Attending to Word Learning:

Refocusing Attention to Foster Growth

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Brief Overview

Expanding the focus: Multi-tasking
Changing the focus over time:
- Early in the lesson series
- Mid-way through the series
- Late in the lesson series

The Challenge of: Multi-tasking:

Teachers must focus on several things at one time:

- The meaning of the story and how the child is responding to the meaning
- Observing the child's processing (watching how he is working)
- Recording significant attempts, solves, and miscues, behaviors
- Providing assistance (scaffolding)
- Analyzing lesson records (after lesson)

Word Learning within Clay's Theory . . .

Teachers need to move beyond the idea that learning to read, or that learning words, is a matter of committing words to memory. Becoming literate is a process of forming complex connections in the brain - an interactive networks of strategies and sub-components through which (the child) learns

- how to process visual information
- how to process phonological information
- to form complex connections between the two (*LL Part II, 205 p. 123*)

Clay on Literacy Learning

(A beginner) attends to many different aspects of printed texts (letters, words, language, messages, and stories.) He will have limited knowledge and primitive early response patterns in each of these areas (which will) change …as he learns more about each area, and as the child learns to work on the interrelationships of these areas. *(Clay 2005a, p. 19, Paraphrased)*

Early in the Lesson Series

Establishing foundations, which include:

- Age-appropriate control of language
- Interest in stories
- Concepts about print
- Letter identification
- Building a bank of known words/letters
- Left-right sequential visual processing
- Phonemic awareness
- Coordinating visual and auditory processing

Questions about Early Word Learning Progress

<u>What</u> does the child know?

(letters, words, concepts about print, use of space, etc.)?

<u>How</u> does the child know it?

(as a memorized string, by a single feature, as a motor program, etc.)

<u>How well</u> does the child know it?

(See the first Word Journey below – correct controlled, etc.)

<u>How does the child use</u> what he knows?

(Does he recognize it in print? does he monitor? etc.)

Word Learning: The Three Journeys

<u>Journey one</u> (Unknown to known)

New (never seen before)
Just known (seen or worked with before)
Partially controlled (working for a solution)
Controlled production but with lapses
Controlled, correct (requires attention)
Fast, fluent (almost no attention required)

<u>Journey two</u> Slow to fast responding

From slow and conscious, to fast automatic

<u>Journey three</u>

The word finds its place within the child's literacy knowledge about other words, phrases and meanings the child knows

Expanding Meager Knowledge of Words

The object is twofold:

- Expanding knowledge of 'known' words
- Learning how to learn words

Selecting words for early learning

Word learning activities in writing: tracing, writing, looking, visualizing (Journey One) Repeated writing (Journey Two)

Practice word remembering and retrieval

Using mag. letters to break known words and to foster left-right sequential processing

Develop concepts: *word, letter, first, last*

Strategic activities with words in reading (locate, monitor, check, search)

Observing and recording reading/writing vocabularies

Assisting with Memory and Retrieval

Activities that can help young children establish mental representations and retrieve information:

Movement activities (tracing, writing, ML's)
Use of various media, surfaces, and contexts
Visualizing (seeing with the eyes closed)
Recall, divert attention, recall again
"Echoes across the lesson (don't overdo it)"
Helping Children intend to remember
Using verbal prompts or specific associations
Repetition and over-learning
Massive amounts of reading and writing

Breaking Words: An early sequence with ML's

Known words for directionality and sequence (19-20)

Known words for word concepts (42-43, & 140-141)

Known words: words can be broken into parts in more than one way (pp. 43-45)

- word endings
- breaks within words (can be onset and rime)

A child needs to:

establish left-right sequential visual scanning

know that words are made up of letters

understand words can be broken in different ways

Then he is ready to see parts he knows within words

This establishes the base for the child to start solving words later in the lesson series, both in reading and in writing, using analogies to known words & parts

[Record what you do and how the child performs]

Hearing/Recording Sounds in Words

- Critical role in strategic activity in both reading and writing
- Attend to the process, not accuracy – what counts is the child's awareness of sounds within his words
- Accept approximations – Be sensitive to child-like forms, and dialects
- Don't keep children at the same level too long
  - Task independence
  - Random vs. sequential order
  - Copying vs. writing in the story
- Foster flexibility in solving words (LL 59-60)
  - Write quickly a word you know
  - Write the sounds you hear

Reading in Early Lessons

The goals: – Learning to look at print; learning more about letters and words; and relating what you say to what you see

Remember: focus on meaning is primary

Early strategic activity
- 1 : 1 matching
- Locating known/unknown words
- Monitoring, Learning to check
- Searching

Teacher scaffolding
- Preparation (Book introductions, etc.)
- Prompting : Prompt for known information
  - Start from least helpful prompt
- Give help when needed

Important Principles for Early Learning

- Target instruction to the child's knowledge
- Be consistent and persistent (teach for shifts in child's understanding and performance)
- Words should arise from reading and writing
- Carefully plan and evaluate your teaching
- Ensure 'echoes' throughout the lesson
- Arrange for continuous learning across lessons
- Be sensitive to the child's language and speech

Midway in the Lesson Series

Three goals:

1. Linking sound sequences with letter sequences
   (Coordinating sequential visual analysis with sequential phonological analysis while orchestrating information from all sources)
2. Providing ways of accessing new vocabulary
   (Searching and problem-solving while reading and writing)
3. Extending knowledge of how words work
   (The third Journey in Word Learning)

1. Linking Sound Sequences with Letter Sequences

The basics:

All of the foundation areas in early learning:
- Hearing and recording sounds in words
- Sequential L→R visual analysis of letters/words
- Linking the analysis of letters you are seeing (L-R) to the sound sequences in the word you are hearing in your head

Ways of promoting L→R visual analysis:

- Breaking known words with ML's
- Use a "slow check" on words to confirm or search
- Use prompts that ask him to think about information of all types (or the type that's ignored)
- Use a masking card to reveal the word gradually, in L-R sequence (Make sense, Look right?)
- All these are slow demonstrations, but the goal is fast processing

Three things to watch for

Consistent habitual L-R visual processing
Ability to identify sounds in sequence (ability to go from sounds to letters)
Ability to go from letters to sounds (now in the special problems section in LL)

2. Providing access to new vocabulary

…In writing

- Repeated writing of words (Journey #2)
- Hearing and recording sounds in words
  - -- More sounds identified and recorded
  - -- Move to sequential analysis
  - -- Notice letter clusters or combinations
  - -- Move to letter boxes
  - -- Transfer the process to the story page
- Make it like a word you know

Make it Like Another Word You Know – Scaffolding

Most help	Help as needed	Less help
Teacher tells similarity ("*Starts* like... *ends* like… *sounds* like…") Teacher tells word (You know "x") Teacher helps connect Thinks of the sound, and writes letters	Teacher tells similarity ("Do you know a word that *starts* like… *ends* like… *sounds* like that?") Helps with word & connection if needed Child thinks of word, makes connection, writes letter	Prompts child to think of a word: (Do you know a word that can help?") (If needed, suggest similarity ("Do you know a word that *starts* like that?) Child thinks of word, makes connection, writes letters.

Variations: A word that ends like that…a word that rhymes with "x"….A word that sounds like that….A word that looks like that ….A word like that

… in Reading

"RR teachers have to change passive readers into readers who search actively for information in print that can help them. "Two things help…

- *they try out possible responses*
- *and they learn to verify their decisions"* (LL p. 102)

Trying out possibilities (**Searching**)

Preparation for reading – book introductions, etc
TTA and think what would make sense (M,S) and/or start with those letters (V) or sounds (Ph)
Prompts to visual features that they know and know how to use (LL pp 132-133)
Cautions about prompting. (LL part I, p.38-39)

Verifying decisions (*often under-emphasized*)

- Checking prompts (make sense? sound right? look right?
  Notice the note on p. 124 … (*If he can move easily from sounds to letters or letters to sounds…)*
- Taking words apart after reading
- Teaching on successful solving
- Make sure the child makes independent decisions based on what he knows and what he sees in the text

Scaffolding toward independence

Based upon thoughtful analysis
Teach to what the child is beginning to notice
Use the scale of help on pp. 132-133

Using a word you know to solve a new word

The known word needs to be well known
Think about what the child can do in writing and in reassembling the cut-up sentence
If needed, demonstrate with magnetic letters
Keep teacher talk to a minimum
Allow minimal interruption of text reading

3. Extending knowledge of how words work

…in Writing

- Letter formation and writing conventions
- Transition to letter boxes
- Information about spelling quirks
- Make it like a word you know

… in Reading

- Taking words apart after reading
- Prompts for strategic activity (monitoring, searching, checking, confirming)
- Teaching points to unsnarl confusions or to demonstrate

… Word Work

Breaking words (LL pp. 140-143)
- Continue to check on L-R sequential analysis
- Breaking words into parts
  - Any kind of break the child makes
  - Word endings, clusters, onset and rime
- Comparing words, seeing similarities
- Changing words:
  - Substituting initial letters;
  - Change the onset – retain the rime
  - Retain the onset – change the rime

Working this into the lesson framework

Choosing examples
- Basic principle: follow the child
- Build from known to new
- Before or after encounters in writing/reading?

Later in the Lesson Series

Meaning is still paramount
Fast processing in reading and writing
Flexible and fluent with strategic activities

Solving Words by Analogy

After HSIW and breaking words are well under control
Taking parts of two known words to form a new word
Words must be really well known so that borrowing from them requires little attention
Words used should be productive and regular
Demonstrate and show; talk only to point to things.
The focus is on the visual (V) and sound (Ph). Correctness decisions involve all cues
Be clear about prompting for <u>looking</u> (in reading, "a word that looks like that?"), or <u>hearing</u> (in writing, "a word that sounds like that?)

Providing support for learning

Opportunities for solving *(non-verbal)*

> *In RR learning occurs as an outcome of problem solving through strategic activities in reading and writing texts. (Clay 1991, pp. 340-345)*
>
> *Many words are learned entirely or partially through this means. Judicious teaching can build upon and extend the partial knowledge. The challenges and opportunities you present are key*

Demonstration *(non-verbal)*

> *Much more powerful than explanation. Work slowly. Any accompanying language should be like a pointer – going clearly straight to the mark*

Teaching *(verbal and non-verbal)*

> *Telling the child something or showing how to do something new that builds on current knowledge*
>
> *Make it very clear to the child what he needs to be attending to -- visual form, sound, letter, word, order or sequence. (See Clay 2005a, p. 40)*

Prompting *(verbal)*

> *"A prompt is a call for action to do something within his control" "Too much prompting (help) interferes with the development of independent solving" (LL p 39)*