Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties

A professional learning series presented by David Kilpatrick, Ph.D.

Module 4 *Session 6*

Sponsored by the Exceptional Student Services Unit (ESSU) and created in collaboration with Specific Learning Disability Specialists Jill Marshall and Veronica Fiedler

COLORADO
Department of Education

Module 4: WORD-LEVEL READING

Session 6: English Learners and Word-Reading Development

Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties

Objective:

Through engagement in this series of 13 on-demand webinars, participants will understand the current research, implications, and the essential elements necessary for assessing, preventing, and overcoming reading difficulties.

ASSESS

PREVENT

OVERCOME

Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties

Webinar Series Modules

Module 1: Reading Research and the Research to Practice Gap

Module 2: Current Approaches to Reading Instruction: Why Many Learners Still Struggle

Module 3: The Simple View of Reading

MODULE 4: WORD-LEVEL READING

Module 5: Reading Comprehension

Module 6: Introduction to Reading Assessment; Assessing Phonological Skills

Module 7: Assessing Phonics Skills

Module 8: Assessing Word Identification and Reading Fluency

Module 9: Assessing Reading Comprehension and Related Skills

Module 10: Effective Approaches for Preventing Reading Difficulties

Module 11: Effective Interventions for Reading Difficulties

Module 12: Case Examples of Reading Disabilities

Module 13: Specific Learning Disability Identification

Module 4 Overview

Module 4:
Word-Level Reading

Learning Intentions

Module 4 Session 6:
English Learners and Word-Reading Development

Participants will be able to:

- ✓ Identify the challenges faced by English Learners

- ✓ Describe the promise of teaching English Learners to Read

- ✓ Develop confidence regarding teaching English Learners word-level reading skills

Challenge of Teaching English Learners

- English Learners (ELs) are making up an increasing percentage of our school age population

- They are tasked with learning the content of math, science, physical education, music, art, computer, and of course reading and spelling, all while having a partial understanding of the English language

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Research on English Learners and Reading

- There is a large and growing body of research on ELs
- The basic findings are
  - ELs make much faster progress in word-level reading and spelling than reading comprehension and written expression
  - The ability to learn to read in a new language (abbreviated in the research as L2, even if it is their third or fourth language) is highly correlated with success in L1
  - Phonemic skill development in L1 directly corresponds to the phonemic skill development in L2
    - To the degree phonemes are similar between L1 and L2
    - The general metalinguistic concept also transfers
    - Technically, you could successfully teach PA to native English speakers exclusively using Spanish words (but why would you?)

The Promise of Teaching EL Students

- As a group, ELs, like native English speakers, have the same general word-reading pattern

- About 2/3^{rds} of students will learn to read regardless of the nature of the reading instruction (in many cases, in spite of the reading instruction)

- About 1/3rd will struggle and only make progress with explicit and systematic teaching of phonics and phoneme skills

- The good news is that for word-level reading, the potential for growth is similar to native speakers of English

Reading Comprehension vs. Word-Reading

- Reading Comprehension is more of a challenge for most ELs than word-level reading

- The vocabulary, grammar, and even background knowledge comes much more slowly

- For those without general language impairments, there is a long, positive growth trajectory that takes several years to come close to catching up with native speakers

- However, semantic knowledge of words is not needed for orthographic mapping,
  - Only an entry into the phonological lexicon is required
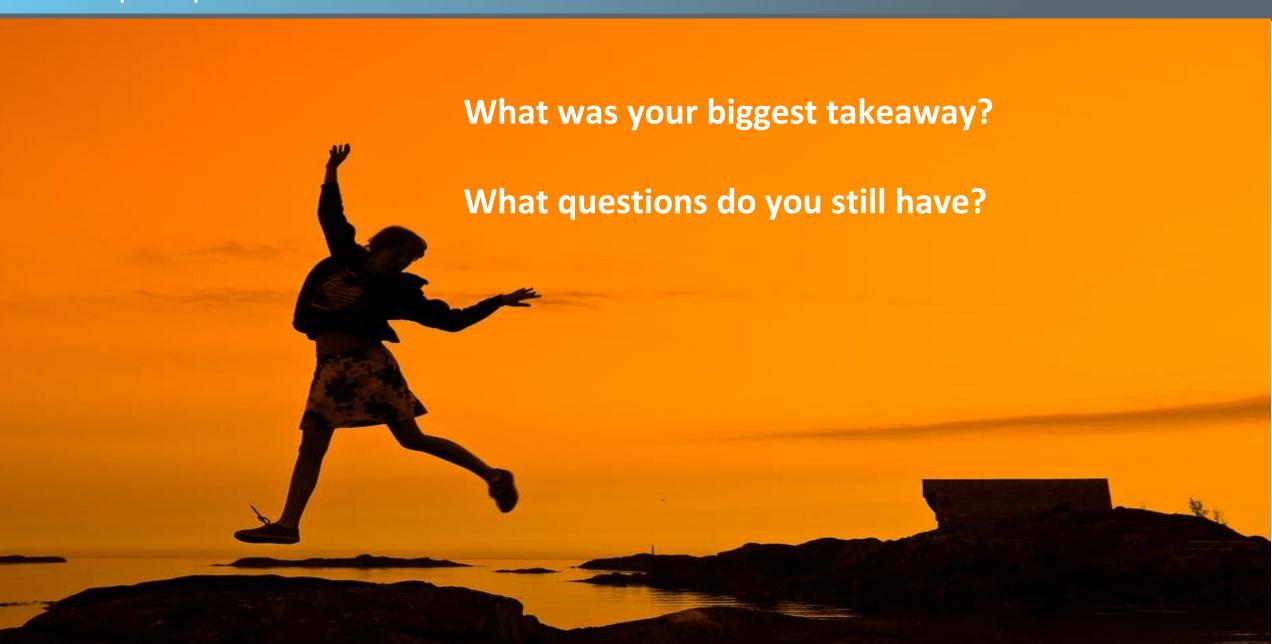 - EL students often function like hyperlexics

Summary: Module 4 Session 6

✓English Learners (ELs) face many challenges in school

✓Word-level reading is less challenging than reading comprehension

✓Skills acquired in one language can be applied to the new language

✓Phonological skills are roughly "transferable" from language to language

✓Early on, ELs may function like hyperlexics

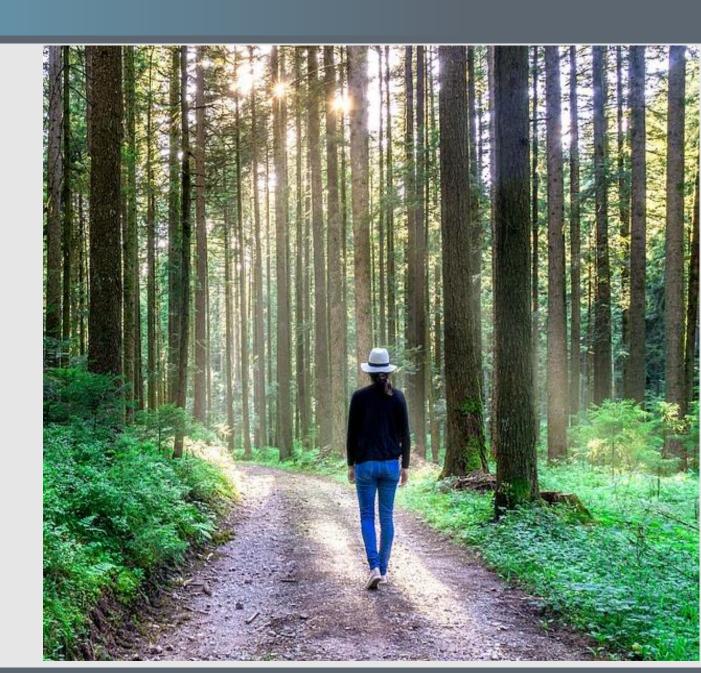✓As higher-level language skills grow, reading comprehension increases

Reflect and Connect:

How are EL's similar to native speakers in regards to the way they acquire word-level reading skills in English?

Wrap Up

What was your biggest takeaway?

What questions do you still have?

Up Next

**Module 4.7
Understanding Word Reading Difficulties**

Thank you!

Colorado Department of Education

Please visit the CDE Specific Learning Disability Website for more information:

https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-SLD