



# **Bilingual/ESL Terminology for Certification Exams**

# Accommodations

Adjustments made to allow learners equitable access to learning situations. Accommodations can be *linguistic accommodations* in classroom instruction to support EL students' full participation in learning activities. Accommodations also refer to adjustments and supports in testing and other output situations to increase accessibility for learners with special needs.



# Advocacy

Serving as a supporter of EL students and family needs by knowing resources, programs, and options available to students and their families.

# Assessment

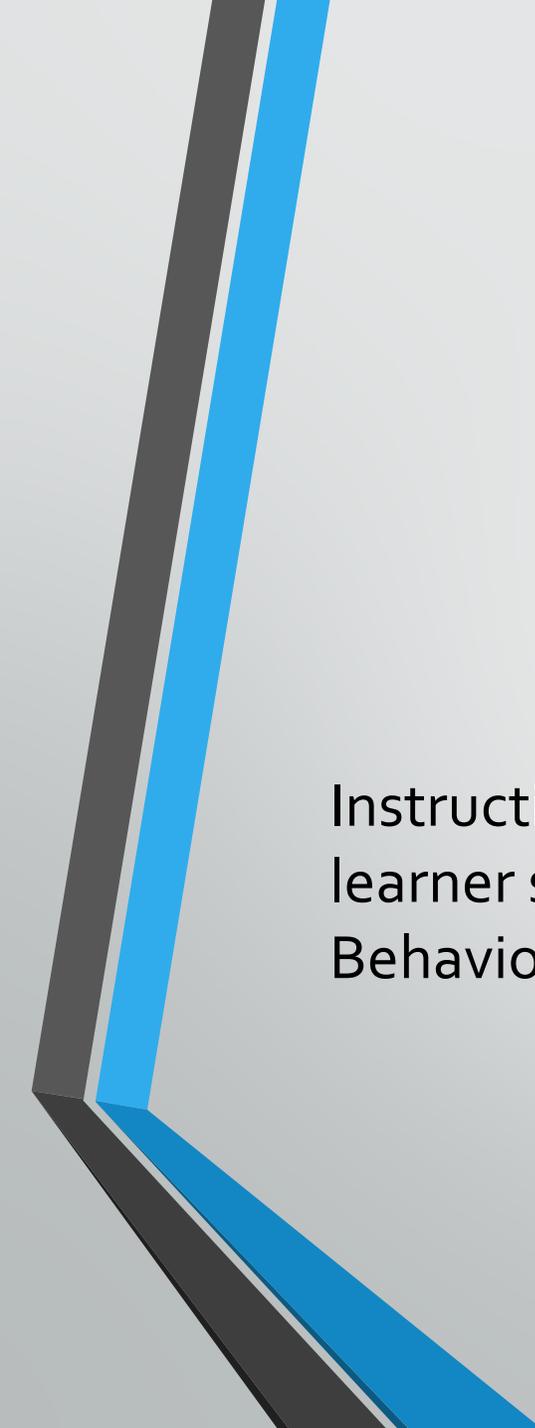
Measurement of student achievement. Assessment should include means for reporting student strengths and weaknesses in performance of tasks related to specific learning outcomes. Assessment should reflect a mindset of continual improvement; in other words, assessments would provide opportunities to improve performance. Lessons should initially be constructed with awareness of how learning outcomes will be assessed.

# Authentic Assessment

Promotes the mindset that assessment is ongoing, success driven, and student centered. Authentic assessment often occurs on-the-spot during lessons when teachers realize that instructional strategy needs to be tweaked to promote student learning. Authentic assessment reflects well-constructed assessments and assessment instruments that allow learners to showcase their achievement and that allow teachers to offer fair, meaningful commentary on learner accomplishments.

# Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS)

One strand of dichotomy that describes types of L2 acquisition: basic interpersonal communicative skills and cognitive/academic language proficiency. Jim Cummins proposed that basic interpersonal communicative skills, which EL students need in order to participate in meaningful speaking and listening interactions with L2 speakers, develop much more quickly than higher-level cognitive skills (Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency).



# Behavioral outcomes

Instruction should be guided by learning outcomes that reflect what the learner should know and be able to do at the end of the instructional period. Behavioral outcomes are *measurable*.

# Bilingual programs

Bilingual programs are one of the two broad language programs implemented in Texas public schools to develop the language and academic proficiency of students who have been designated LEP on the basis of their performance on the state-approved English proficiency exam. In bilingual programs, instruction is delivered in English and another language. In Texas, there are four types of bilingual programs: two transitional programs (early exit and late exit) and two dual language programs (immersion/one way and immersion/two way).

# Bloom's Taxonomy

A classic system of hierarchical cognitive tasks that teachers use to construct developmentally appropriate instructional activities and assessments. Bloom's Taxonomy includes six levels of cognitive tasks: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. The verbs in learning objectives should match the cognitive tasks reflected by the objective in order to ensure coherence in instruction, activities, and assessments related to the objective.



# Code-switching

A deliberate integration of a structure from L1 into an L2 structure. Real code-switching is intentional, either to flip a gap in current L2 proficiency, in which case it is more of a translation or transfer strategy, or to enact a rhetorical, political, or social motive.



# Cognitive processes

In the context of the ESL exam's competencies, cognitive processes refer to the deliberate or unconscious thinking processes that modulate an EL student's learning. SLA (Second Language Acquisition) requires that learners be aware of what they can do cognitively to enhance their L2 learning.

# Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency

One strand of a dichotomy that describes types of L2 acquisition: basic interpersonal communicative skills and cognitive academic language proficiency, Jim Cummins proposed that basic interpersonal communicative skills, which EL students need in order to participate in meaningful speaking and listening interactions with L2 speakers develop much more quickly than higher level cognitive skills (Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency). CALP is what is taught in schools in content areas and it takes much longer to develop than BICS because it is so much more cognitively demanding. Cummins warned that looking only at surface proficiency in L2 could result in early exit from language programs before learners are truly adept in cognitive language skills.



# Collaborative learning

Involving learners in activities that call for cooperation and interaction. Most group activities are collaborative because learners are usually given a task that must be performed by working together toward the assigned outcome.

# Communication with families

It is the teacher's responsibility to initiate and maintain fruitful communication with families. Communication sent to families should express openness to involve the families in the learner's school world. Communication with families from different cultures should take into account possibilities for misconception and should factor in cultural norms that impact how families interact with schools. In ESL settings, teachers may need to ask campus assistance in translating communication into the learner's family's primary language.



# Communication

A vital part of L2 learning. Communication is the generic term used to refer to social, pragmatic, and functional uses of language.

# Communicative competence

The ability to interact meaningfully in social situations using basic linguistic skills, nonverbals, and appropriate registers. Communicative competence is acquired relatively quickly; research estimates that most EL students can learn basic communicative skills in about two years whereas academic skills take up to seven years or longer. Researchers also believe that EL students rely on fundamental communicative skills that transfer across languages, which explains the rapid development of communicative competence.

# Community resources

A variety of community resources can help learners meet their academic and personal goals. Teachers can inform both learners and their families of community organizations and services that target specific needs. A teacher's awareness of learner needs contributes to knowing what community services and organizations might best suit the learner and/or the family. In ESL settings, teachers can help learners and families acculturate by being aware of resources that can provide academic, personal, financial, political, and health services.

# Competencies

The English as a Second Language framework is presented in ten competencies in three domains. The competencies are statements of the general knowledge that beginning teachers should have in pivotal areas of ESL teaching content, with each competency subdivided into descriptive statements that offer details on expected on expected ESL certification knowledge and skills.

# Comprehensive input

A term coined by Stephen D. Krashen to describe the catalyst for successful SLA (Second Language Acquisition). Krashen explained that individuals learn L1 via ongoing meaningful, context-related input, and while L1 learning processes cannot be replicated in SLA, Krashen contended that L2 learning could be enhanced by ensuring the learners receive constant comprehensible input in authentic communicative and cognitive interactions.



# Comprehension

A term associated with reading. Comprehension refers to the holistic construction of meaning when we read a text. Readers use many cognitive, linguistic, and reading skills to shape meaning as they read and then holistically at the end of a reading segment.

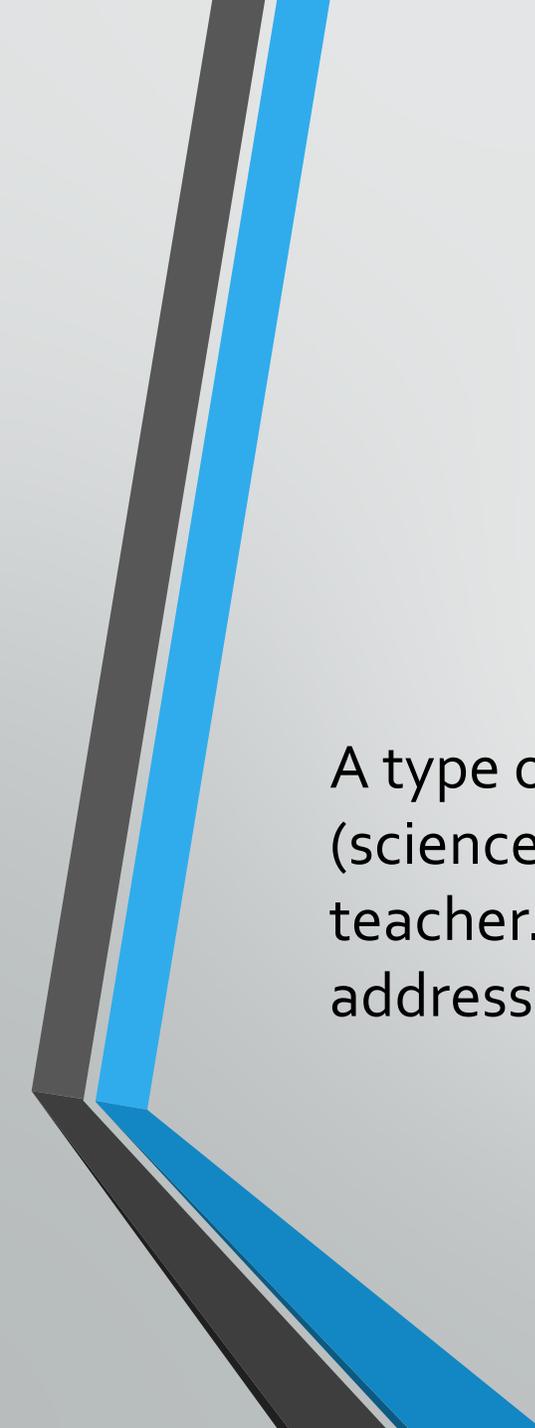


# Computer-administered tests (CATs)

All TExES exams are administered online in a designated testing center. Logistical information about registering for any TExES exam is available through a link to the current exam vendor provided in the Texas Educators tab on the TEA website.

# Content –area teaching

In teaching ESL, we often create a dichotomy between supporting English proficiency and teaching discipline-relevant subject matter. Content-area teaching refers to teaching math, science, social studies, literature, and reading, subject areas that call for specialized knowledge but that require strong proficiency in English to support learning in those subjects. Realistically, ESL teachers teach both proficiency and subject area content.



# Content-based instruction

A type of ESL program where ESL students are placed in content-area classes (science, social studies, literature, math, reading) taught by an ESL-certified teacher. Instruction is in English but with appropriate accommodations to address the linguistic and cognitive needs of EL students.

# Conventions

Expectations that influence written and spoken output. These aren't "rules" in the sense that word order in sentences is a rule of grammar. Instead, conventions are guidelines about when to make choices: for example, the choice to use *-er vs. more* in a comparative structure or *-est vs. most* in creating a superlative. Conventions are also relevant in major language decisions, like adding new words to the language through increased usage of invented forms or through the need of a word to represent a new phenomenon.

# Cross-curricular ELPS

Student expectations for content-area performance. Cross-curricular ELPS focus on cognitive and practical language skills that EL students need in order to learn disciplinary content while also learning English. ELPS stipulates that teachers must provide linguistic accommodations to support content-area learning.



# Culturally relevant pedagogy

Teaching approaches that aim to create inclusion for all learners from all ethnic, national, or social groups. Cultural relevance can be integrated into lessons that include circumstances, situations, and scenarios that reflect multiple cultures.

# Descriptive statements

Each of the ten ESL competencies is broken down into specific knowledge that the beginning teacher should demonstrate in the broad area of the competency. Descriptive statements begin with active verbs: *knows, analyzes, recognizes, understands, uses, accepts, plans, enhances, stimulates, teaches, provides, presents, creates, works, organizes, applies, engages, communicates, practices, employs, develops, responds, conducts.*

# Developmental characteristics

The cognitive, social, affective, and physical characteristics that learners exhibit at various stages in their educational progress. Developmental characteristics significantly impact learner readiness to engage in the cognitive demands of content-area work, but they also determine how a learner participates in the class community. Instructional choices should reflect the learners' developmental characteristics. Usually, developmental characteristics are broadly labeled using chronological categories: early childhood, elementary, middle school, and adolescent. However, learner characteristics are not homogeneous; teachers need to make individual, differentiated instructional choices in order to meet all learners' needs.

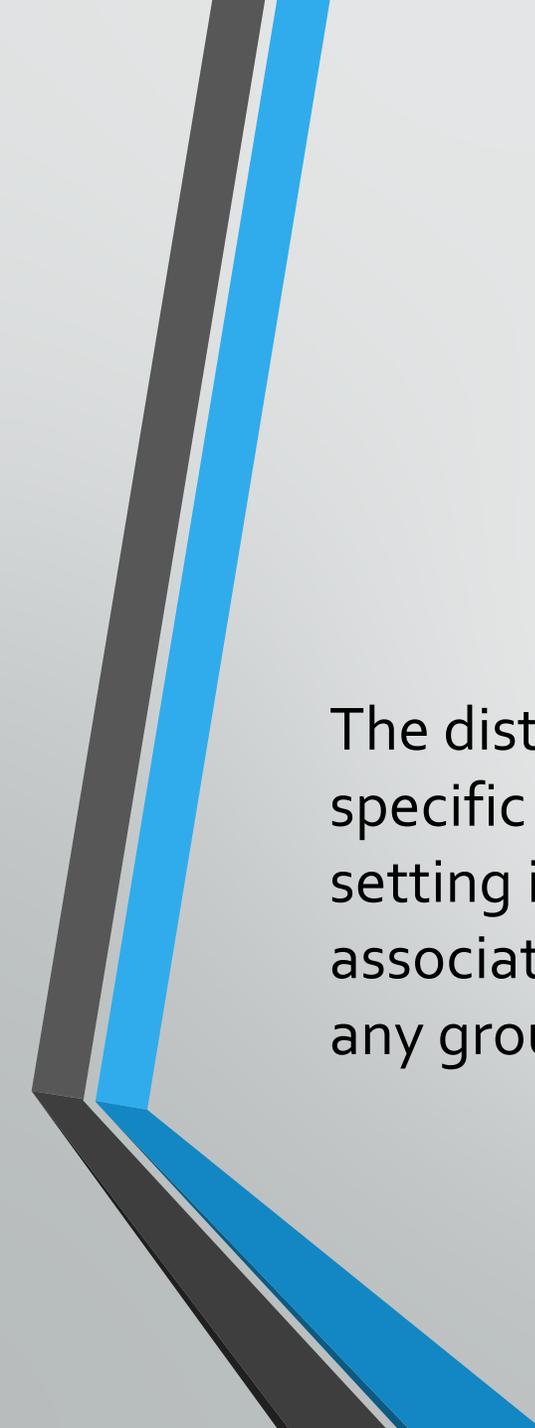
# Developmental appropriate

Knowing learners' characteristics enables teachers to construct lessons and activities that reflect learners cognitive, social, affective, and (if appropriate) physical readiness to attempt the tasks. Developmentally appropriate tasks should enable learners to progress in their learning by attempting and completing tasks that reflect what they are able to do on their own and what they can do with appropriate assistance and mentorship from the teacher. Learning tasks should challenge the learner in a way that creates learner satisfaction but not frustration. Tasks that are consistently too simple for learners may be aimed at developmental levels below the learners' current level and may consequently lead to learner disinterest.



# Differentiated instruction

Instruction that takes into account individual learners' needs. It may be impractical to create designated lessons for individual students, but differentiation suggests that teachers can tailor general instruction to address specific learner's needs so as to pull the learner into the holistic learning experience.

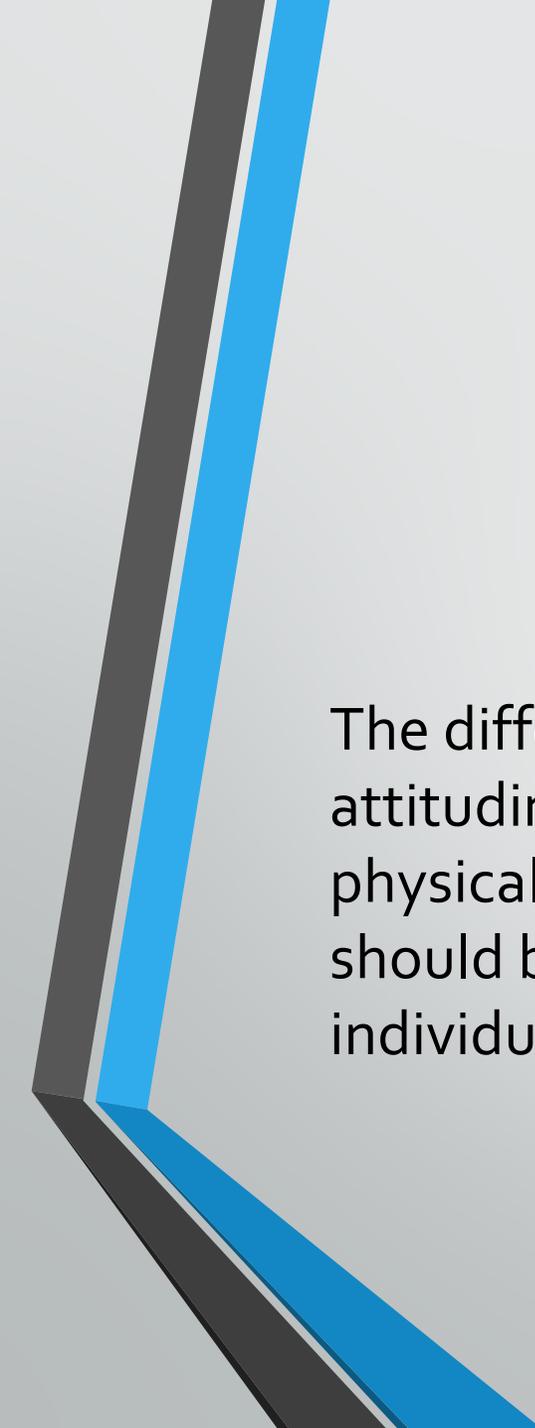


# Discourse

The distinct linguistic and cognitive expectations for communication in a specific setting. Discourse is bound and defined by the parameters of the setting in which the output and input are produced. Specific discourses are associated with distinct social groups, academic groups, political groups, or any group in which members share ways of thinking, acting, and believing.

# Discussion

Discussions can be whole-group discussions involving the entire class or small group discussions. In ESL settings, it is vital that teachers modulate whole-group discussions so that all learners participate even if they do not contribute comments or questions. Teachers need to factor in appropriate wait time to allow EL students time to construct responses. Small group discussions can be facilitated if the teacher assigns specific tasks and sets time limits for discussion. Whether whole class or small group, discussions should aim for inclusivity and equitable participation from all learners.

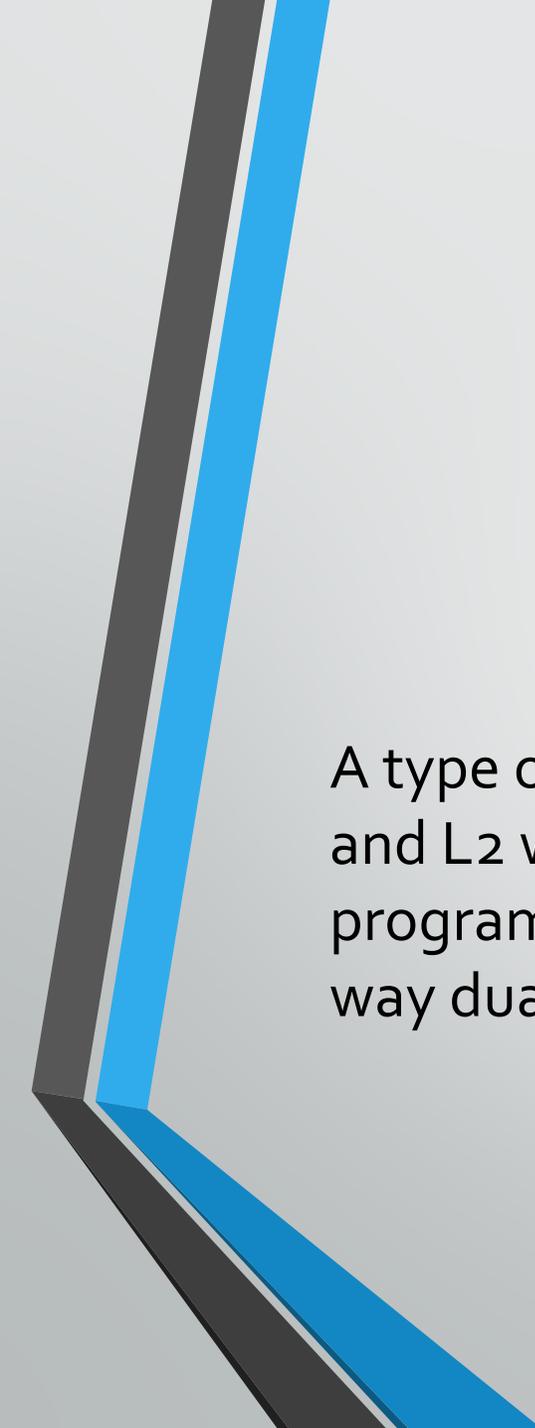


# Diversity

The differences that learners bring to a class community. Differences may be attitudinal, ethnic, national, gender-based, disability-based, linguistic, physical, social, economic, or any number of other distinctions. Differences should be used to create a cohesive class community of distinct learners with individual as well as holistic needs.

# Domains

The content of the TExES ESL (154) Supplemental exam is presented in three domains which represent broad areas of knowledge: Domain I – the teacher's knowledge of linguistics; Domain II – The teacher's ability to construct effective ESL instruction; Domain III – The teacher's ability to contextualize ESL within historical frameworks and social aspects of language instruction. Each domain is further divided into competencies and descriptive statements.



# Dual language programs

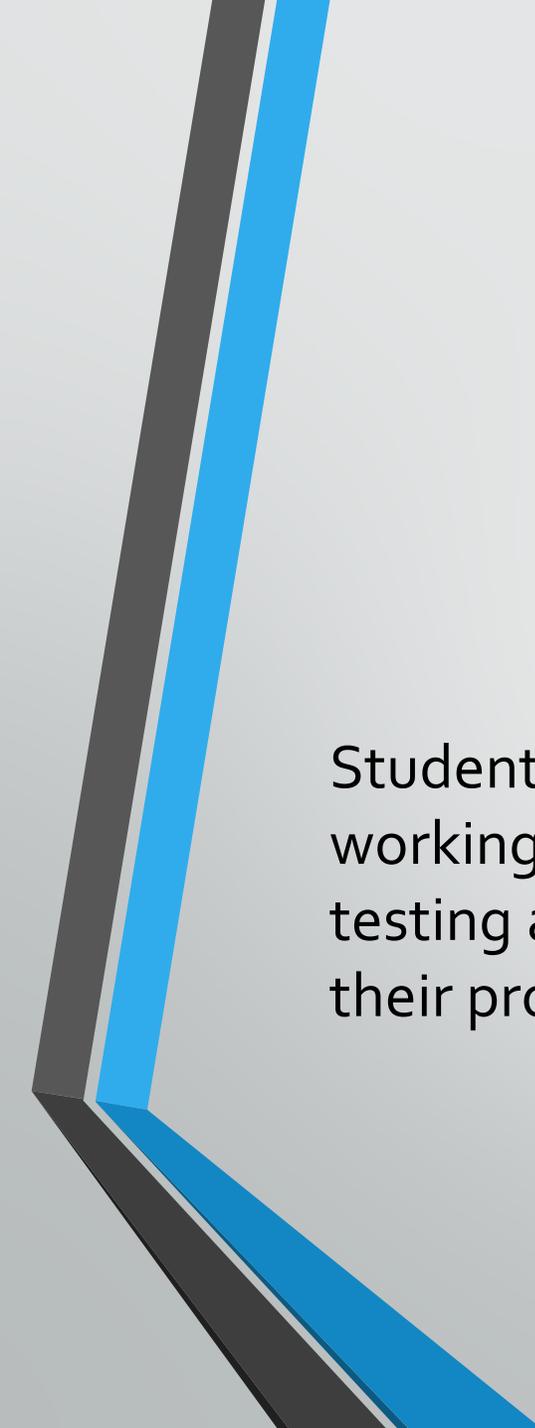
A type of bilingual education program in which instruction is delivered in L1 and L2 with a goal of biliteracy for all learners. Two-way dual language programs include native speakers of English as well as language learners; one-way dual language programs are focused on EL students.

# Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

Passed in 1965, this act was aimed at general improvement in the educational circumstances of young learners in the U.S. Although the 1965 act was intended to achieve equity for low-income students, in subsequent revisions and reauthorizations, ESEA has been instrumental in implementing language programs to support the needs of students whom English is not a first language.

# English as a Second Language (ESL)

ESL programs are one of two broad language programs implemented in Texas public schools to develop the language and academic proficiency of students who have been designated LEP on the basis of their performance on the state-approved English proficiency exam. In ESL programs, instruction is delivered in English although teachers are expected to make linguistic accommodations to support learners' ability to learn English while they are learning content-area material in English.



# English Learners

Students whose home language is a language other than English and are working toward proficiency in English. EL students are designated EL through testing and are placed in ESL or bilingual education programs on the basis of their proficiency in English as determined by a state-approved test.

# English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)

A section of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum that includes categories of proficiency for EL students: Beginner, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high in listening and speaking and in reading and writing. ESL and bilingual education teachers are responsible for knowing the characteristics of each proficiency level to ensure that instruction is appropriate adjusted to meet EL students' academic and linguistic needs.

# Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The 2015 reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act which focused on improving the quality of elementary and secondary education by emphasizing equity and access. ESSA is the updating of No Child Left Behind which was characterized by the average yearly progress requirement. ESSA focuses on providing appropriate language support to enable EL students to reach high levels of achievement in the same academic subjects and opportunities as native speakers.

# Family improvement

ESL teacher must engage families in striving for the success of ESL students on school. Family involvement is fostered through communication, through on-going contact with parents, and through invitations for parental participation. A teacher can serve as an intermediary or liaison in official communication from LPAC, especially when parents may not understand what testing data or language program status information means specifically for their children. Teachers can also direct parents to state an national websites aimed at helping parents of English learners participate in their children's education.

# Feedback

Comments a teacher offers in response to an in-progress or completed learning task. Feedback should clearly identify what the learner has done effectively and what the learner needs to do to improve. Feedback can be immediate in class, as during a class activity, or deferred, as in a formal commentary or scoring of a learning product. Feedback is a component of assessment.

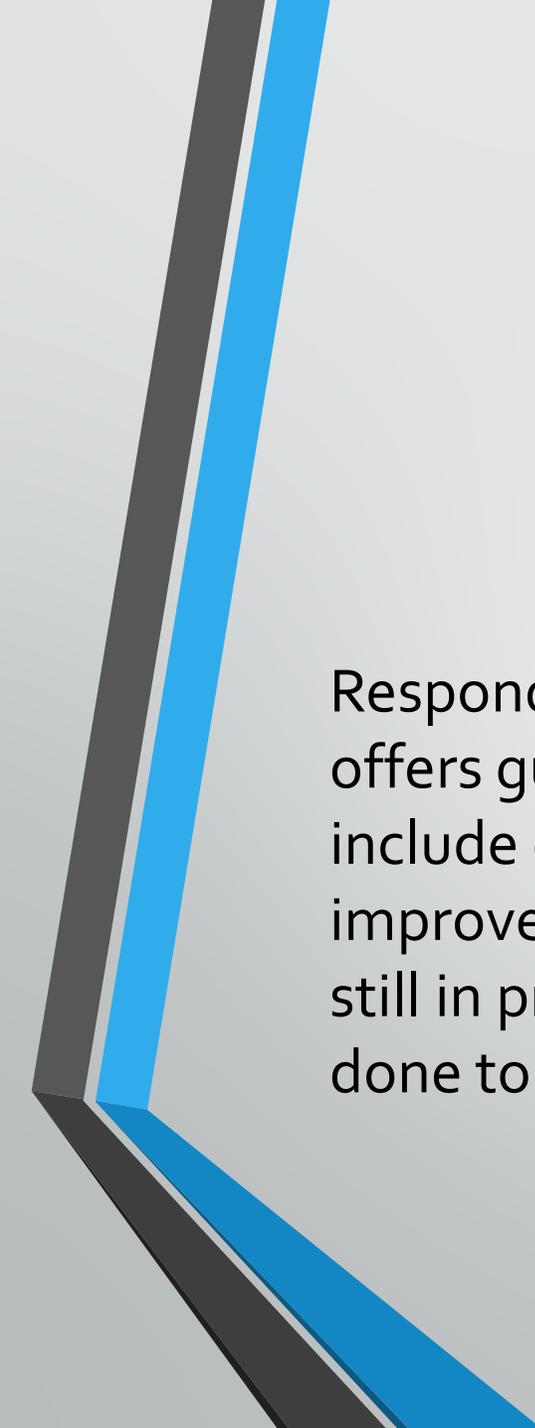
# First language acquisition

The processes of becoming fluent in one's native or first language. First languages are acquired intuitively, naturally, and quickly without instruction. First language acquisition processes cannot be realistically replicated in SLA, but the comprehensible, meaningful input hypothesis is an attempt to establish that if first language acquisition occurs through meaningful communicative interactions, then we should be able to carry the learning platforms into ESL instruction.



# Fishbowl

A prolific classroom strategy for demonstrating learning activities. Fishbowl relies on the metaphor of a fish in a bowl that can be viewed swimming around and doing fish activities. In the classroom, students volunteer to be the fish by demonstrating an activity while everyone else watches, comments, and asks questions. The fishbowl is considered a robust strategy for fostering learner engagement.

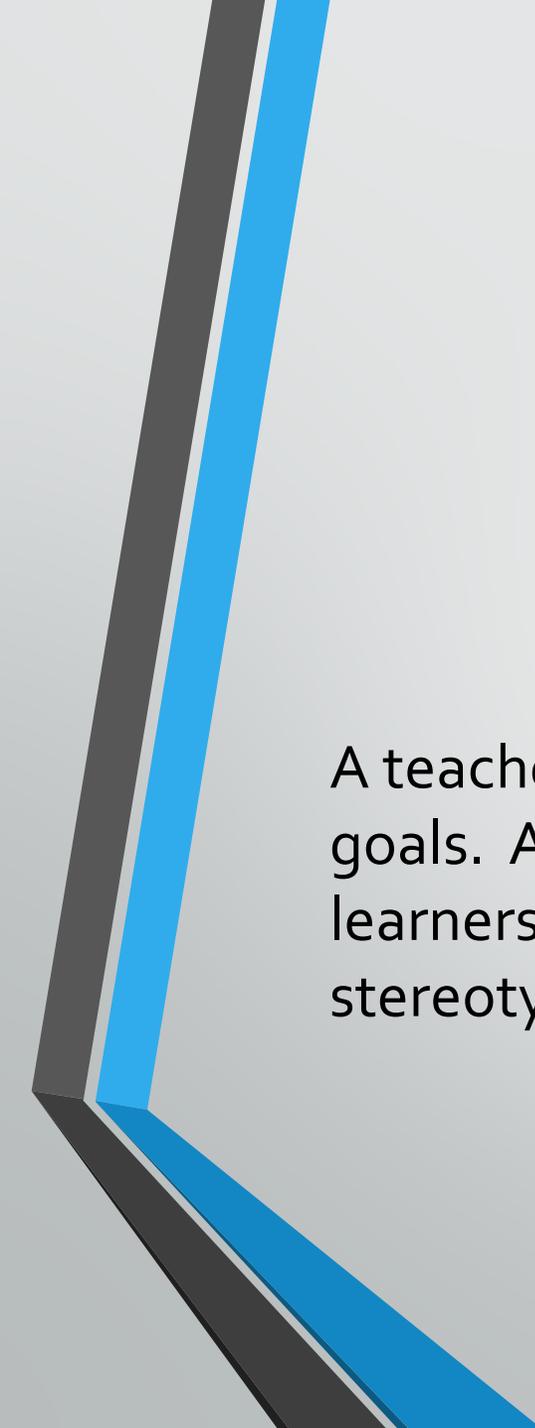


# Formative feedback

Responding to student learning products in a way that identifies strengths and offers guidance for specific improvement. Formative assessment should include opportunities to revise based on the comments for needed improvement. Formative feedback is offered while a learning task is still in progress and students have the opportunity to revise what they have done to demonstrate higher levels of achievement.

# Grouping strategies

Collaborative activities call for decisions about grouping. The teacher's choices for arranging students into groups significantly impact the classroom environment. A teacher can promote diversity by creating random groups. Base groups, which are more or less permanent, however, contribute to learners' feelings of responsibility to classmates. Self-selected groups allow learners to assemble themselves in comfortable social groups. The grouping strategy should reflect the learning objective for the specific collaborative learning task.



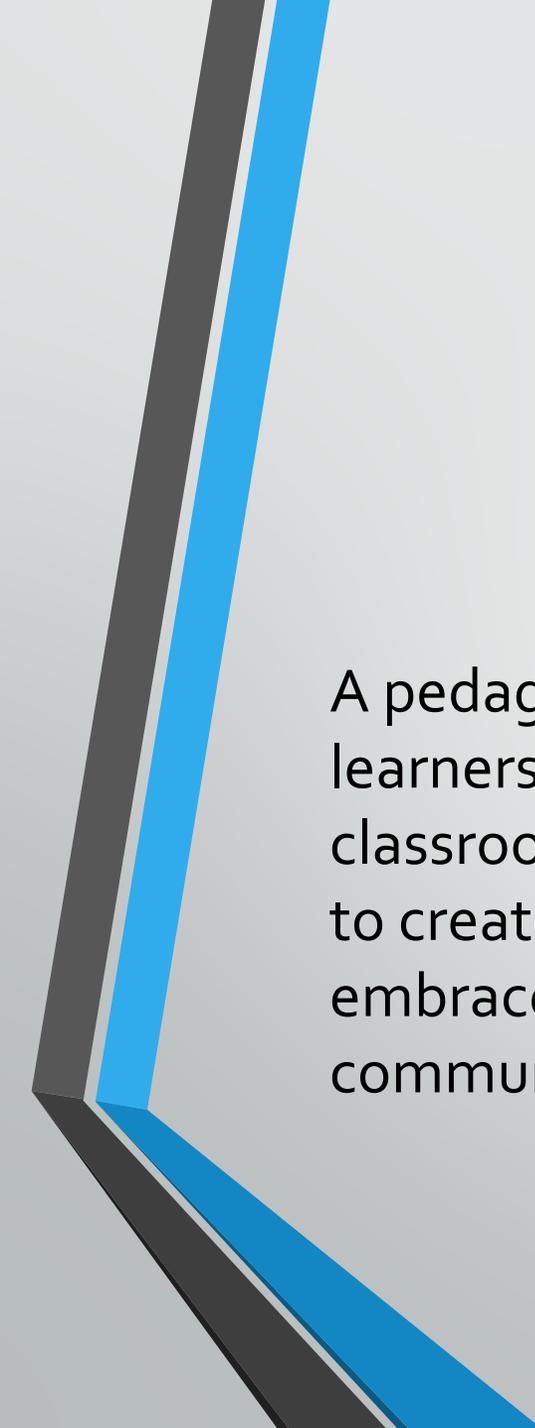
# High expectations

A teacher attitude that reflects the belief that all learners can achieve their goals. A mindset of high expectations creates a learning community where learners feel they have every chance to succeed. High expectations eliminate stereotyping based on past learner failure or subpar performance.



# Higher-order thinking

Learning tasks that promote evaluation of ideas, exploration of multiple perspectives, problem solving, inquiry, critical exploration of ideas, abstract thinking, reflection, and other cognitive tasks that challenge learners to look beyond the surface level of a topic. Higher-order thinking tasks should reflect learner readiness based on developmental levels.



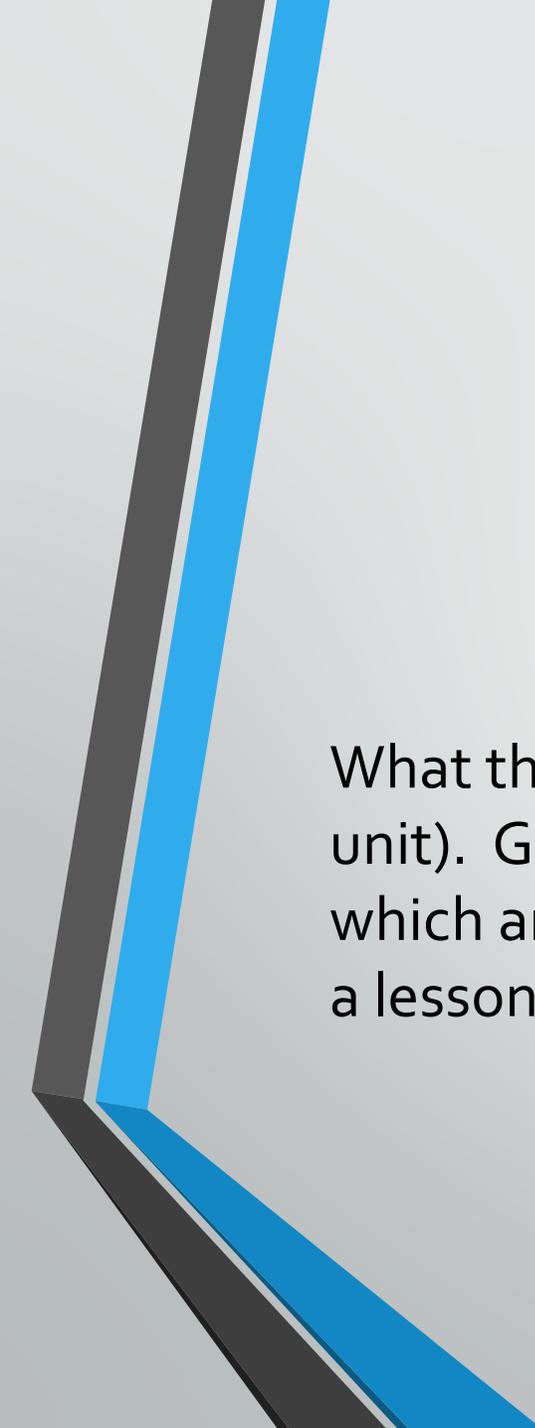
# Inclusion

A pedagogical attitude that emphasizes access and opportunity for all learners. Inclusion is usually used to describe how difference is dealt with in classrooms. Federal laws dealing with linguistic difference or disabilities aim to create equity of access for all learners. Ideally, a class community should embrace difference, recognizing that individual distinctiveness enriches the community as a whole.



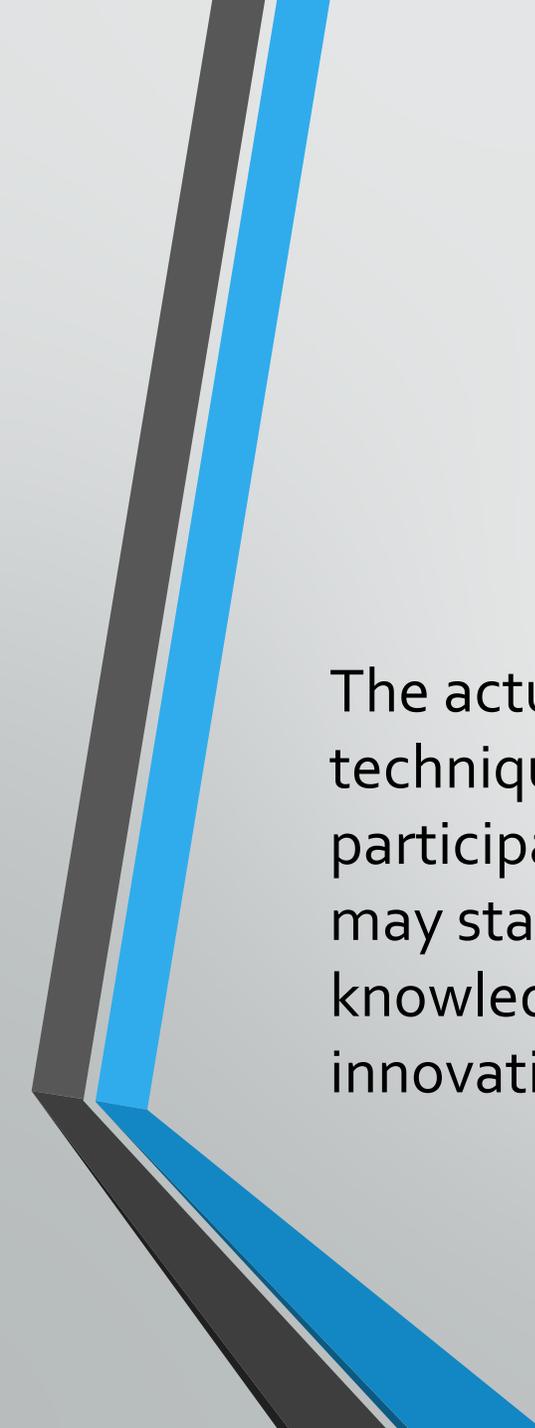
# Input hypothesis

Stephen D. Krashen contended that for language learning to happen, the learner must be in an environment of meaningful intake of language, which he labeled “comprehensible input.” According to Krashen, learners acquire L2 only if they are immersed in an environment of comprehensible input.



# Instructional goals

What the teacher hopes to accomplish in a lesson or set of lessons (as in a unit). Goals are generally subdivided into measurable learning objectives which articulate what the learner should know and be able to do at the end of a lesson or set of lessons.



# Instructional techniques

The actual choices teachers make for delivering instruction. Instructional techniques should reflect learning outcomes and should enable learners to participate fully and meaningfully in their learning. Instructional strategies may start out as generic techniques (like an activity for activating prior knowledge) but the actual technique can reflect teacher creativity and innovation.



# Interlanguage

A coherent intervening stage in a learner's trajectory toward L2 proficiency. Interlanguage is systematic, showing the learner's current holistic competence in L2. Interlanguages are idiosyncratic, with each learner moving through numerous interlanguage stages on the path toward L2 proficiency.

# Interrelatedness

The connectivity among listening, speaking, reading, and writing. While we analyze language acquisition in these four language areas, learning a language past the first, or native language, occurs with almost simultaneous learning in all of the domains. In ESL instruction, interrelatedness means that teachers need to integrate all the domains as they support students' development in communicative and academic proficiency.



**L1**

A learner's first or native language



**L2**

A learner's second or additional language

# Language acquisition

The process of learning a language. Learning a language is such a complex process that language specialist distinguish between *learning* and *acquisition*. In this distinction, *learning* is almost a superficial process where the learner can participate in the discourse of L2 but lacks full involvement, engagement, and/or motivation. *Acquisition*, on the other hand, is a deeper process in which the learner strives to join the full discourses of L2, demonstrates a high level of engagement, and feel confident and competent in joining L2 communities. Acquiring a second language requires conscious learning processes, metacognitive attention to those processes, and transfer of L1 structures.

# Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC)

Mandated by the Texas Education Code, an LPAC is formed on each campus to oversee the implementation of federal and state regulations regarding education of EL students. Membership includes a parent of an EL student, language teacher, and appropriate administrators. The LPAC initially evaluates proficiency test results to determine the best language program for each student who has been designated LEP. The committee also sends out the required parent approval letters and provides detailed, annual progress reports showing EL students' performance on required tests. Based on test results, the committee determines when students can exit the language program or can be reclassified as fluent English speakers.

# Learning styles

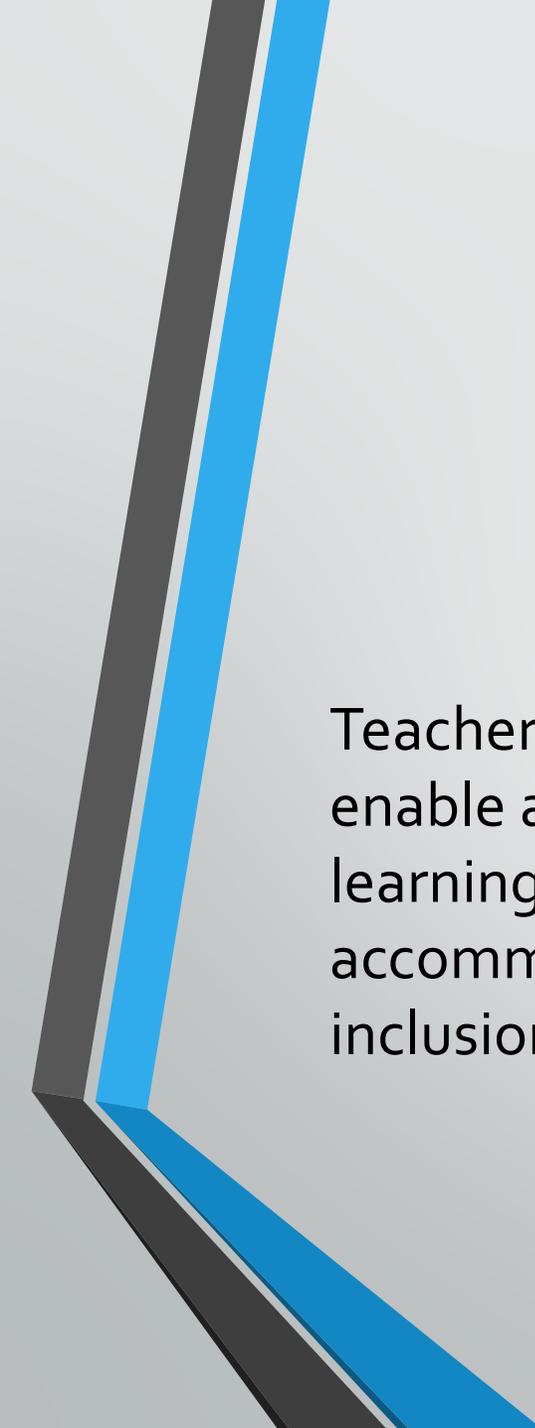
Learners process new information in a variety of ways. Some researchers suggest that each learner has a preferred way of learning, with some learners preferring text, others visual stimuli, some kinesthetic activities. Other researchers point out that because of the complexity and interrelatedness of our cerebral activity, the teacher is able to provide learners with diverse platforms for constructing new understandings.

# Lexicon

The collection of words and associated semantic understandings in a specific language. However, lexicon can also refer to the body of words that an individual learner knows. A lexicon is like the learner's individually-constructed dictionary of words that he/she knows either fully and operationally (words that the learner can actually use to construct meaningful utterances) or words that are known to a limited extent but are recognized in appropriate contexts. Learners construct lexicons for individualized circumstances that require environment-specific knowledge of specialized terms, as in sports, special activities, and content areas.

# Limited English Proficient (LEP)

This is the official label used by Texas to designate students in need of language support: “Student of limited English proficiency’ means a student whose primary language is other than English and whose English language skills are such that the student had difficulty performing ordinary class work in English” (TEC, 1995).

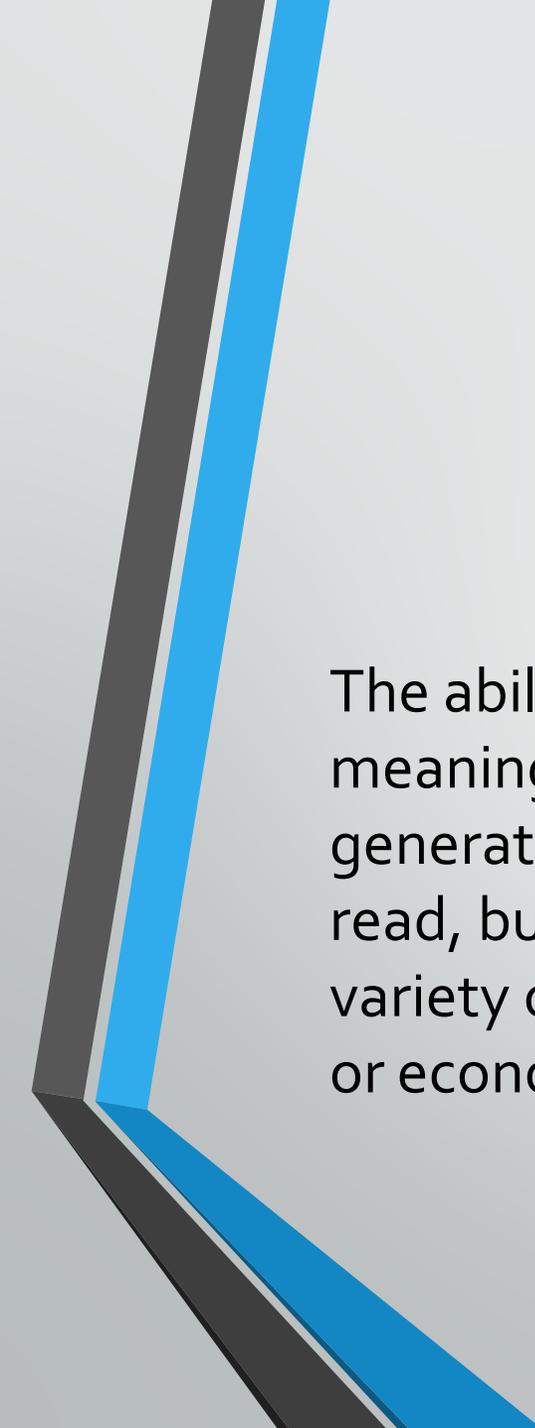


# Linguistic accommodations

Teachers who have EL students in their classes must provide adaptations that enable all learners to participate equitably in all classroom activities and learning. Accommodations should not call attention to the learner; instead, accommodations should be integrated holistically into teaching to promote inclusion.

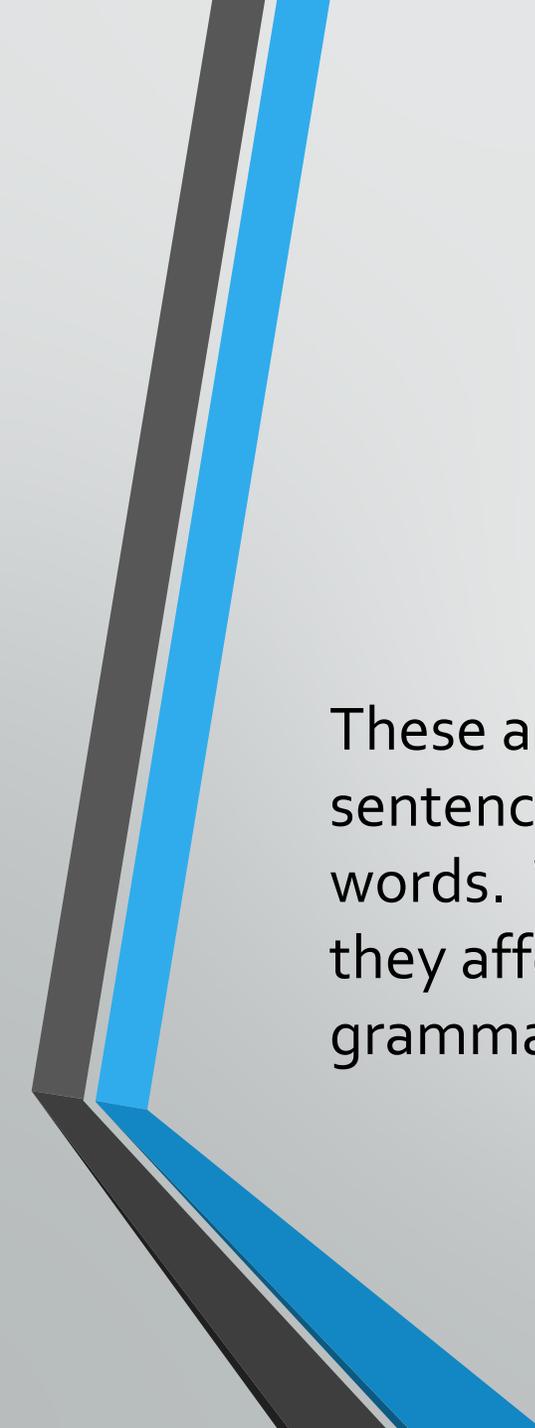
# Linguistic knowledge

In the context of teaching ESL, linguistic knowledge allow the teacher to identify structures that the EL student is attempting in speaking or writing. Linguistic knowledge is the full understanding of the system of English: phonology, morphology, semantics, and syntax. The specific student expectations presented in ELPS are based on demonstration of specific linguistic performances, so teachers need a strong background in linguistics to connect learner output to elements of linguistic systems.



# Literacy

The ability to use linguistic, rhetorical, and discourse systems to construct meaning from a text and to participate in meaningful use of these systems to generate meaningful utterances. Literacy often refers simply to the ability to read, but increasingly, literacy explains more expansive abilities to use a variety of linguistic systems to meet communicative, personal, social, political, or economic goals.



# Mechanics

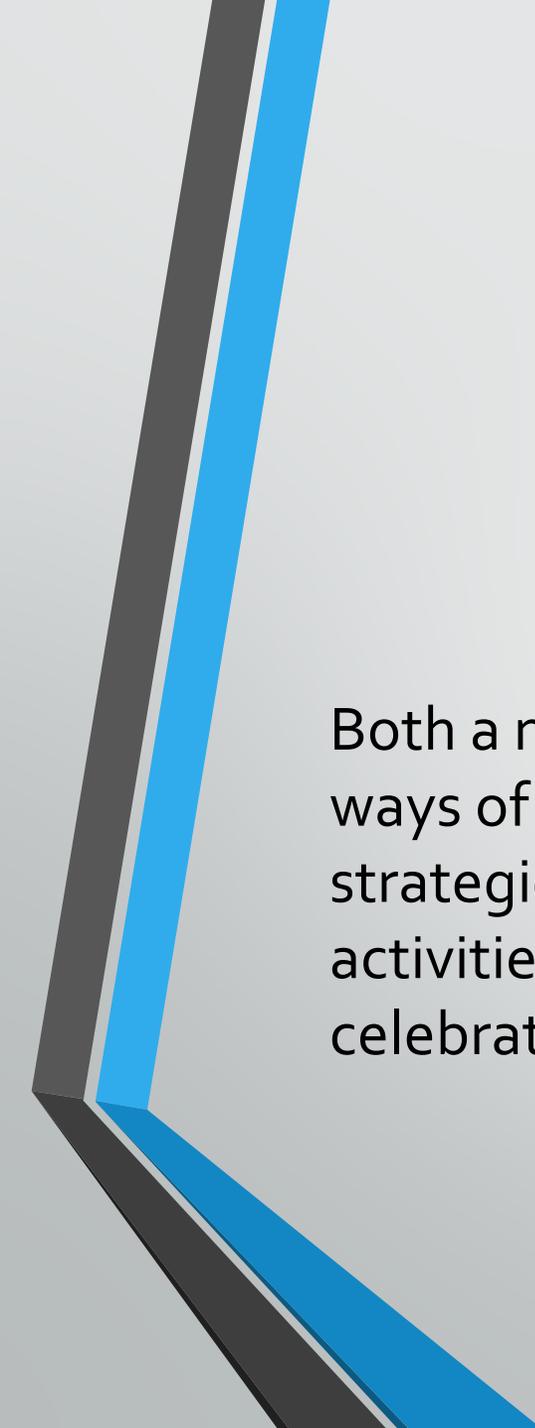
These are rule like expectations in writing, like capitalizing the first word of a sentence, spacing after a period, using a hyphen between some compound words. “Mechanical” aspects of writing don’t necessarily impact meaning but they affect the way writing is perceived by a reader. Mechanics are not grammar rules.

# Modeling

Demonstrating how a learning task is to be performed. In ESL instruction, modeling is a valuable teaching strategy for guiding EL students toward growing understanding of specialized content-area knowledge. Modeling can be done by the instructor or by students.

# Morphology

The word construction system of a language. Morphemes are meaningful linguistic units that are used in constructing words. Morphemes can be bound (must be attached to other morphemes to create meaningful words) or free (can exist as a meaningful word without being attached to other morphemes). The word *geography* is made up of two bound morphemes which both have distinct meaning: *geo* and *graphy*. Both of these bound morphemes can be combined to form other words such as *geologist* or *biography*. Morphemes are *not* the same thing as syllables because morphemes have distinct meaning while syllables represent sound combinations distinct to a specific language.



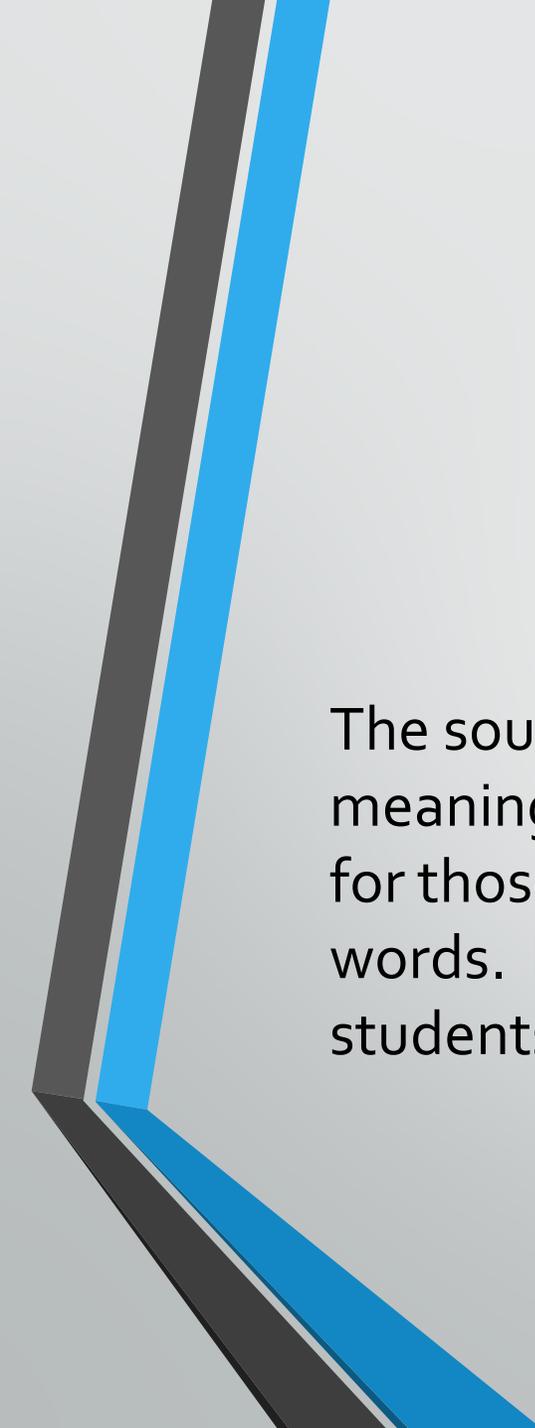
# Multiculturalism

Both a mindset and an actual approach to teaching that integrates diverse ways of thinking, multiple sources of culturally-diverse resources, and strategies for pulling learners into cohesive, egalitarian class community activities. The goal of multiculturalism is to foster community based on celebration of diversity.



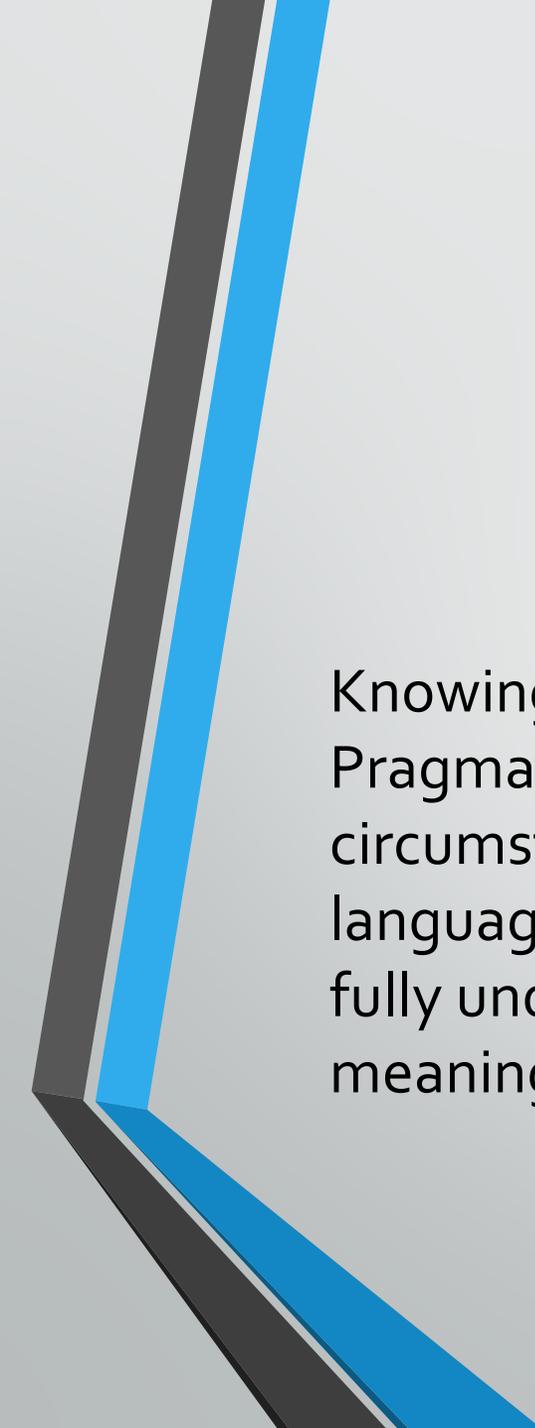
# Orthography

The spelling system of a language. Orthography determines how letters combine to represent sounds and form words in graphophonemic form.



# Phonology

The sound system of a language. The phonological system identifies distinct, meaning-making sounds (phonemes), and creates alphabetic representations for those sounds. Phonemes are combined to create syllables and then whole words. Knowing how sounds are produced enables ESL teachers to help EL students modify their sound production to create English utterances.



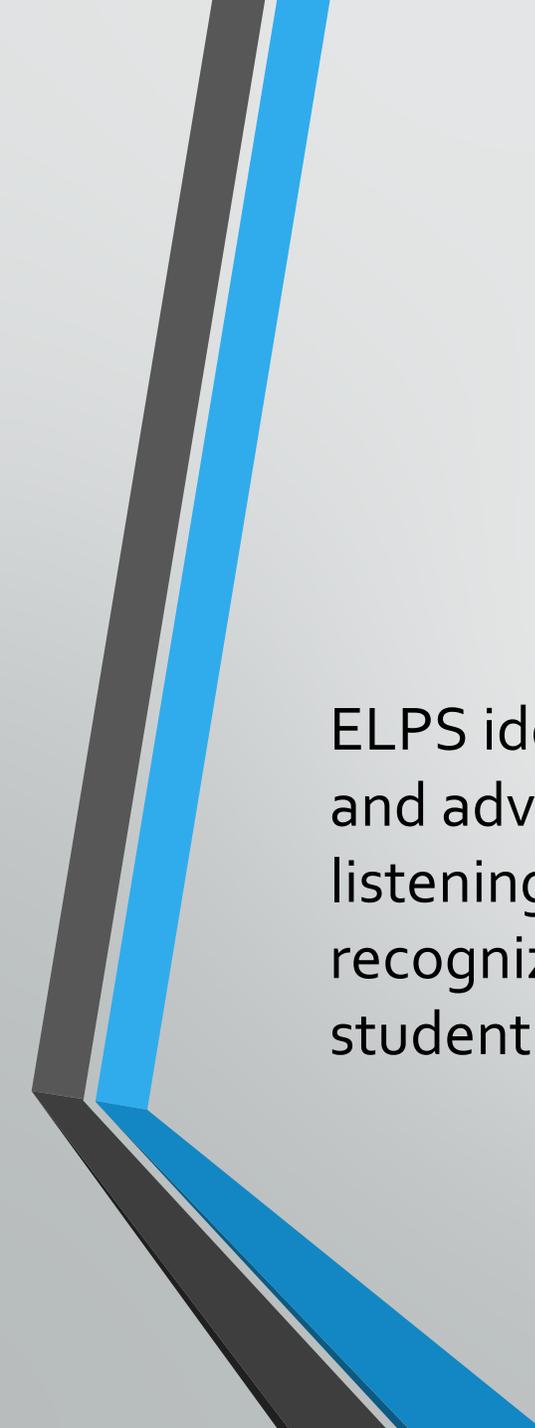
# Pragmatics

Knowing how to use language to act upon the world, to get things done. Pragmatics involves extra-linguistic factors such as tonality, inflections, circumstance-specific variations, irony, sarcasm, humor, gestures, body language, and other choices in performative speech acts. EL students may not fully understand pragmatics until they have interacted significantly and meaningfully in L2 environments.



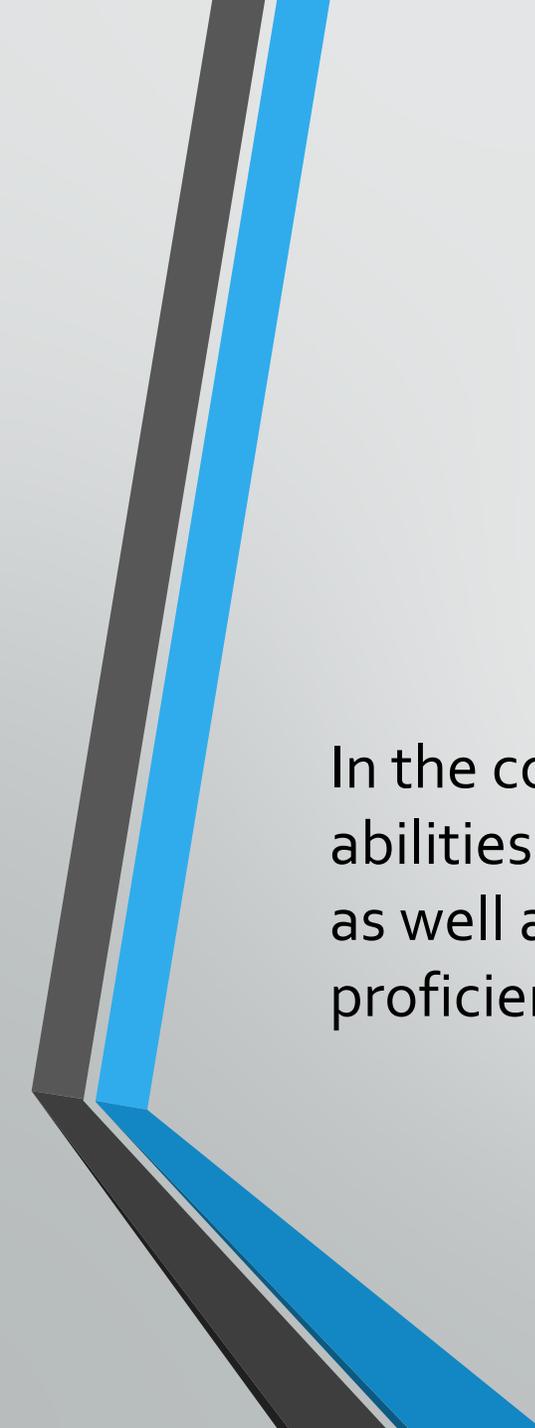
# Prior knowledge

What the learner already knows about a new learning topic either from past academic experience or life experience. Prior knowledge is considered essential for engaging learners in a new learning task. Learning task should include activities for activating prior knowledge.



# Proficiency levels

ELPS identifies four proficiency levels: beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high. Each level has specific descriptors for performance in listening, speaking, reading and writing. ESL teachers are expected to recognize student performance levels in order to shape instruction to support student advancement to higher levels of proficiency.



# Proficiency

In the context of ESL usually refers to English Learners' growing linguistic abilities in English. State of Texas guidelines and statutes charge content-area as well as specialist teachers with the responsibility for promoting EL students' proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in English.

# Pull-out programs

A type of ESL program in which EL students participate in main stream content-area classes with specialized instruction in language and literacy delivered by an ESL teacher. In this system, an ESL certified-teacher provides instruction to ELs in an inclusionary model within the confines of the classroom or by removing the learner from it by “pulling” the learner out of the class for targeted language instruction.



# Read aloud

A teaching strategy in which the teacher reads a core text aloud to demonstrate effective reading strategies and/or to enable learners to hear the rhythms of the text. Read alouds are considered highly effective teaching strategies in ESL content and literacy instruction.

# Realia

Props, objects, items, or manipulatives that teachers integrate into lessons to support learners' understanding of content. Realia allows learners to use concrete objects connected to actual experiences to construct meaning. For example, a teacher starting a unit on recycling might want to bring in the following realia: an empty tissue box, an empty plastic water bottle, and a clean, empty aluminum can.



# Recursiveness

The loop-like quality of learning. As we try to master new knowledge, we find ourselves backtracking in order to move forward. A learner's understanding that learning is recursive is a valuable cognitive strategy for mastering all types of content.

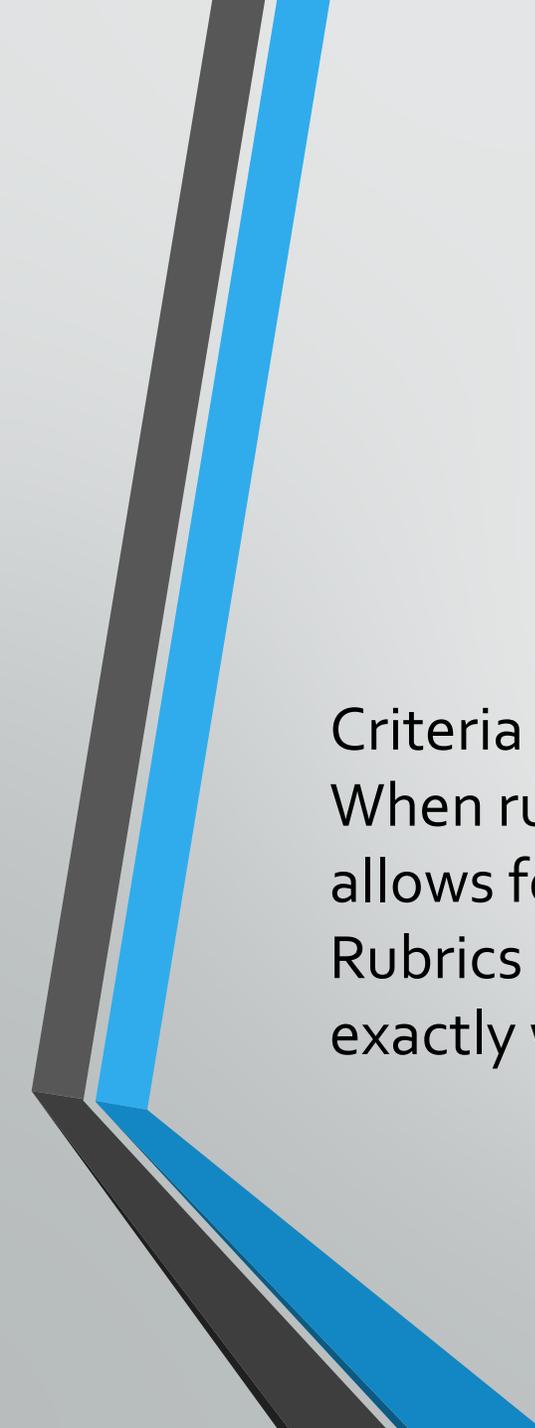
# Registers

Registers are systems of variable language uses. Simply stated, registers are the “way” we interact linguistically in different discourse settings with different people. Registers reflect social groupings and social settings. Registers are marked by setting specific word choices, attitudes, discourse expectations, and user groupings. Registers generally refer to communicative (listening and speaking) interactions. In early stages of second language acquisition, EL students are likely to have difficulty recognizing the nuances of output expectations in different registers.



# Responsive teaching

A teacher's ability to recognize learners' needs and to make adaptations so that the learner is able to participate fully and meaningfully in instructional activities. A responsive teacher is attuned to learner reactions to classroom events, to specific instruction, to classmates, to the classroom climate, and to all the generalized transactions of the classroom.



# Rubric

Criteria for scoring presented in performance levels and criteria for each level. When rubrics are distributed as the learners work on a learning task, the rubric allows for self-evaluation and contributes powerfully to self-directed learning. Rubrics should be task-specific rather than generic in order to show learners exactly what is required for a distinct learning task.

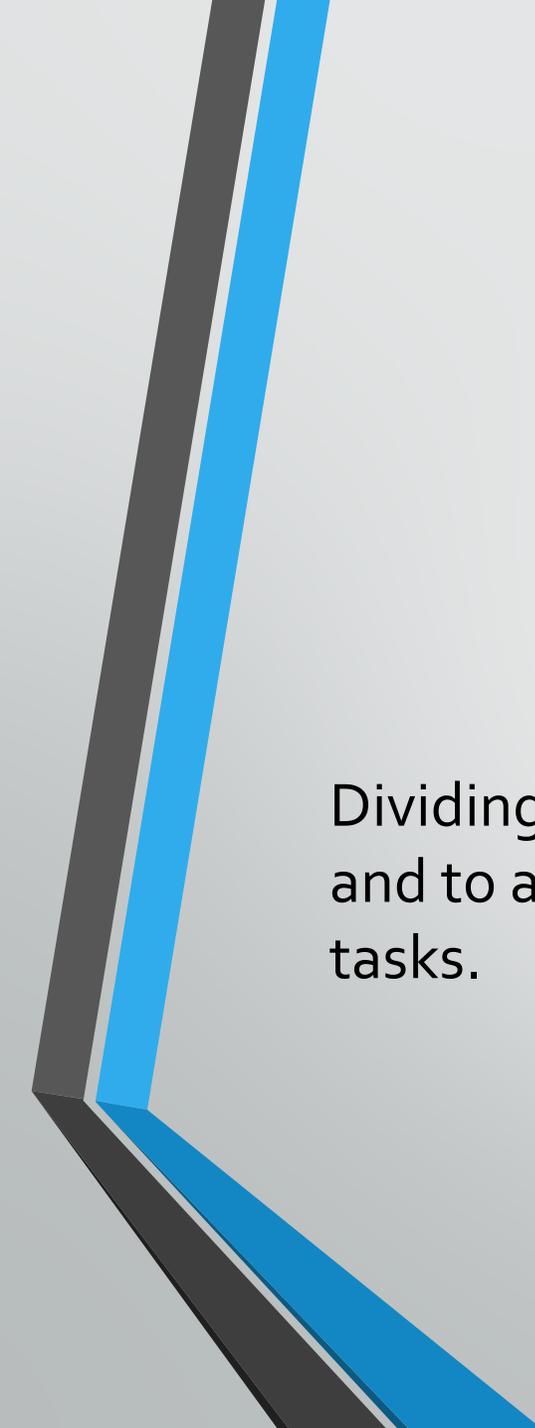


# Scaffolding

Presenting new information in segmented, incrementally complex stages. Scaffolding allows learners to support increasing understanding with platforms of established knowledge and comprehension.

# Second language acquisition (SLA)

The process of learning and acquiring a language other than the first or native language. SLA occurs through conscious application of learning strategies, application of L1 support, transfer of L knowledge, and direct learning of L2 content. SLA is quite different from first language acquisition which many researchers and theorist say occurs intuitively and naturally as individuals interact with experienced speakers in communicatively-significant settings, like home and family settings, and without direct instruction. SLA, in contrast, is often triggered by pragmatic logistics such as having to learn an additional language to participate in school or in a job. In ESL settings, teachers facilitate learners' SLA processes through researched-based applications of learning strategies.



# Segmenting

Dividing a learning task into smaller units to facilitate learner understanding and to allow teachers to assess learners' incremental mastery of complex tasks.

# Semantics

The system of meaning in a language. Semantics involves knowing how and why words carry meaning. At the simplest level, semantics can be thought of as the vocabulary or lexicon of a language, but once we start using words of a language, we discover that meaning can be constructed, manipulated, implied, or deflected on the basis of the way we use words.

# Sheltered instruction

An approach to ESL instruction that calls for adaptations and accommodations to promote inclusion of EL students in meaningful learning. Instruction is modified by integrating such supports as visuals, more explanation of content-area terms, presentation of content-area information in accessible language, interacting among learners, and demonstrations. Many teachers point out that sheltered instruction embraces principles and practices found in all teaching; the difference, however, is that ESL teachers who use sheltered instruction consistently integrate these practices in order to support continual language, cognitive, and academic growth of language learners.



# Silent period

A stage of second language acquisition in which the learner is mostly observing and taking in L2 information. The learner may be reluctant or unready to actually talk in L2 circumstances, hence the “silent” label.

# State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR)

The state assessment system. STAAR exams are administered in core areas starting in Grade 3 and continue through end-of-course exams in high school. The exams are based on selected TEKS for the content area being tested. EL students must take STAAR exams as part of ESSA expectations for demonstrating academic proficiency. Accommodations may be requested to create equity and access for EL students in mandated testing situations.



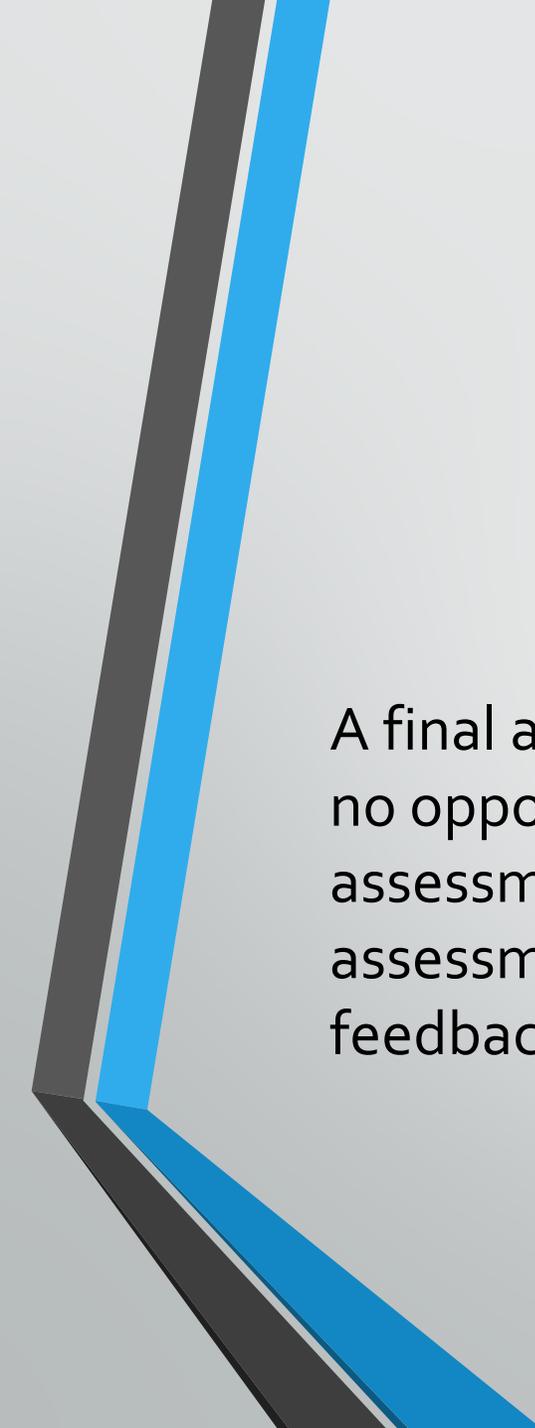
# Student diversity

The individual qualities that create a heterogeneous community marked by differences among learners. Diversity should be celebrated as an indicator of individuality among learners. In class communities, diversity should be valued, with differences seen as distinctiveness not as deficit.



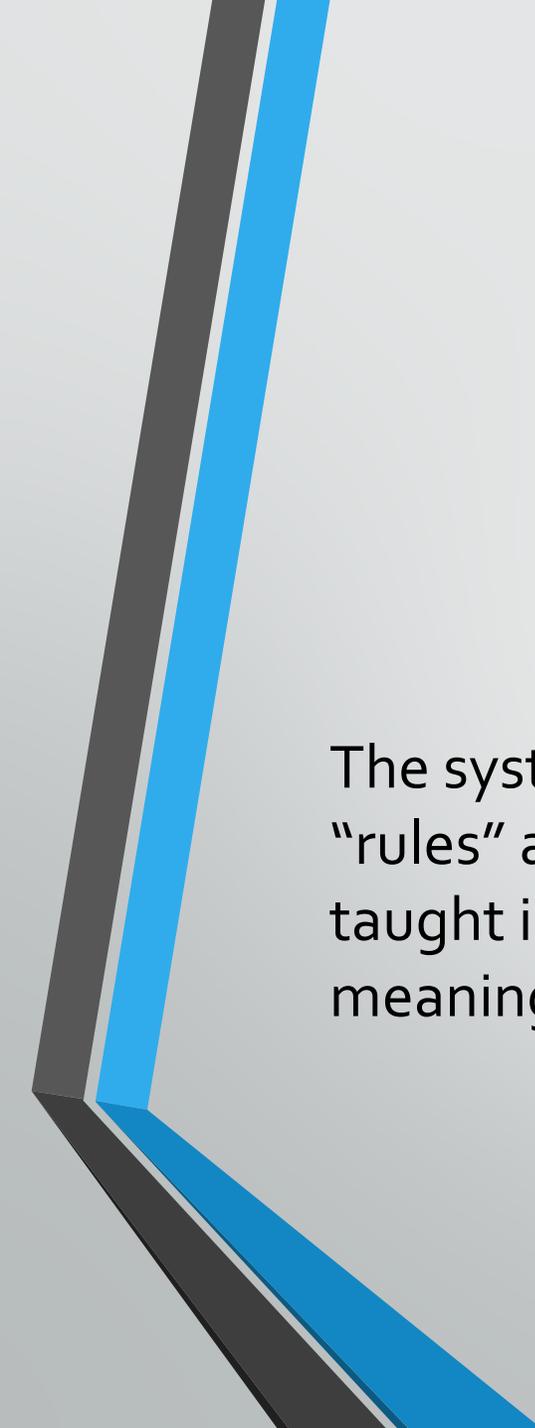
# Student expectations

ELPS cross-curricular essential knowledge and skills presented as lists of performances and abilities that students are expected to demonstrate in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.



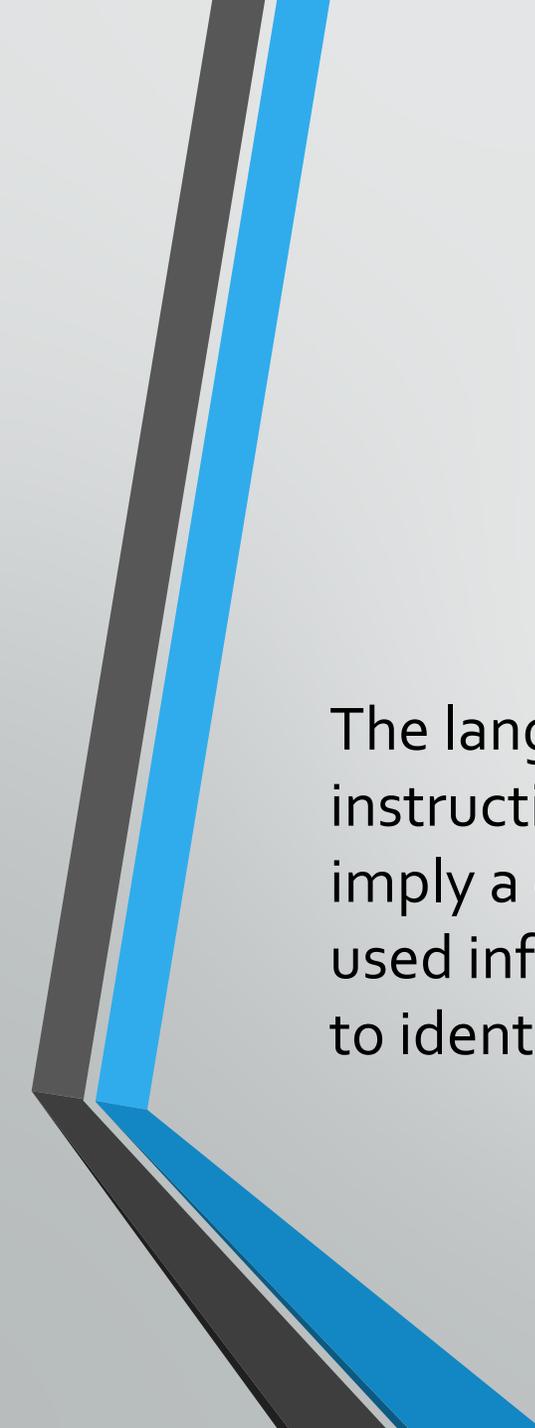
# Summative assessment

A final assessment that includes summaries of learner performance but with no opportunity for redoing the assessed work. Ideally, summative assessments come at the end of a learning cycle that has included formative assessment and that has allowed multiple opportunities for learners to apply feedback to improve their performance.



# Syntax

The system of “rules” for constructing sentences in a language. Syntactic “rules” are acquired intuitively by learners. They refer not to the grammar rules taught in school but to the way that words are put together to form meaningful utterances in a language.



# Target language

The language that an EL student is learning through ESL or bilingual instruction. The term is sometimes seen as politically incorrect because it can imply a diminishment of the importance of the native language. The term is used infrequently in discussions of ESL instruction; instead the term L2 is used to identify the language being acquired.

# Teacher talk

A generic term for the talk initiated by teachers in classrooms. Teacher talk includes activities such as greeting students, modulating transitions among class activities, answering questions, delivering instruction, giving directions, and all the phatic communication that occurs in classrooms. Researchers and practitioners generally advocate that teachers work at cutting down teacher talk to increase learners' meaningful interactions with each other.



# Technology

Electronic and digital enhancements for teaching. Technology in teaching now involves far more than computer-assisted instruction. Instead, technology should transform traditional teaching by creating new ways to present new knowledge and to involve learners in their learning. In ESL instruction, technology is seen as a way to allow EL students to practice language structures, to construct background knowledge, and to adjust learning processes to a pace that allows them to review and repeat instruction.



# Texas Administrative Code (TAC)

A compilation of all state agency rules in Texas. Title 19 of the TAC includes chapters on the Texas Education Agency and the State Board for Education Certification. TEKS are included in the section on TEA.



# Texas Education Agency (TEA)

The state organization that oversees public education in Texas. TEA offers information, guidance, leadership, and direction to public school teachers and administrators in all areas of public school education. TEA is a prime resource in issues related to mandated state or federal requirements for language programs in Texas. TEA headquarters are in Austin.



# Texas Education Code (TEC)

A compilation of education-related laws and statutes passed by the Texas state legislature.



# Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

The state-approved curriculum standards in basic content areas and several specialized areas. TEKS are statements of what students should know about the content area at grade levels from kindergarten through high school. ELPS is a component of TEKS.



# Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)

The state system of assessment of English learners. Administered annually, TELPAS exams are used to assess EL students' performance and achievement in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

# **TExES English as a Second Language (ESL) Supplemental (154)**

“Supplemental” means you attempt this exam after you have achieved full certification by passing a content area or all-level exam and the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities exam. Exam 154 certifies you can teach English as a second language in an ESL program in Texas public schools. Exam 154 is not equivalent to certification in bilingual education. There is a separate supplemental exam for that.



# Thematic units

Clusters of lessons that focus on a theme or broad topic rather than a specific curricular element. Thematic units may be interdisciplinary and are considered highly effective instructional tools for creating and sustaining student engagement.

# Total Physical Response

A learning strategy that includes kinesthetic activities to promote learners' comprehension of L2 vocabulary, commands, directions, and activities. While TPR may seem to engage learners in rudimentary learning of limited L2 phrases, TPR can actually promote learners' multimodal engagement by linking language to physical response, thereby activating a higher level of cognitive engagement.

# Transfer

A prolific, natural strategy in SLA. Individuals with strong first language systems naturally rely on linguistic knowledge in L1 as they work on L2 proficiency. Transfer can occur in all language domains. Transfer can be productive and accurate, but it can also lead to L2 errors when learners approximate structures in L2 by using structures from L1 that do not correctly fit in the intended L2 output

# Transitional programs

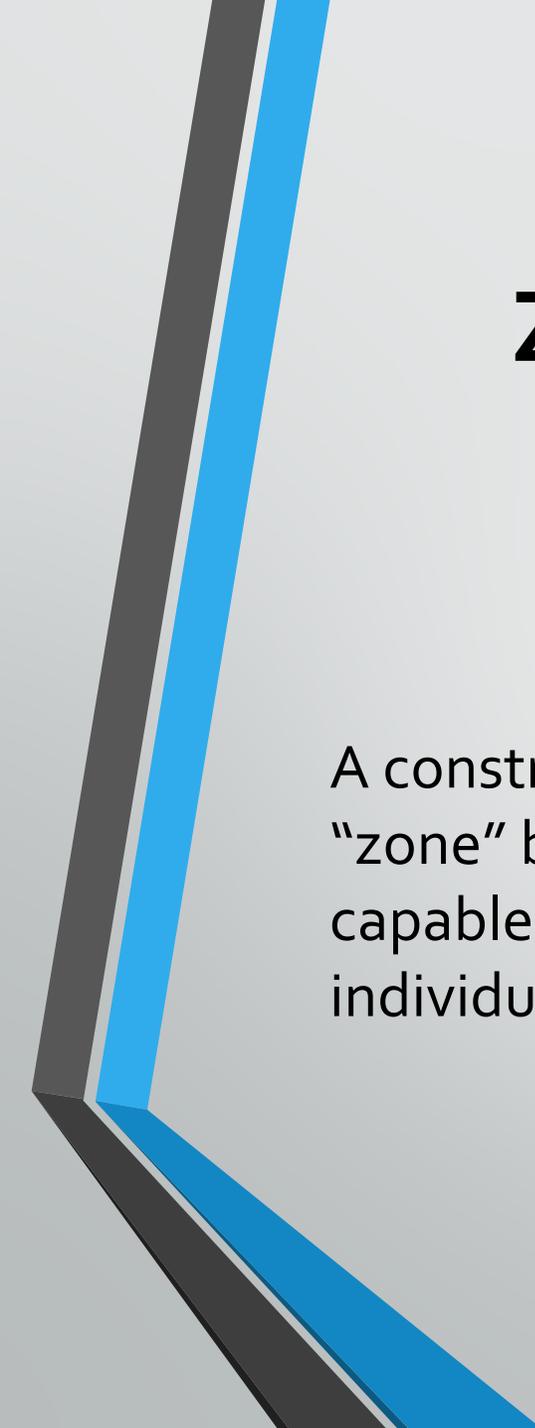
A type of bilingual program in which substantive support for L2 learning is provided in L1. The goal of transitional programs is to move students into mainstream classrooms as soon as they acquire sufficient proficiency in English to function effectively in regular classrooms. Transitional programs can be early exit, which means that learners may spend as little as two years in the program, or late exit, which means that learners are in the program for six or more years.

# Translingualism

An increasing number of language specialist contend that knowledge of multiple languages results not in bilingualism (literacy and fluency in two separate languages) but instead in a merging of the language systems in an idiosyncratic, learner-specific hybrid. Translingualism is *not* something as simple as code-switching. True translingualism shows learners appropriating linguistic and rhetorical patterns across the multiple language systems to create utterances that demonstrate evidence of effective, creative crossings in linguistic systems.

# Wait time

The time that a teacher allows for learners to process a question during class discussion. Wait time should allow learners to think about the question and formulate a response. Higher-order thinking questions require more wait time. Teachers should not see silence during the interval between the question and the student response as idle time. In classes that include EL students, wait time should be extended so that second language learners can fully process the question.



# Zone of proximal development (ZPD)

A construct attributed to Lev Vygotsky. ZPD is the hypothetical “area” or “zone” between what a learner currently knows and what the learner is capable of doing with the guidance or mentoring of a knowledgeable individual.