

Teaching comprehension across languages in the biliteracy classroom is the focus of this month's newsletter. Read more in our featured article and blogs!



Building Bridges

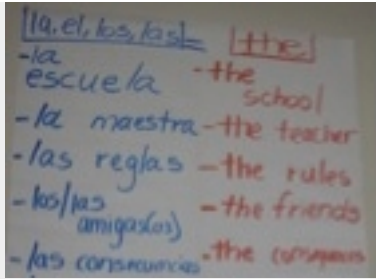
Comprehension and The Bilingual Reader

Comprehension is the focus and goal of all literacy instruction. Sometimes, however, the instructional emphasis on word level tasks - especially in the early grades – can send the message that comprehension of text is secondary and optional.

Teaching for comprehension across languages is the focus of this month's newsletter. In her article on [Comprehension and The Bilingual Reader](#), Emily Zoeller looks at the challenges of teaching strategic thinking skills within Spanish, which can often provide early readers with a highly a decodable text. Zoeller writes,

*The reader in Spanish may develop an approach that draws primarily from graphophonic cues, that is, the visual information within the word, such as the letters or syllables. Over time, these readers may become “word callers” or “syllabifiers”, knowing how to pronounce the word but not understanding what they are saying. If the reader is not set up to be thinking about his reading **within** the text, his comprehension **about** the text will undoubtedly be affected.*

Read more of Emily's article [here](#) and see below for more resources related to comprehension and the bilingual reader.



For Teachers

Make sure to look at [Susan Pryor's latest blog](#) on the importance of beginning instruction with interactive, comprehensible, content-based activities.

"Cuando enseñamos en aulas bilingües o duales, nos tenemos que asegurar que empezamos con un conocimiento común para que los estudiantes desarrollen la oralidad y el conocimiento previo necesario para tener éxito durante toda la unidad."



For Administrators

[Sara Robles' latest blog](#) offers great examples of the kinds of interactive, comprehensible word walls that reflect and support teaching for biliteracy.

Sara's photos and clear descriptions of word walls illustrate the organization of the three linguistic spaces within biliteracy: Spanish, the Bridge, and English.

Sara writes about the need to make these word walls meaningful, while also focusing on graphophonic skills.

"Word walls in both languages should be made up of meaningful words that students know, and they should focus on



Ask the Authors

Q: *If comprehension is the focus and goal of all literacy instruction, how can abstract skills, like the difference between strong and weak vowels in Spanish, be taught within a context that emphasizes comprehension?*

A: Students learn discrete, abstract skills (like weak and strong vowels, or the difference between the hard and soft c) best by using words, sentences, and paragraphs they already understand. For that reason, the words used to teach these skills come from words that are tied to a unit of instruction or other highly comprehensible context, like their own names.

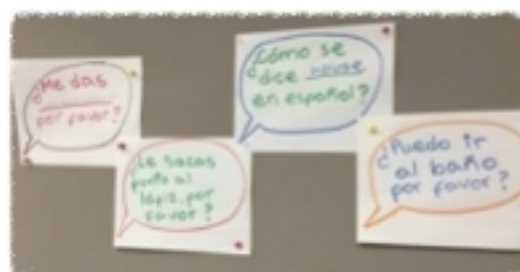
different parts of literacy, for example: spelling, morphological patterns, content area words, and high frequency words."

You can see the comprehensible instruction of weak and strong vowels in the video series *Nombres largos y cortos* on our website. [Log in](#) or [sign up](#) (it's free!) for access to the videos.

Find the answer to other FAQs, [here](#).

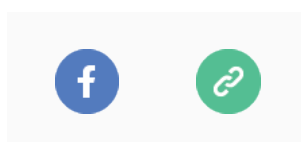
Would you like to "ask the authors"? Send your question to

info@teachingforbiliteracy.com



¡Compártalo!

Please share this newsletter with others in the field of biliteracy. We are building a community of teachers and learners in biliteracy.
¡Gracias!



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