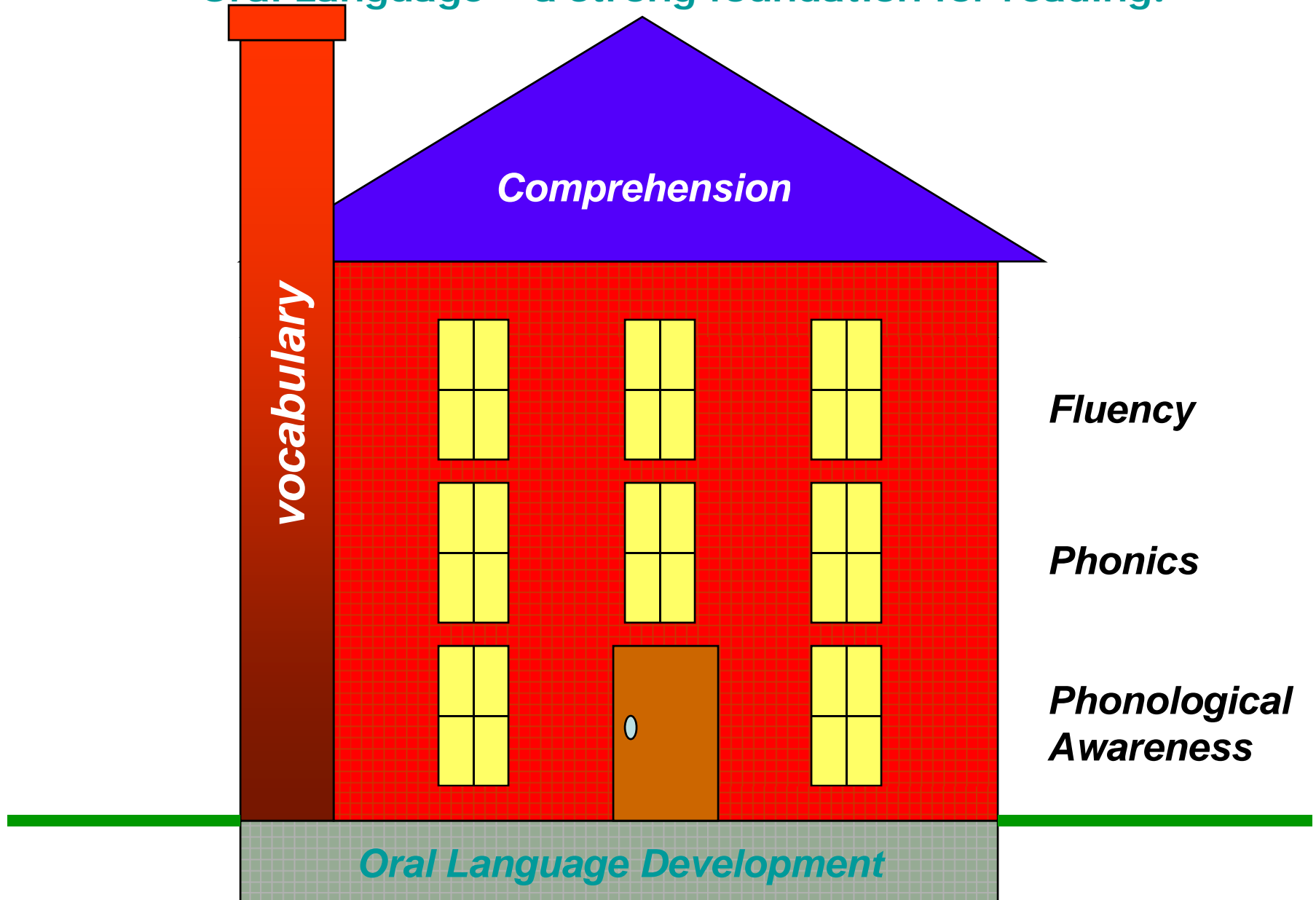
THE PROPS assist the house
Until the house is built,
And then the props withdraw-
And adequate, erect,
The house supports itself;
Ceasing to recollect
The auger and the carpenter.

Just such a retrospect
Hath the perfected life,
A past of plank and nail,
And slowness,-then the scaffolds drop-
Affirming it a soul.

-Emily Dickinson



Oral Language – a strong foundation for reading!



Closing Thought

“Educators must focus on high-level, high quality, high expectation instruction. In doing so, teachers ensure that they build on what students already know, clearly express their high expectations for achievement, and motivate students to learn.”

(Moll, 1992, 2005)



The faces in our classrooms are changing. Are we as educators changing our teaching strategies to meet the needs of those faces?

