

# Potential Literacy Problems with our 'bilingual' language

When are children exposed to the different parts of English?

# Graded Vocabulary Lists

- Organize words from "most common" in the beginning weeks to the "lesser common" words
- Organize words into small groups of similar vowel sound and reading-rule categories (Emphasis on tying pronunciation to visual input.)

# Graded Vocabulary Lists – 4<sup>th</sup> grade

- Emphasis is still on most common
- Emphasis is still on organization by similar vowel sound and reading rules
- No emphasis on relations between words, like

*expláin – explanátion*

*repeat – repetition*

*number - numeral*

# Anglo-Saxon morphology is explicitly taught

*redo, rewind, reshape*

What does re- mean?

Problems: *research, resort, resign*

(There's a Latinate 're-' and an AS 're-'.)

*deactivate, debone, debrief*

What does de- mean?

Problems: *delay, debate, design*

(There's a Latinate 'de-' and an AS 'de-')

Latinate morphology is not explicitly taught

*(except by Princeton Review)*

*permit, permission, permissive*

*perceive, perception, perceptive*

*consume, consumption, consumptive*

*reduce, reduction, reductive*

*assert, assertion, assertive*

*suggest, suggestion, suggestive*

*prefer, preference, preferential*

*But the patterns are there for use in pronunciation  
and in writing.*

# The Problem

# The problem is linguistic

- Related Latinate words pattern differently from related Anglo-Saxon words
  - **Anglo-Saxon derived words are clearly related to their roots:**
    - wonder, wonderful*
    - king, kingdom*
    - care, careless*
    - happy, happiness*
  - **Latinate words are not:**
    - perceive, perception*
    - profound, profundity*
    - democrat, democracy*

Latinate derived forms differ from their root forms in many ways

# Related Latinate words undergo consonant changes in suffix

Anglo-Saxon

*sun – sunny*

*safe - safety*

*fool – foolish*

*care - careless*

*wood – wooden*

*teach – teacher*

Latinate

*perceive – perception*

*act – action\**

*\*t → ʃ is explicitly taught*

# Related Latinate words undergo consonant changes in prefix

Anglo-Saxon

*uncanny, undead*

*unpack, unmake*

*unlace, unladylike*

*unravel, unreal*

Latinate

*incomplete, indiscreet*

*imperfect, immature*

*illegal, illegitimate*

*irregular, irrational*

# Related Latinate Words undergo vowel changes

Anglo-Saxon

*ease - easy*

*busy – business*

*wood – wooden*

Latinate

*profane – profanity*

*line – linear*

*profound – profundity*

*But: child - children*

*wksht: str. shift*

# Related Latinate Words undergo stress shift

## Anglo-Saxon

*háppy – háppiness*

*ánger – ángry*

*understánd –*

*understánding*

*forgét - forgétful*

## Latinate

*expláin – explanátion*

*contríbute –*

*contribútion*

*Abólísh – abolítion*

*Repéat - repetítion*

# The Possible Literacy Problem

- If you encounter a derived Latinate form
  - You don't know how to pronounce it
  - You are not sure what root form it relates to

Latinate syntax is different

# Latinate syntax is different

The ablative absolute:

*mutatis mutandis* – with the things that need to be changed having been changed

*ceteris paribus* – all things being equal

*vice versa* – with the alternation turned around

*A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.*

**Latinate semantics is different**

# Latinate forms are less semantically coherent

Anglo-Saxon *-ness*

*Monstrousness*

*Luminousness*

*Curiousness*

*Religiousness*

*Pompousness*

*viscousness*

Latinate *-ity*

*Monstrosity*

*Luminosity*

*Curiosity*

*Religiosity*

*Pomposity*

*Viscosity*

*“The surer one is of what a word will  
mean, the more likely one is to  
use it”*

*Aronoff. 1976.*

# Latin lexicalizes concepts differently

- Several concepts may combine in language in the meaning of a single word:

*kill = cause + die*

*light = cause + to be lit*

*wksht*

# English combines concepts one way

Figure    Motion    Path    Ground {Manner/Cause}

move  
+ *manner*

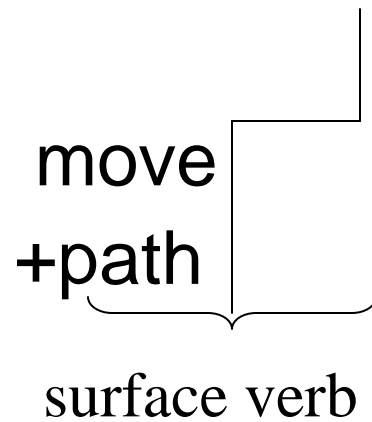
The diagram consists of a horizontal line extending from the right side of the text 'Ground {Manner/Cause}' to the right side of the text 'move + manner'. From the right end of this horizontal line, a vertical line goes down to the top of a bracket that spans the width of 'move + manner'.

surface verb

*The bottle rolled into the cave.*

# Romance, another

Figure    Motion    Path    Ground {Manner/Cause}



*La botella entró en la cueva, rodando.*

*The bottle entered the cave, rolling.*

# Semantic Concept and Word

- Some concepts are expressed readily in a given language, e.g., action and manner in English, action and path in Spanish
- Some concepts are expressed awkwardly, e.g., action and manner in Spanish
- Languages like English that borrow heavily often have parallel systems

action+manner: *slide, limp, swirl*

action+path: *ascend, distribute, return*

# References

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