

Supporting Linguistically Diverse Students to Develop Deep, Flexible Knowledge of Academic Words

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**Our goal: Develop knowledge of
academic words that is both...**

DEEP



&

FLEXIBLE



Why DEEP and FLEXIBLE word knowledge?

- Depth of word knowledge contributes to **reading comprehension** (Nation & Snowling, 2004; Oullette, 2006; Stafura & Perfetti, 2014)
- Important for general academic words
 - Ubiquitous across disciplines
 - Key for making meaning
 - Examples: *ambiguous, reside, advocate*

Robust Academic Vocabulary Encounters (RAVE)

- **General Academic Vocabulary**
 - Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000)
- **Authentic contexts**
- **Robust Vocabulary Instruction**
- **Positive results with native English speakers in middle school (McKeown et al., 2012; 2013; 2014)**

How effective for ELL students?

ELL-RAVE

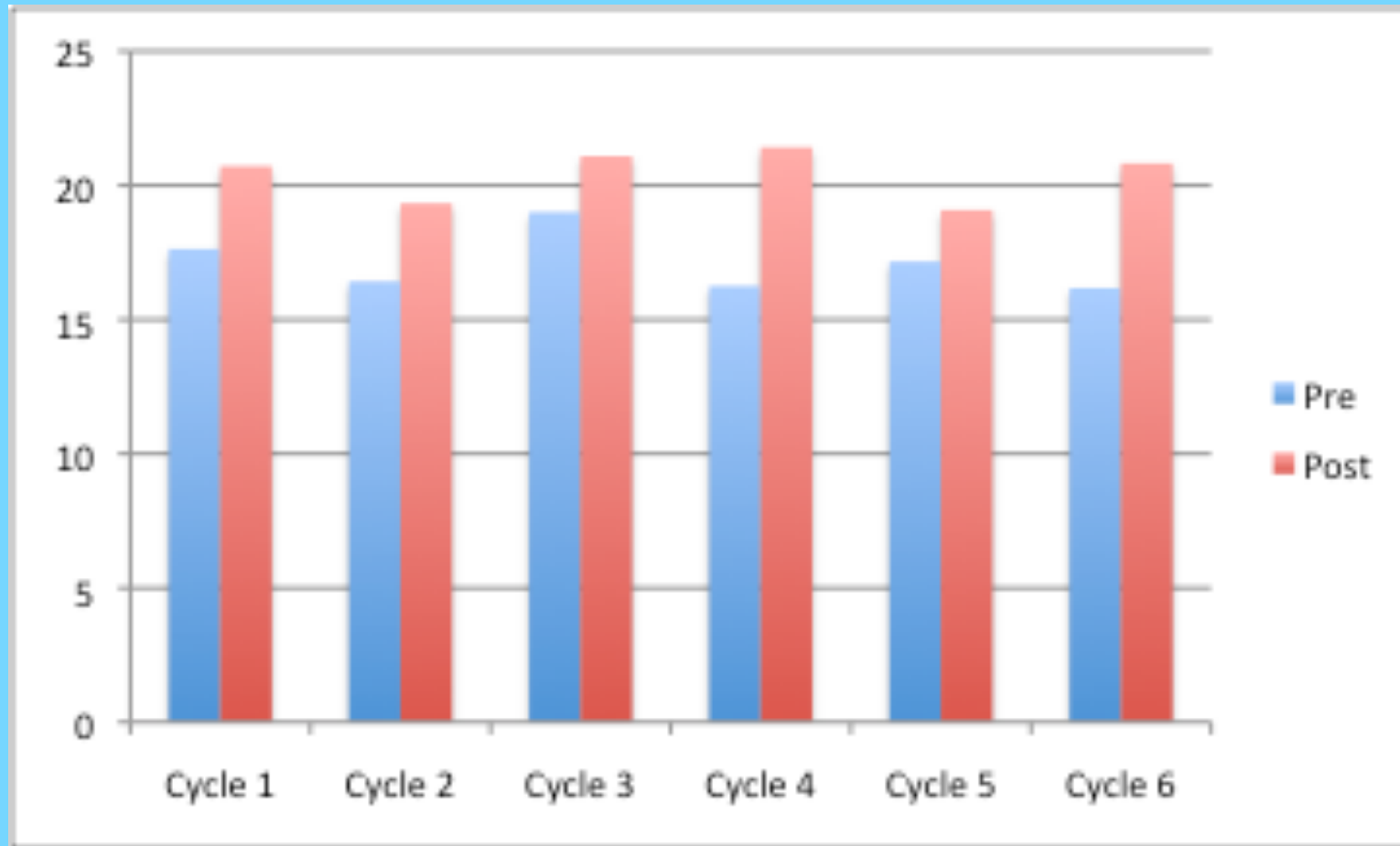
- Small-scale (3 ESL classes)
- Culturally and linguistically diverse middle school students (n=34)
- 2 - 6 RAVE cycles
- **Purpose:** How does RAVE support ELLs to develop deep, flexible knowledge of academic words?

Countries of Origin & Home Languages



**Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian, French, Hindi, Jamaican
Creole, Karen, Nepali, Uzbek**

ELL-RAVE Results... so far!



Growth in Depth of Vocabulary Knowledge from pre to post test

ELL-RAVE

- **Small-scale (3 ESL classes)**
- **Culturally and linguistically diverse middle school students (n=34)**
- **2 - 6 RAVE cycles**
- **How does RAVE support ELLs to develop deep, flexible knowledge of academic words?**
 - **Multiple senses**

Multiple Senses: Why?

- For many academic words, meanings shift across domains
- For example:

foundation of a building

foundation of a relationship

- Multiple sense words (i.e., “ambiguous words”) harder to learn (Tokowitz & Kroll, 2007; Jiménez et al., 1996)

Multiple Senses: How?

1. Teach multiple senses at outset (Degani et al., 2014)
2. Present in authentic contexts
3. Teach friendly definition with a *core meaning*
4. Balance types of encounters
5. Design interactions to contrast senses

Examples of Authentic Contexts: *foundation*

When Hurricane Katrina swept through New Orleans, it uprooted trees, blew cars around, and flooded many neighborhoods. The hurricane also damaged thousands of homes, tearing them to pieces and ripping up their *foundations*. People either moved away to other cities or had to live in government trailers until new *foundations* were laid and new homes could be built on them.⁷

Michael Uy believes that trust is the *foundation* of the relationship between a dog owner and his dog. When owners build that kind of trust, he thinks, they can teach their dog to do anything. Michael's dog, Abbie, was near death when he rescued her from a California animal shelter. Now, Abbie goes mountain biking and rock climbing with him, and she is a champion surfer.⁸

Teach the Core Meaning

- Captures the key meaning elements
- For example:

foundation of a building

foundation of a relationship

***A foundation* provides support on which something else can be built.**

- Promotes connections between senses

Using the core meaning

Sanjay's excellent classes in high school were the foundation for his strong academic performance in college.

Because he got a good grade in school, he got a strong academic performance in college.

That work support him in college.

He's building his future by doing a good job in school.

Using the core meaning

Water was leaking into the house through the foundation.

The water was leaking
because of a support?
Because something else
was built?

The
sides?

Balance of Encounters

Patricia lost the debate because she had no *foundation* for her opinions.

This observation became the *foundation* of Darwin's theory....

What would make a good *foundation* for a skyscraper? Plastic or steel? Why?

What would make a good *foundation* for a tent?

Interactions to Contrast Senses

What's the sense of it?

If your zoo membership is *valid*, what does that mean?

If your point about why zoos are good for animals is *valid*, what does that mean?

How might you *confine* a dozen jumping beetles?

How might parents *confine* their children's choices of what to order at a restaurant?

Interactions to Contrast Senses

Teacher: A beetle's like a bug. A jumping beetle. How might you *confine* a dozen jumping beetles?

Rianti: Dozen. Like many.

Teacher: Saleem, what do you think?

Saleem: Put them in a wine jar.

Teacher: Alright, put them in a jar with a lid. Right? You're confining them to a spot so they can't jump everywhere.

Students: yeah.

Teacher: To be confined is to be kept in a certain area.
Okay, how might parents confine their children's choices about what to order at a restaurant?

Durga: They can tell them you can order this much only.
Like you know, this much food.

Interactions to Contrast Senses

Saleem: And you could like go to another store by yourself.

Teacher: That's not going to confine. How parents confine their children's choices. They can say like Durga told us, "you can only order from this particular page of the menu." Or you can confine them by what?

Saleem: Money.

Teacher: How much it costs, right? So that's a way to confine what they order. You have to order from this page, or you have to order things that are under \$5.00. That's confining their choices, right?

So if something is confined, it must stay in just one place or is used in just one way.

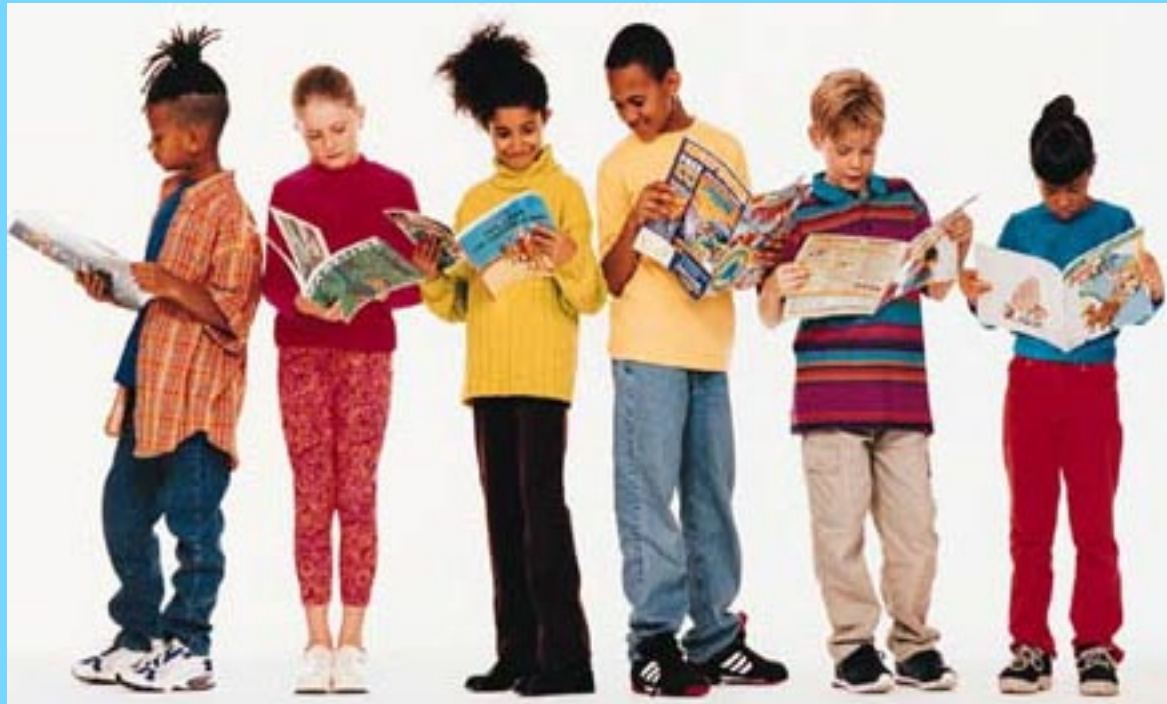
Instruction that builds word knowledge that is DEEP and FLEXIBLE...

**... promotes analytical thinking about
word meanings, including multiple
senses**

**... builds connections, connections,
connections!**

... is lively, interactive and fun!

Thank You



Common Core Expectations for Vocabulary Acquisition and Use*

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty).

Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

*(6th grade excerpts)