

Explicit Direct Instruction

for EAL/D Learners

EAL/D

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A Joint Publication



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Preface

In our last book, *Explicit Direct Instruction® (EDI®): The Power of the Well-Crafted, Well-Taught Lesson* (Hawker Brownlow Education, 2009), we described how to design and deliver lessons that would help all students learn more and learn faster. This book takes the same approach but focuses even more specifically on strategies for using Explicit Direct Instruction to teach English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D). Of course, the goal for this book is to ensure that *all* students, including EAL/D learners, are successfully taught year-level work, at school, every day. Students are successful as a direct result of your teaching. We also call this GIFT: *Great Initial First Teaching*, when students learn more the first time they are taught, the best school reform. To help you make this happen, we'll describe lesson design, lesson delivery, vocabulary development, language objectives and how to make lessons more understandable for EAL/D students.

The ideas we present are research based but have been refined by extensive field research conducted by our company, DataWORKS Educational Research, including our analysis of more than 2.5 million student assignments and visitations to more than 35 000 classrooms. In addition, we – and the other DataWORKS consultants – have taught hundreds of demonstration lessons, from Foundation to Year 12, in all content areas so teachers can see the practices working with their students.

IDEAL FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

Since its publication in 2011, educators across Australia have been working to implement the first national Australian Curriculum (ACARA 2013). In doing so, they will have noticed this new curriculum's renewed emphasis on literacy as a cross-curricular "general capability". The Australian Curriculum recognises "literacy as an essential skill for students in becoming successful learners and as a foundation for success in all learning areas." Further, it notes that "for students who speak a language or dialect

other than Standard Australian English at home, access to language and literacy development is especially important."

Explicit Direct Instruction for EAL/D Learners is the ideal model for teaching the Australian Curriculum because of its balanced approach in teaching both Concepts and Skills along with integrated listening, speaking, reading, writing and vocabulary development in every lesson.

CONTENTS AND SPECIAL FEATURES

We start this book with classroom examples of EAL/D learners learning.

In Part I, *Getting Ready*, we describe EAL/D students and their needs – learning year-level content while simultaneously learning English. We present the importance of well-crafted lessons for EAL/D learners. A quick overview of Explicit Direct Instruction is followed by a chapter on Checking for Understanding and specific modifications for EAL/D students.

In Part II, *Strategies for EAL/D Learners*, three chapters present the core of the EAL/D Learner Strategies: Vocabulary Development, Language Objectives and Content Access Strategies. The Vocabulary Development chapter describes how to teach new vocabulary – including Academic Vocabulary – within the context of each lesson, every day. We next describe how to implement Language Objectives – in which students continually Listen, Speak, Read and Write using new English words and language structures from the lesson itself. In the Content Access Strategies chapter, we describe how to make spoken and written English more understandable for EAL/D learners.

In Part III, *Integrating Strategies for EAL/D Learners Into EDI Lessons*, six chapters describe in detail how to teach EAL/D learners – how to integrate EAL/D learner strategies into each part of a well-crafted lesson, starting with a curriculum-aligned Learning Objective and ending with Closure and Independent Practice. Chapter 13 wraps up this part of the book, with feedback on actual classroom lessons plus a list of all the instructional techniques used throughout the book.

You will also find several special features throughout the text. "From John" and "From Silvia" notes have been included when one of us has an extra insight to add, and shaded boxes highlight key strategies and quick-reference tips in each chapter. In addition, end-of-chapter summary sections provide a brief recap of each chapter's contents.

Sample lessons are also included within the text and are presented in three ways: first, as short examples throughout the text, identified with markers indicating which portion of a lesson they illustrate (e.g. Learning Objective, Activate Prior Knowledge, Concept Development, Skill

Development, Guided Practice, Importance, Closure, Independent Practice and Checking for Understanding), second, as complete lessons in Appendix A, Sample Explicit Direct Instruction Lessons for EAL/D Learners, and third, on our website (<http://www.dataworks-ed.com/resources>).

Six additional Appendices also provide a wealth of resources, including instructions on how to manage pair-shares, address sub-skill gaps, teach EAL/D learners on year level and design an EDI learning objective for EAL/D learners. Appendix D provides a quick refresher on English phonemes and associated spelling patterns, which can be helpful when teaching EAL/D students how to read specific words incorporated in EDI lessons.

Additional resources, including sample lessons and videos showing the strategies being used in actual classrooms, are on the DataWORKS website, www.dataworks-ed.com. The various worksheets and posters presented in this resource are also available to download at go.hbe.com.au.

We invite you to discover step by step how to create success in every lesson – transforming your teaching and revolutionising learning for your EAL/D learners.

A final note for administrators reading this book: It's not a focus on test scores that raises test scores. It's a relentless pursuit of optimising the effectiveness of the way students are taught – before the tests are given – that raises test scores. And that's what this book is all about.

1 EAL/D Learners Learning Every Day

Who Are They? What Do They Need?

This book shows how to successfully teach English as an additional language or dialect learners (EAL/D learners). Before delving into specific practices, we want to relate two examples in which a few changes in teaching strategies produced immediate success for EAL/D learners. Silvia describes two classrooms.

Mr Nelson pointed to his Learning Objective written on the board: "Identify the title of a book." He immediately called on some students to read the Objective. Most of them were not able to read the word *title*. I could hear students struggling trying to sound it out. Some students used the short *i* sound. Some pronounced the silent *e* at the end of *title*.

In desperation, Mr Nelson turned to me and whispered, "I have too many EAL/D learners, and this is too hard for them."

I whispered back, "Let me try some strategies. Watch what I'm going to do, and then you can use the same techniques later on your own."

I pointed to the word *title* on the board.

Students, I want all of you to look carefully at this word. Put your eyes right here where I am pointing and listen very carefully while I say this word.

I waited a few seconds to check that all students were looking.

This word is title. Listen one more time as I say it, title.

I repeated *title* one more time, extending the long *i* sound, *tiiii-tle*. I asked the students to say the word *title* as I cued them by pointing to the word each time I wanted them to say it.

I stepped away from the board and towards the students.

Now, I am going to call on some of you to read the word to me. But first, I want all of you to point to the word title on your handout and read it to your pair-share partner.

I waited a moment for the students to pair-share and then I called on some random non-volunteers. The first one said it correctly.

I asked a second student. He looked at the word *title* and misread it, pronouncing the silent *e*. It almost sounded like *tightly*. I corrected the mispronunciation.

Listen carefully. The correct way to read this word is title.

I wanted to reduce the focus on him, so I asked the entire class including him to say *title* one more time. I returned to him and asked him to read it. "Title," he now correctly stated. I called on a third student who pronounced it correctly.

I then slowly read the entire Objective while having the entire class look at each word as I pointed to it.

Students, look at these words while I read: Identify the title of a book. Now we are going to read the Objective together.

I cued the class, *Today we will . . .*

The students joined in chorally, *Identify the title of a book.*

I turned to Mr Nelson and whispered, "Now, have your students pair-share by reading the Learning Objective to each other. Then call on two non-volunteers to read today's Learning Objective." The students were successful, and it only took a couple of minutes.

After the lesson was completed, we debriefed about what had happened during the lesson. Mr Nelson stated that it was great that his EAL/D learners were able to read and pronounce new words and to participate in the lesson. He went on to confess that in the past he had been hesitant to call on EAL/D learners.

I reminded him that nothing magical had taken place. All I did was implement research-based strategies that have been proven to work for EAL/D learners, such as pre-pronouncing and pre-reading difficult words, choral readings, pair-shares, Checking for Understanding and providing Effective Feedback in direct response to student errors.

Now let's look at Silvia's second example, a lesson that addressed a different challenge.

Mr Cunningham was part of a group of teachers I was working with. At this school, I taught the lesson first, and then teachers took turns teaching the same lesson with different students. After each lesson we debriefed, analysing the strategies and practices used.

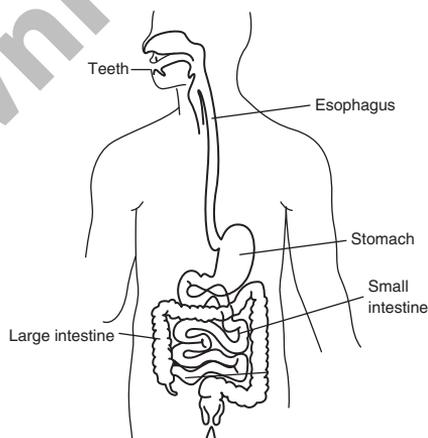
The lesson was "Describe the sequence and function of the digestive system." Mr Cunningham used PowerPoint slides with written text and visuals. During Concept Development, the students read the text with him, and he referred to a diagram that illustrated the digestive system (see below). He followed up with some Checking for Understanding questions.

Concept Development

The **digestive system** is a group of organs working together to break down food into nutrients to make energy.

Digestion happens in a specific sequence, and each digestive organ completes a specific function.

- teeth
- esophagus
- stomach
- small intestine
- large intestine



For his first question, he called on non-volunteers to define the digestive system in their own words. All the students were successful. Then he asked his students to list the sequence of the digestive system on their whiteboards. All of a sudden, the students started to ask questions such as "What do you want us to do?" "What do you mean by that?" Pointing to the diagram, one girl asked, "Do you want us to draw that?"

Mr Cunningham looked at me, very puzzled because the lesson had been going very well up to this point. I had some ideas.

Sometimes, it appears that EAL/D learners don't understand content when, in reality, they don't understand a specific English word. It's important to recognise the difference between EAL/D learners not understanding content and not understanding English. In this case, the students were having trouble with the word *sequence*. They didn't know what Mr Cunningham was asking them to do. Some students guessed that he wanted a drawing of the digestive system.

I thought about my options. With Explicit Direct Instruction for EAL/D learners, there are various strategies for dealing with words that students don't know. I could substitute an easier-to-understand word by rephrasing "sequence of digestion" as "order of digestion". I could quickly tell the students the meaning of *sequence* and move on. However, *sequence* is an academic word that will come up often at school. I decided to invest a moment in teaching its meaning and to follow up with a Checking for Understanding question.

I told the students to place their fingers underneath *sequence* and to read it with me. I explained that *sequence* means the order in which something happens or the order in which something is done. I elaborated.

Think about the alphabet. The letters are in a sequence: a, b, c, d, all the way to z. They are in order. We use words like first, next, then and last to describe things that happen in sequence, in order.

I told the students to tell their pair-share partner the meaning of *sequence*. I waited a few moments while the students exchanged their answers and then called on non-volunteers to give the definition.

I turned and pointed towards the PowerPoint screen.

Students, explain to your pair-share partner what the sequence of the digestive system means.

I motioned to Mr Cunningham to take over and to re-ask his question about the sequence of the digestive system. The students were successful in answering his question.

During the debriefing session afterward with the teachers, Mr Cunningham stated it was hard to believe that EAL/D learners came to class not knowing the meaning of *sequence*. I explained to everyone that we should act preemptively as much as possible, anticipating where EAL/D learners might need help and then using Checking for Understanding to make decisions during the lesson. In this case, the fact that the students did not understand what *sequence* meant became apparent when they were not sure what the teacher wanted of them when the word was used in a Checking for Understanding question.