

CONTENT AREA I—READING, LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERATURE

SUBAREA I.

LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

COMPETENCY 1.0 LANGUAGE STRUCTURE AND LINGUISTICS

Skill 1.1 Identify and demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental components of human language, including phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, as well as the role of pragmatics in using language to communicate.

Phonics

As opposed to phonemic awareness, the study of phonics must be done with the eyes open. It's the connection between the sounds and letters on a page. In other words, students learning phonics might see the word "bad" and sound each letter out slowly until they recognize that they just said the word.

Phonological awareness means the ability of the reader to recognize the sound of spoken language. This recognition includes how these sounds can be blended together, segmented (divided up), and manipulated (switched around). This awareness then leads to phonics, a method for teaching children to read. It helps them "sound out words."

Development of phonological skills may begin during pre-K years. Indeed by the age of 5, a child who has been exposed to rhyme can recognize a rhyme. Such a child can demonstrate phonological awareness by filling in the missing rhyming word in a familiar rhyme or rhymed picture book.

You teach children phonological awareness when you teach them the sounds made by the letters, the sounds made by various combinations of letters, and to recognize individual sounds in words.

Phonological awareness skills include:

1. Rhyming and syllabification
2. Blending sounds into words—such as pic-tur-bo-k
3. Identifying the beginning or starting sounds of words and the ending or closing sounds of words
4. Breaking words down into sounds, also called "segmenting" words
5. Recognizing other smaller words in the big word, by removing starting sounds, i.e. "hear" to ear

Phonemic Awareness

See Skill 1.2

Morphology, Syntax and Semantics

Morphology is the study of word structure. When readers develop morphemic skills, they are developing an understanding of patterns they see in words. For example, English speakers realize that cat, cats, and caterpillar share some similarities in structure. This understanding helps readers to recognize words at a faster and easier rate, since each word doesn't need individual decoding.

Syntax refers to the rules or patterned relationships that correctly create phrases and sentences from words. When readers develop an understanding of syntax, they begin to understand the structure of how sentences are built, and eventually the beginning of grammar.

Example: "I am going to the movies."

This statement is syntactically and grammatically correct.

Example: "They am going to the movies."

This statement is syntactically correct since all the words are in their correct place, but it is grammatically incorrect with the use of the word "They" rather than "I."

Semantics refers to the meaning expressed when words are arranged in a specific way. Eventually, knowledge of semantics, the connotation and denotation of words, will have a role with readers.

All of these skill sets are important to developing effective word recognition skills, which help emerging readers develop fluency.

Pragmatics

Pragmatics is concerned with the difference between the writer's meaning and the sentence meaning (the literal meaning of the sentence) based on social context. When someone is competent in pragmatics, he or she is able to understand the writer's intended meaning or what the writer is trying to convey. In a simpler sense, pragmatics can be considered the social rules of language.

For example, a child sitting beside her mother at a fancy restaurant after her great-grandmother's funeral looks over to the table next to them. She sees a very elderly woman eating her dessert. "Mom?" she asks, patiently waiting for response. When her mother addresses her, she states loudly, "That woman is old like Grandma. Is she going to die too?" Of course, embarrassed, the mother hushes her child. However, this is a simple example of immature pragmatics. The child has the vocabulary, the patience to wait her turn, and some knowledge of conversational rules; however, she is not aware that certain topics are socially inappropriate, and therefore she did not adapt her language to the situation.

Skill 1.2 Demonstrate knowledge of phonemic awareness and apply knowledge of similarities and differences among groups of phonemes that vary in their placement and manner of articulation.

Phonemic awareness is the acknowledgement of sounds and words, for example, a child's realization that some words rhyme. Onset and rhyme, for example, are skills that might help students learn that the sound of the first letter "b" in the word "bad" can be exchanged with the sound "d" to make it "dad." The key in phonemic awareness is that when you teach it to children, it can be taught with the students' eyes closed. In other words, it's all about sounds, not about ascribing written letters to sounds.

To be phonemically aware means that the reader and listener can recognize and manipulate specific sounds in spoken words. The majority of phonemic awareness tasks, activities, and exercises are ORAL.

Since the ability to distinguish between individual sounds, or phonemes, within words is a prerequisite to association of sounds with letters and manipulating sounds to blend words (a fancy way of saying "reading"), the teaching of phonemic awareness is crucial to emergent literacy (early childhood K-2 reading instruction). Children need a strong background in phonemic awareness in order for phonics instruction (sound/spelling relationships in printed materials) to be effective.

Theorist Marilyn Jager Adams who researches early reading has outlined five basic types of phonemic awareness tasks.

Task 1- Ability to hear rhymes and alliteration.

For example, children would listen to a poem, rhyming picture book or song and identify the rhyming words heard which the teacher records or lists on an experiential chart.

Task 2- Ability to do oddity tasks (recognize the member of a set that is different {odd} among the group.)

For example, the children would look at the pictures of (a blade of) grass, a garden and a rose and be able to tell which starts with a different sound.

Task 3 –The ability to orally blend words and split syllables.

For example, the children can say the first sound of a word and then the rest of the word and put it together as a single word.

Task 4 –The ability to orally segment words.

For example, the ability to count sounds. The children would be asked as a group to count the sounds in "hamburger."

Task 5- The ability to do phonics manipulation tasks.

For example, replace the “r” sound in rose with a “p” sound to get the word “pose.”

The role of phonemic awareness in reading development

Children who have problems with phonics generally have not acquired or been exposed to phonemic awareness activities. This is usually fostered at home, and in preschool through 2nd grade, and includes extensive songs, rhymes and read-alouds.

Instructional Methods

Since the ability to distinguish between individual sounds, or phonemes, within words is a prerequisite to association of sounds with letters and manipulating sounds to blend words, i.e. reading, the teaching of phonemic awareness is crucial to emergent literacy (early childhood K-2nd reading instruction). Children need a strong background in phonemic awareness in order for phonics instruction (sound/spelling relationships in printed materials) to be effective.

Instructional methods that may be effective for teaching phonemic awareness can include:

- Clapping syllables in words
- Distinguishing between a word and a sound
- Using visual cues and movements to help children understand when the speaker goes from one sound to another
- Oral segmentation activities which focus on easily distinguished syllables rather than sounds
- Singing familiar songs (e.g. Happy Birthday, Knick Knack Paddy Wack) and replacing key words in the song with words having a different ending or middle sound (oral segmentation)
- Dealing children a deck of picture cards and having them sound out the words for the pictures on their cards or calling for a picture by asking for its first and second sound.

Knowledge of Phonemes

In everyday language, we attach affective meanings to words unconsciously; we exercise more conscious control of informative connotations. In the process of language development, the student must come to grasp not only the definitions of words, but also to become more conscious of the affective connotations and how listeners process these connotations. Gaining this conscious control over language makes it possible to use language appropriately in various situations and to evaluate its uses in literature and other forms of communication.

The manipulation of language for a variety of purposes is the goal of language instruction. Advertisers and satirists are especially conscious of the effect word choice has on their audiences. By evoking the proper responses from readers/listeners, we can prompt them to take action.

A phoneme is the smallest contrastive unit in a language system, and the representation of a sound. The phoneme has been described as the smallest meaningful psychological unit of sound. The phoneme is said to have mental, physiological, and physical substance: our brains process the sounds; the sounds are produced by the human speech organs; and the sounds are physical entities that can be recorded and measured. Consider the English words “pat” and “sat,” which appear to differ only in their initial consonants. This difference, known as contrastiveness or opposition, is adequate to distinguish these words, and therefore the P and S sounds are said to be different phonemes in English. A pair of words, identical except for such a sound, is known as a minimal pair, and the two sounds are separate phonemes.

Where no minimal pair exists to demonstrate that two sounds are distinct, it may be that they are allophones. Allophones are variant phones (sounds) that are not recognized as distinct by a speaker, and are not meaningfully different in the language, and so are perceived as being the same. An example of this would be the heavy sounding “L” when landed on at the end of a word like "wool," as opposed to the lighter sounding “L” when starting a word like “leaf.” This demonstrates allophones of a single phoneme. While it may exist and be measurable, such a difference is unrecognizable and meaningless to the average English speaker. The real value is as a technique for teaching reading and pronunciation. Identifying phonemes for students and applying their use is a step in the process of developing language fluency.

EXAMPLES OF COMMON PHONEMES APPLIED

Phoneme	Uses
/A/	a (table), a_e (bake), ai (train), ay (say)
/a/	a (flat)
/b/	b (ball)
/k/	c (cake), k (Key), ck (back)
/d/	d (door)
/E/	e (me), ee (feet), ea (leap), y (baby)
/e/	e (pet), ea (head)
/f/	f (fix), ph (phone)
/g/	g (gas)
/h/	h (hot)
/I/	i (I), i_e (bite), igh (light), y (sky)
/i/	i (sit)
/j/	j (jet), dge (edge), g (gem)
/l/	l (lamp)

/m/	m (map)
/n/	n (no), kn (knock)
/O/	o (okay), o_e (bone), oa (soap), ow (low)
/o/	o (hot)
/p/	p (pie)
/kw/	qu (quick)
/r/	r (road), wr (wrong), er (her), ir (sir), ur (fur)
/s/	s (say), c (cent)
/t/	t (time)
/U/	u (future), u_e (use), ew (few)
/u/	u (thumb), a (about)
/v/	v (voice)
/w/	w (wash)
/gz/	x (exam)
/ks/	x (box)
/y/	y (yes)
/z/	z (zoo), s (nose)
/OO/	oo (boot), u (truth), u_e (rude), ew (chew)
/oo/	oo (book), u (put)
/oi/	oi (soil), oy (toy)
/ou/	ou (out), ow (cow)
/aw/	aw (saw), au (caught), al (tall)
/ar/	ar (car)
/sh/	sh (ship), ti (nation), ci (special)
/hw/	wh (white)
/ch/	ch (chest), tch (catch)
/th/	th (thick)
/th/	th (this)
/ng/	ng (sing)
/zh/	s (measure)

Choice of the medium through which the message is delivered to the receiver is a significant factor in controlling language. Spoken language relies as much on the gestures, facial expression, and tone of voice of the speaker as on the words he speaks. Slapstick comics can evoke laughter without speaking a word. Young children use body language overtly and older children more subtly to convey messages. These refinings of body language are paralleled by an ability to recognize and apply the nuances of spoken language. To work strictly with written work, the writer must use words to imply the body language.

By the time children begin to speak, they have begun to acquire the ability to use language to inform and manipulate. They have already used kinesthetic and verbal cues to attract attention when they seek some physical or emotional gratification. Children learn to apply names to objects and actions. They learn to use language to describe the persons and events in their lives and to express their feelings about the world around them.

Skill 1.3 Candidates know the differences between phoneme awareness and phonics.

Phonics is a widely used method for teaching students to read. This method includes studying the rules and patterns found in language. By age 5 or 6, children can typically begin to use phonics to begin to understand the connections between letters, their patterns, vowel sounds (i.e., short vowels, long vowels) and the collective sounds they all make.

Phonemic awareness is the ability to break down and hear separate and/or different sounds and distinguish between the sounds one hears. These terms are different, however they are interdependent. Phonemic awareness is required to begin studying phonics, where students will require the ability to break down words into the small units of sound, or phonemes, to later identify syllables, blends, and patterns.

For more information on these terms, see Skills 1.1 and 1.2.

Skill 1.4 Knowledge of the predictable patterns of sound-symbol and symbol-sound relationships in English (the Alphabetic Principle)

Alphabetic Principle

The Alphabetic Principle is sometimes called Graphophonemic Awareness. This reading foundation term details the understanding that written words are composed of patterns of letters which represent the sounds of spoken words.

There are basically two parts to the alphabetic principle:

- An understanding that words are made up of letters and that each of these letters has a specific sound
- The correspondence between sounds and letters leads to phonological reading. This consists of reading regular and irregular words and doing advanced analysis of words.

Since the English language is dependant on the alphabet, being able to recognize and sound out letters is the first step for beginning readers. Relying simply on memorization for recognition of words is not feasible as a way for children to learn to recognize words. Therefore decoding is essential. The most important goal for beginning reading teachers is to teach students to decode text so that they can read fluently and with understanding.

There are four basic features of the alphabetic principle:

1. Students need to be able to take spoken words apart and blend different sounds together to make new words
2. Students need to apply letter sounds to all their reading
3. Teachers need to use a systematic, effective program in order to teach children to read
4. The teaching of the alphabetic principle usually begins in Kindergarten.

It is important to keep in mind that some children already know the letters and sounds before they come to school. Others may catch on to this quite quickly and still others need to have one-on-one instruction in order to learn to read.

Critical skills that students need to learn are:

- Letter sound correspondence
- How to sound out words
- How to decode text to make meaning

Skill 1.5 Identify examples of parts of speech, and their functions, as well as the morphology contributing to their classification

English grammar, in conventional use, classifies words based on the following eight parts of speech:

- 1) The VERB: essential to a sentence, a verb asserts something about the subject of the sentence and expresses action, event, or state of being. The verb is the critical element of the predicate of a sentence.
- 2) The NOUN: a word used to name/identify a person, animal, place, thing, or abstract idea. Within the structure of a sentence, a noun can function as a subject, a direct or indirect object, a subject or object complement, an appositive, and adjective, or an adverb.
- 3) The PRONOUN: can be substituted for a noun or another pronoun. Pronoun classifications include the personal pronoun, the demonstrative pronoun, the interrogative pronoun, the indefinite pronoun, the relative pronoun, the reflexive pronoun, and the intensive pronoun. The appropriate use of pronouns (e.g., "he," "which," "none," "you") can make sentences less cumbersome and less repetitive, and therefore, more readable.
- 4) The ADJECTIVE: modifies a noun or a pronoun by describing, identifying, or quantifying words. An adjective usually precedes the noun or the pronoun which it modifies.

- 5) The ADVERB: can modify a verb, an adjective, another adverb, a phrase, or a clause. An adverb indicates manner, time, place, cause, or degree and answers questions such as "how," "when," "where," "how much." While some adverbs can be identified by their characteristic "ly" suffix, most adverbs must be identified by analyzing the grammatical relationships within the sentence or clause as a whole. Unlike the adjective, the adverb can be found in various places within the sentence.
- 6) The PREPOSITION: links nouns, pronouns and phrases to other words in a sentence. The word or phrase that the preposition introduces is the object of the preposition. A preposition usually indicates the temporal, spatial or logical relationship of its object to the rest of the sentence (e.g., on, beneath, against, beside, over, during).
- 7) The CONJUNCTION: is used to link words, phrases or clauses. For independent clauses, phrases and individual words, use coordinating conjunctions (e.g., and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet). To introduce a dependent clause and indicate the nature of a relationship between the independent clause and dependent clause, use a subordinating conjunction (e.g., after, although, as, because, before, how, if, once, since, than, that, though, till, until, when, where, whether, while). Equivalent sentence elements would be linked with correlative conjunctions, which always appear in pairs (e.g., both...and, either...or, neither...nor, not only...but also, so...as, whether...or). Strictly speaking, correlative conjunctions simply consist of a coordinating conjunction linked to an adjective or adverb.
- 8) The INTERJECTION: is a word added to a sentence to convey emotion, and usually compels the sentence to be closed with an exclamation mark. It is not grammatically related to any other part of the sentence. Some examples would be "ouch," "hey," "wow," and "oh no."

It is important to remember that each part of speech explains not what the word is, but how the word is used. In some instances (for example), the same word can be used as a noun in one sentence and as a verb or adjective in the next.

