

PLUS

Framework for Instructional / Intervention Enhancement: Observation Rubric

Project LEE



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Acknowledgements

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Introduction

PLUSS Framework for Instructional/Intervention Enhancement

The PLUSS Framework (Sanford, Brown & Turner, 2012) was created to enhance existing instructional and intervention programs with linguistic and cultural supports for EL students (ELs). PLUSS is a synthesis of research-based practices for ELs and consists of the following components: **Pre-teach** critical vocabulary and prime background knowledge, **Language modeling** and opportunities for practice, **Using** visuals and graphic organizers, **Systematic** and explicit instruction, and **Strategic** use of native language and teaching for transfer. This framework is user-friendly and easily applicable across any language of instruction and in both large and small group settings.

Who Are English Learner Students?

English learner (EL students) are a heterogeneous group of students known by many terms including limited English proficient (LEP) students, English-as-a-second language (ESL) students, and emergent bilinguals (EBs). All terms refer to students who come from homes where at least one of their parents speak a language other than English. By definition, EL students require varying levels of language support to learn via English instruction. Unfortunately, data reflects long-standing gaps between EL students and their native-English-speaking counterparts (Hemphill & Vanneman, 2011). In 2017, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reported a 37-point difference in fourth grade reading between EL and non-EL students (NCES, 2018). Additionally, data also show disproportionate representation of EL students in some special education categories (citation) and a 40-point difference on NAEP between students

with disabilities and those without (NCES, 2018). Many EL students qualify for and receive supplemental services to improve their English language proficiency through Title III under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The goal of language services is for each EL student to become fluent in English as evidenced by passing a state English Language Proficiency (ELP) exam at which point they are exited from services. Schools are required to monitor the academic progress of exited students for two years and continue language or academic support when needed. Recently, the term “Ever English Learner” (Umansky, Thompson, & Diaz, 2017) student has been introduced to include students who are receiving ELD service and those that have been exited and reclassified as Fully English Proficient (FEP) to better identify students for whom standard English is not their native language.

PLUSS Framework & Definition

Evidence

Pre-teach critical vocabulary and prime background knowledge

Identify and explicitly teach vocabulary and language structures that are unknown and critical to understanding a passage or unit of instruction; provide culturally relevant curriculum and make connections between new information and life experiences.

Calderón, 2007;
Carlos, et al. 2004;
Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2008;
Gay, 2000; Hollie, 2012;
Linan-Thompson & Vaughn, 2007; Nieto &
Bode, 2008; Paris, 2012; Sleeter, 2011

Language modeling and opportunities for practicing

Teacher models appropriate use of academic language, then provides structured opportunities for students to practice using the language in meaningful contexts.

Dutro & Moran, 2003; Echevarria, Vogt &
Short, 2008; Gibbons 2009;
Linan-Thompson & Vaughn, 2007; Scarcella,
2003

Use visuals and graphic organizers

Strategically use pictures, graphic organizers, gestures, realia and other visual prompts to help make critical language, concepts, and strategies more comprehensible to learners.

Brechtal, 2001; Echevarria & Graves, 1998;
Haager & Klinger 2005; Linan-Thompson &
Vaughn, 2007; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990

Systematic and explicit instruction

Explain, model, provided guided practice with feedback, and opportunities for independent practice in content, strategies, and concepts.

Calderon, 2007; Flagella-Luby & Deshler, 2008;
Gibbons, 2009, Haager & Klinger, 2005;
Klinger & Vaughn, 2000; Watkins & Slocum,
2004;

Strategic use of native languages & teaching for transfer

Identify concepts and content students already know in their native language and culture to explicitly explain, define, and help them understand new language and concepts in English.

Carlisle, Beeman, Davis & Spharim, 1999;
Durgunoglu, et al., 1993; Genesee, Geva,
Dressler, & Kamil, 2006; Odlin, 1989; Schecter &
Bayley, 2002

Blank PLUSS Lesson Planning Format

1 **Content Objective:**

2 **Language Objective:**

Strategies: L - Language modeling and opportunities for practicing U - Use visuals and graphic organizers S - Strategic use of native languages & teaching for transfer		5	6	7
		L	U	S
3 P Pre-teach critical vocabulary and prime background knowledge				
4 S Systematic and explicit instruction				

Pre-teach Critical Vocabulary and Prime Background Knowledge

Academic language frequently poses challenges for EL students yet broad vocabulary knowledge is crucial for text comprehension. To comprehend text, students need both conceptual and vocabulary knowledge (Baumann, 2009; Helman, 2009). Nation (2001) found that students needed familiarity with about 95% of words in a text for moderate comprehension. By middle school this amounted to about 25,000 words (Graves, 2006). Although many readers learn vocabulary by using context clues while reading EL students benefit from explicit vocabulary instruction and word learning strategies.



Pre-teach Critical Vocabulary and Prime Background Knowledge

PLUSS Feature	Highlight any instructional strategies you saw utilized to support the ELs*	Note how ELs were supported, responses (or opportunities to improve support)	Not in place	Partially in place	Fully in place
P Pre-teach Critical Vocabulary and Prime Background Knowledge	Addresses vocabulary & background knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none">• fast mapping unknown vocabulary,• using system to ID unknown words,• pre-teaching difficult vocabulary words,• pre-teaching necessary background knowledge Other:		0	1	2

Language Use and Modeling

Children acquire a second language similarly to how they develop their first language. That is, they move through predictable stages as they develop two language registers: informal/social and formal/academic. Initial informal oral fluency develops fairly rapidly but it takes much longer to develop the more complex structures of academic language in all four domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Most children will reach formal academic fluency in English in about six years but some could take longer (Hakuta, 2011; Hakuta, Butler, & Witt, 2000; Thomas & Collier, 2003). Understanding this continuum will help teachers scaffold language for their students. The language levels have different names across the states with most delineating between five to six stages. Here we merely number the levels for simplicity.



Language Use and Modeling

PLUSS Feature	Highlight any instructional strategies you saw utilized to support the ELs*	Note how ELs were supported, responses (or opportunities to improve support)	Not in place	Partially in place	Fully in place
L Language Use and Modeling	Opportunities for students to practice targeted language skills • sentence frames • opportunities to talk/write Other:		0	1	2

Using Visual and Graphic Organizers

Using visuals, such use of realia, photographs, pictures, drawings, and gestures can make content more comprehensible to students. Scaffolds such as these can be effective means to demonstrate vocabulary meanings and to prime students' background knowledge so they can show what they know (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Roberts & Neal, 2004). Graphic organizers (e.g., word maps, Venn diagrams, and charts) help ELs organize information and clarify relationships (Hoover et al., 2008).



Using Visual and Graphic Organizers

PLUSS Feature	Highlight any instructional strategies you saw utilized to support the ELs*	Note how ELs were supported, responses (or opportunities to improve support)	Not in place	Partially in place	Fully in place
U Using visuals & graphic organizers	Uses visuals and graphic organizers in lesson <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sentence strips• pictures, realia• motions or TPR (Total physical response) Other:		0	1	2

Systematic and Explicit Instruction

Systematic instruction is that which is carefully sequenced, provides sufficient practice to master content, and uses judicious review to retain learning over time (Carnine et al., 2010). Systematic, explicit instruction provides clear, comprehensive, and careful explanations and actively demonstrates how to implement skills and strategies. Then, through guided and independent practice students demonstrate content mastery (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Honig et al., 2008). The explicitness of instruction can increase to meet students' support needs.

Systematic and Explicit Instruction

PLUSS Feature	Highlight any instructional strategies you saw utilized to support the ELs*	Note how ELs were supported, responses (or opportunities to improve support)	Not in place	Partially in place	Fully in place
S Systematic & explicit instruction	Includes systematic and explicit instruction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • modeling • guided practice with feedback • partner and independent practice Other:		0	1	2

Strategic Use of Native Language Teaching for Transfer

Using a child's native language strategically can support the development of skills and comprehension. It may be as simple as providing a single synonym in the student's native language for an English word, or as complex as previewing an entire lesson in the native language before teaching the lesson in English. Teaching for transfer involves identifying what students already know in their native language, and teaching them which skills are the same, or similar, and which skills are different in English. For example, if students can read in Spanish, teachers can teach for transfer by telling students that many consonant sounds are the same in English and Spanish (e.g., /n/, /m/, /t/, /s/) or similar (e.g., /v/, /b/).

Translanguaging is the practice where students use their linguistic resources in one language to understand and communicate in another language through strategies such as code-switching, translating and interpreting, and language brokering (Daniel & Pacheco, 2017). By knowing the linguistic resources the students use in their communities teachers can then reinforce and strengthen them at school. Perhaps the most important aspect of translanguaging, however, is to value students' multiple language abilities rather than emphasize utilizing English only.



Strategic Use of Native Language and Teaching for Transfer

PLUSS Feature	Highlight any instructional strategies you saw utilized to support the ELs*	Note how ELs were supported, responses (or opportunities to improve support)	Not in place	Partially in place	Fully in place
S Strategic use of native language and Teaching for transfer	Addresses student's native language needs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provides additional practice on skills relevant to student's native language and culture• points out sounds, words, concepts that are common across their two languages Other:		0	1	2

*not all strategies need to be used in every lesson; teachers should select the most appropriate supports for their student population and lesson content



Conclusion

Typically, students develop basic social and interpersonal language skills in one to two years but may take five to seven years to reach “native-like” proficiency with strong knowledge of academic language. For ELs to be academically successful, all teachers need to explicitly teach the language in the curriculum students’ need to access the content. Knowing and understanding EL students’ level of English language proficiency (or instructional language in dual language programs) guides the intensity and types of language supports that will most benefit each student. The PLUS framework is flexible in that it can be used within general education, intervention, and/or special education programs to ensure that the language demands or cultural concepts inherent in instruction and curriculum is not a barrier to content learning and high achievement.

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