Amplify.

Amplify Caminos: Biliteracy Research Base Brief

Foundational Research: The Simple View of Reading

The Simple View of Reading (SVR), outlined by researchers Gough & Tunmer (1986), describes skilled reading as the product of two components: language comprehension and word recognition. Language comprehension is the ability to make sense of what we hear; word recognition is the ability to read the words on a page. The SVR model holds for any alphabetic language -- reading proficiency in any alphabetic language requires both competencies.

- Language comprehension: Background knowledge, vocabulary, language structures, verbal reasoning, literacy knowledge
- Word recognition: phonological awareness, decoding, sight recognition

Amplify Caminos was developed to ensure that instruction focuses on two critical factors, language comprehension and word recognition, as represented by the Simple View of Reading (SVR). The SVR framework has been validated for both English and Spanish demonstrating elements of instruction that are necessary for students to become proficient readers. This model has been validated in a variety of studies with Spanish-speaking students, demonstrating the unique importance of both language comprehension and word recognition for reading proficiency (Braze, Tabor, Shankweiler, & Mencl, 2007; Sparks, 2015; Sparks & Patton, 2016; Sparks, Patton, & Luebbers, 2018a;2019).

Like Amplify CKLA, Amplify Caminos is organized into two strands of instruction for grade K-2, Knowledge (Conocimiento) and Skills (Lectoescritura). CKLA Caminos Conconcimineto (Knowledge Strand) focuses on the language comprehension element of the SVR, helping students build coherent knowledge and rich, nuanced vocabulary. Amplify Caminos Lectoescritura (Skill Strand) focuses on the word recognition element of the SVR, helping students acquire foundational skills of phonological awareness and phonics for both reading and writing. In Grade 3, these strands integrate, synthesizing skill and knowledge development with a range of texts and activities.

Amplify Caminos Conocimiento content themes follow the same sequence of Amplify CKLA (English) and are based on the Core Knowledge Sequence, which was developed as a content guide for Grades PreK-8 and has been used for over two decades in nearly every state. The carefully organized domains build within and across grades, building broad content knowledge and vocabulary. Research suggests that this focused, coherent, and systematic approach to knowledge building and vocabulary development is highly impactful on reading comprehension (Alexander, Kulikowich, & Schulze, 1994; Cain et al., 2001; Shapiro, 2004).

Amplify Caminos Lectoescritura provides systematic, explicit, and comprehensive instruction in the Spanish language code. Lectoscritura instruction is a sounds-first approach similar to Amplify CKLA (English). This approach supports Spanish Language Learners as they focus on phonemes (sounds) first, which is particularly impactful for at-risk learners (Vaughn, et al., 2006). Students are explicitly taught each sound-letter correspondence of the Spanish code, to quickly move into syllables to form words. Lectoescritura includes explicit, integrated grammar lessons.

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Application: The Science of Reading in Dual Language

Based on this research, developing reading proficiency in both English and Spanish follows a similar framework or structure. In both languages, instruction must focus on developing both language comprehension and word recognition. There must be, however, some differences in the approach to word recognition based on the orthographic transparency of each language. It is generally accepted that there are 44 phonemes in the English language represented orthographically by approximately 150 graphemes, one of the most opaque alphabetic languages. In contrast, Spanish has between 22-24 phonemes with almost a one-to-one match to graphemes, one of the more transparent languages.

Because both English and Spanish are alphabetic languages, calling students' attention to individual phonemes in Spanish words may serve a dual function as they learn to read in both languages. Whether in transitional bilingual, dual language, or Spanish immersion settings, they will, at some point, be expected to develop literacy and comprehension in both languages. This is directly related to the basic concept of metalinguistic awareness in bilingual learners, which refers to the understanding of how two languages are similar and different (Beeman & Urow, 2013.)

Having experience working with language at the phoneme level in Spanish may make it easier for them to apply what they have learned about reading in Spanish as they take on the task of learning to read in English. As Pollard-Durodola and Simmons (2009) point out, "If phoneme blending and segmentation have been taught and mastered in Spanish, then it is conceivable that the linguistic readiness primed by instruction and practice in Spanish will facilitate transfer to English, therefore allowing English phonemic awareness instruction on high-priority skills to be abbreviated."

Amplify Caminos Lectoescritura: Program Principles

Amplify Caminos teaches reading and writing in tandem, since they are inverse processes. Spanish writing involves making pictures of sounds; reading involves translating those pictures back into sounds and blending the sounds to make words.

Synthetic Phonics approach

- Phonics instruction begins at the phoneme level as the building block of word-level reading skills
- All Spanish phonemes are taught explicitly
- Students are taught to blend and segment phonemes to form syllables, and blend and segment syllables to form words.

Systematic Instruction

- There is a scope of sequence of instruction which starts with basic concepts and builds to more complex.
- The most frequent and least ambiguous phoneme-graphemes are introduced first with a combination of vowels and consonants to build words as soon as possible.
- This sequence allows students to begin reading words quickly, either because they are composed entirely of letter-sound correspondences or commonly used words they have been taught.
- Decodable texts are carefully matched to the scope and sequence of instruction to ensure students have practice reading connected text.

Explicit Instruction

- Letter-sound correspondences are taught through explicit instruction. For example, a lesson teaching /m/ might:

    ○ Direct the teacher to tell the students: “Today’s sound is /m/.”
    ○ The teacher then engages the students in an oral exercise where students hear and say /m/
    ○ Once students are familiar with the sound, the teacher shows them how to draw a picture of /m/ by writing the letter ‘m’
    ○ Students practice on writing independently

- Instruction includes multimodal activities for high levels of engagement. Students practice skills through individual movement and using various manipulatives such as letter cards.
- Student activity pages are used for focused, distributed practice to master skills they have been taught.
- Decodable text is regularly used during instruction to provide students with practice reading connected text and for basic comprehension practice.

Formative Assessments and Feedback

- Lessons have clear objectives that indicate what students should know and be able to do at the conclusion of the lesson.
- Lesson activities support mastery of lesson objective(s).
- Instructional activities and activity pages are designed to provide feedback to teachers on how well each student has mastered the lesson objective(s).
- After each lesson, additional support is included to provide teachers with point-of-use activities for students who may need additional time and practice to master lesson-level objectives.
- Timely assessment measures the acquisition of first and second languages.

Amplify Caminos: Authentic to Spanish Literacy

Amplify Caminos is not merely a translation of the English program. The program has been built diligently by a team of bilingual educators and designers to ensure it is equitable to the English program, but specifically built to address Spanish Language Arts. In the Knowledge strand across both Spanish and English, we maintain consistency in the domain focus.

For example, if students are learning about plants in English, they will also learn about plants in spanish. However, the content of the Spanish lessons is adapted to fit the Spanish language.

Furthermore,whenever authentic texts are used in the program in English, we have sourced entirely new authentic Spanish language texts.

The Skills Strand in Spanish (Lectoescritura) is built entirely new for Spanish. It has strong research and pedagogical ties to the English program, but all lessons and decodable texts are written in Spanish by a bilingual team of writers, editors, designers and illustrators from across the Latin American diaspora. Due to the transparency of the Spanish language, the foundational skills lessons are 40 minutes long, as opposed to 60-minute lessons in CKLA Skills.

Additional Research Supporting this Program

Reading involves a complex integration of skills. Proficient readers seem to make the process look effortless, but reading instruction for all students requires systematic instruction in both word reading and comprehension. For students in the early stages of reading, or for those who struggle, reading is particularly difficult and requires careful instruction and intervention. Problem areas must be determined, and instruction and intervention to address these areas must be carefully planned and delivered. Learning to read consists of developing skills in two critical areas: (1) Reading each word in texts accurately and fluently and (2) Comprehending the meaning of texts being read. This is known as the Simple View of Reading. (Gough & Tunmer, 1986.)

- The essential components of reading (phonological awareness (PA), phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) are applicable to both L1 and L2 literacy, although the instructional practices and time spent teaching sub-skills may differ. For example, English and Spanish instruction in PA and phonics differs, with English instruction typically requiring more time and different strategies for teaching these skills. In English, which has an opaque and deep orthography, some letter-sound combinations have a one-to-one correspondence, but many do not. Students must learn to decode words with a letter-sound correspondence and must be taught how to also decode words with irregular spellings that may require more time to learn (Caravolas et al., 2013). The Spanish language, which has a transparent orthography, has a strong letter-sound correspondence that allows students to decode easily. These differences in the languages affect reading accuracy and fluent word-reading skills (Ellis et al., 2004; Ziegler & Goswami, 2005) as well as the time spent teaching foundational reading skills (Petscher et al., 2021). Early phonics instruction is important to both languages and provides the gateway to more complex multisyllabic and morphophonemic skills that improve reading with automaticity. To become skilled readers, students need to develop automaticity and word recognition to allow cognitive energy for making sense of text and ultimately comprehension.

- In a review of the SOR for emergent bilinguals, Nogueron (2020) states that the current SOR practices for English literacy are not enough for emergent bilinguals and suggests that the knowledge base about, and best practices for, emergent bilinguals be incorporated into their instructional programming. In particular, emergent bilinguals can use translanguaging, or flexible language use sometimes referred to as codeswitching, to help them derive meaning from text, contrast languages, and develop language for academic contexts (Nogueron, 2020). Comparing and contrasting languages through syntactical and contextual analysis helps emergent bilinguals deepen language knowledge (Nogueron, 2020). Oral language development should be an integral part of language and literacy instruction for emergent bilinguals.