

## Instructional Intervention Consideration for English Learners with Dyslexia

English Learners (ELs) receiving dyslexia services will have unique needs. Provision of dyslexia instruction should be in accordance with the program model the student is currently receiving (e.g., dual language, transitional bilingual, ESL). Interventionists working with ELs should have additional training on the specialized needs of ELs.

Learning to read, write, and spell in two languages can be facilitated by building on a student's native language knowledge and helping to transfer that knowledge to a second language. While direct, systematic instruction is still required for all aspects of reading, additional explicit instruction will be needed to address the similarities and differences in sounds, syllable structure, morphology, orthography, and syntax between the first and second languages.

For example, instructional considerations may include capitalizing on familiar sound-symbol correspondences. Direct and systematic instruction of the cross-linguistic correlations is beneficial for ELs. Instruction can subsequently include those sound-symbol correlations that partially overlap or present a slight variation from the native language to the second language. Unfamiliar phonemes and graphemes then can be presented to ELs. A systematic approach will enhance instruction and assist the bilingual student in transferring native language and literacy knowledge to second language and literacy acquisition.

For ELs learning to read in English and not in their native language, progress in reading may be hindered due to limited vocabulary in English. Therefore, in addition to all the components of effective instruction previously discussed, intervention for ELs also must emphasize oral language development (Cardenas-Hagan, 2018). Because the English language is derived from Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Greek, French, and other languages, ELs can expand their oral language and vocabulary knowledge by understanding the cognates (baseball/béisbol or leader/lider) that exist in their native language and English. The similarities of words in the native language and English must be explicitly taught.

It is also necessary to incorporate ESL strategies during the intervention process and in all content areas. In Texas, school districts are required to implement the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) as an integral part of each subject area in the required curriculum ([TAC §74.4\(a\)](#)). Dyslexia instruction for ELs must incorporate the ELPS. A few strategies to consider include the following:

- Establish routines so that ELs understand what is expected of them
- Provide native language support when giving directions or when students do not understand the task
- Provide opportunities for repetition and rehearsal so that the new information can be learned to mastery
- Adjust the rate of speech and the complexity of the language used according to the second language proficiency level of each student

- Provide extra time for the EL to process the English language. This is especially necessary during the early stages of second language development
- Provide extra time for the EL to formulate oral and written responses
- Emphasize text that includes familiar content and explain the structure of the text

*Source for Instructional Intervention Consideration for English Learners (ELs) with Dyslexia*

19 Texas Administrative Code §74.4, English Language Proficiency Standards. (2007).

Cardenas-Hagan, E. (2018). Language and literacy development among English language learners. In J. R. Birsh, *Multisensory teaching of basic language skills* (4th ed.) (pp. 720–754). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.