



Building Biliteracy through Organizing Instruction for Explicit Skill Transference

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Foundational Knowledge

Transfer of Skills from Spanish to English: A Study of Young Learners Report for Practitioners, Parents and Policy Makers

**Diane August, Center for Applied Linguistics
Margarita Calderón, John Hopkins University
María Carlo, Harvard University**

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Research Findings

An effect of transfer from Spanish to English exists for:

- **phonemic segmentation skills,**
- **letter identification and**
- **word reading skills**

for Spanish speaking students initially instructed in Spanish.

Vocabulary knowledge:

The Spanish instructed students knew significantly more cognates than those instructed in English only, but the two groups did not differ on their knowledge of non-cognates.

Comprehension:

There is a positive correlation between Spanish comprehension and English comprehension students with the highest Spanish passage comprehension scores at the end of second grade had the highest English passage comprehension scores at the end of fourth grade.

August, Calderón and Carlo, 2002

Implications



These findings support the practice of providing literacy instruction in Spanish to Spanish-speaking English Language Learners as a means of helping them acquire literacy skills in English.

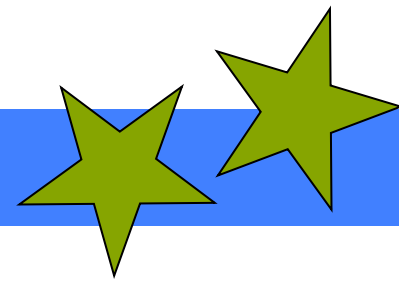
The practice of strengthening students' Spanish literacy, also enables them to use their native language well, enhancing their bilingual capability.



What is skill transference?

Transfer of learning means the application of a previously known skill set to a new experience or learning.

The cross-linguistic transfer research points out how reading ability is enhanced when students whose first language (L1) is Spanish learn to apply their linguistic knowledge and literacy skills to reading in English as their second language (L2).



All learning that occurs is influenced to a great extent by previously learned concepts.

Thorndike first advanced the notion that skills from one task would transfer to another task as long as the **critical features** of the second task were like those of the first task.

manga



botón

bolsillo

What skills from previous learning can the student apply to new learning?



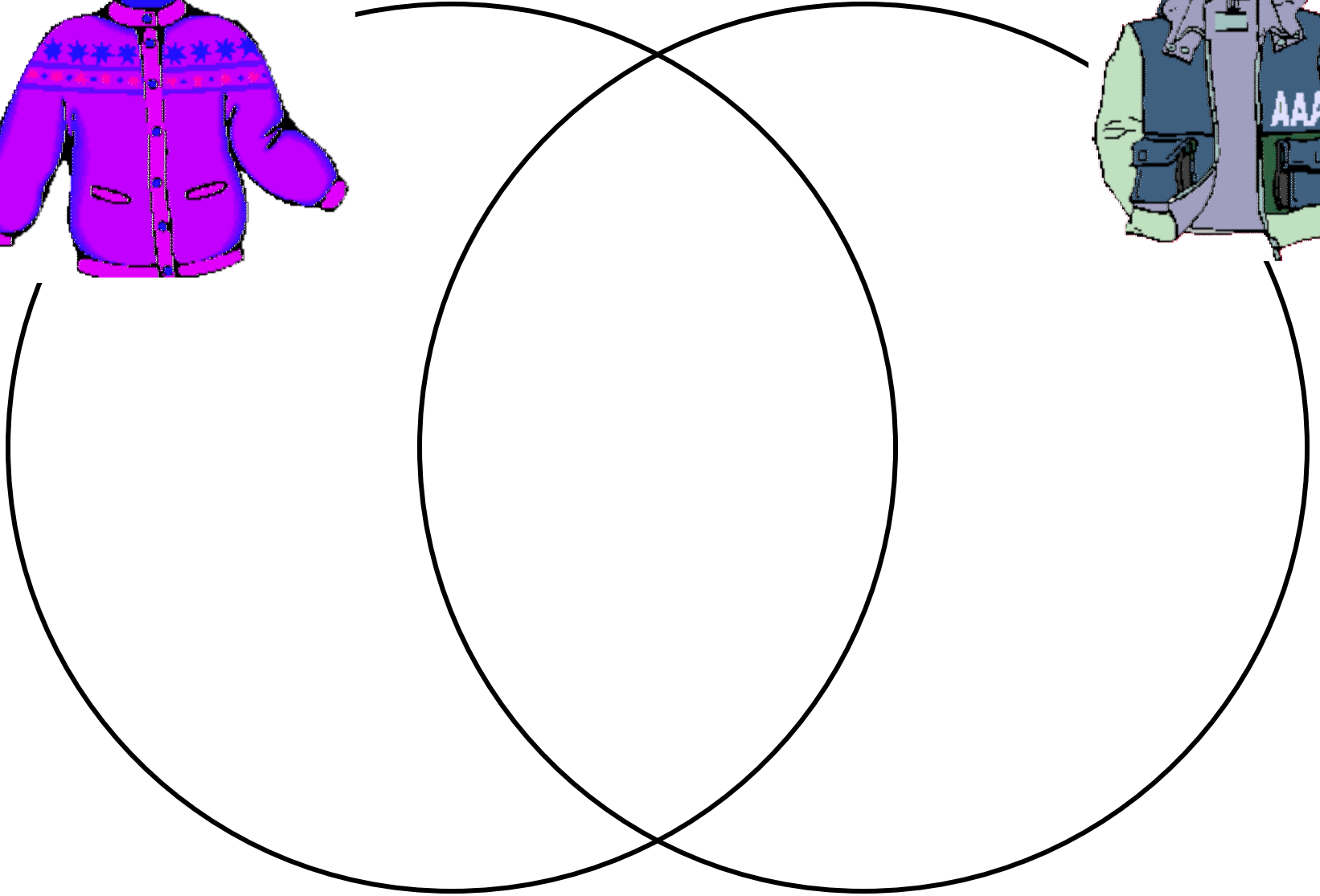


hood

**outside
pocket**

sleeve

zipper



Judd noted that **comprehension** of the rule and the **realization** of its **applicability** to the new task were necessary if transfer were to occur.

Metalinguistic Awareness

Is the ability to deliberately reflect on and manipulate the structural features of spoken language, treating the language system itself as an object of thought, as opposed to using the language system to comprehend and produce sentences.

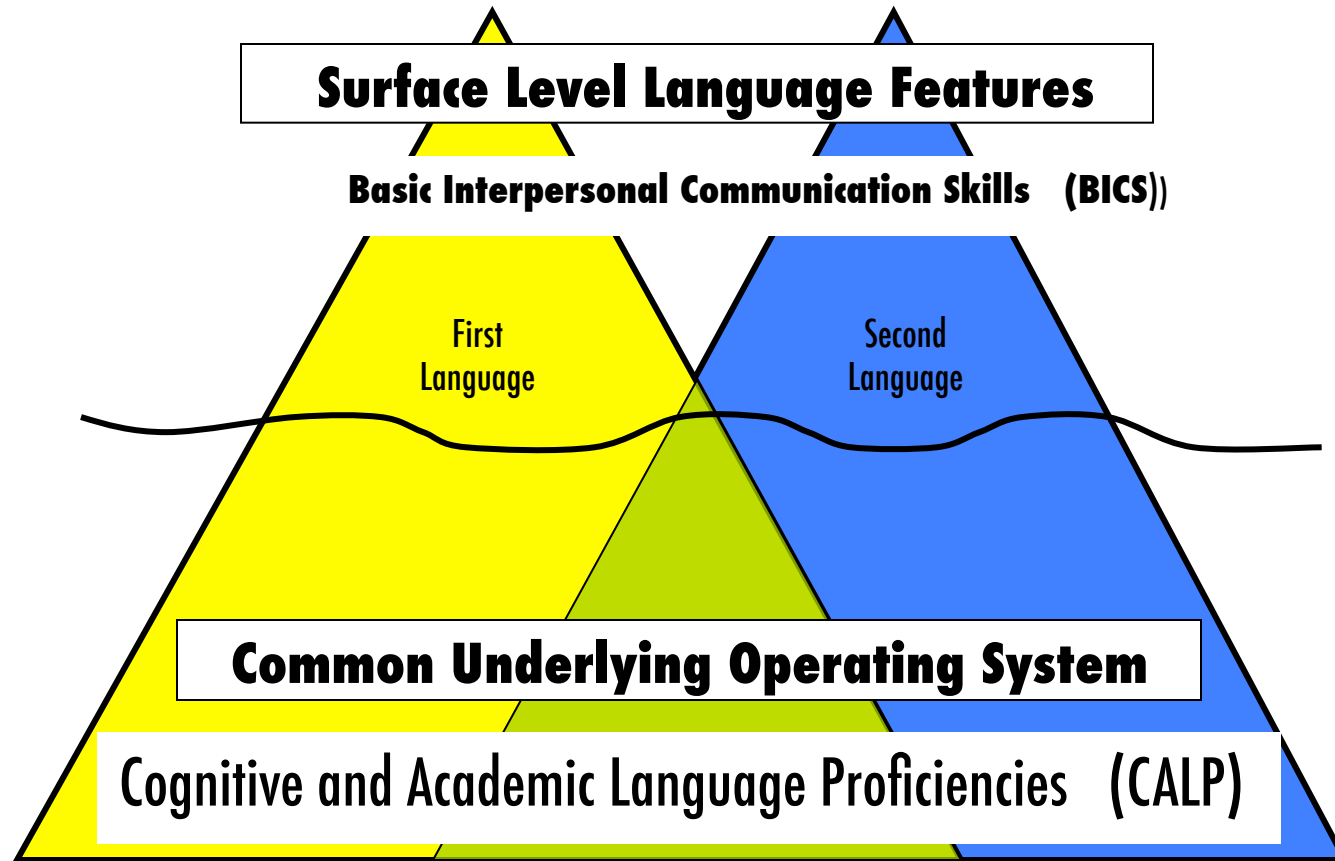
That is, metalinguistic awareness refers to the individual's ability to understand the nature of language rather than the ability to use language to communicate meaning.

Tunmer & Cole, 1985

Transfer is best when there is:

- **similarity in the learning conditions**
- **similarity in the learning task**
- **similarity in the expected student response**
- **a comprehensible connections between first learning and second learning**
- **a clear understanding of rules or generalizations**

Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis



Cummins, J. (1981). The role of primary language development in promoting educational success for language minority students. In California State Department of Education (Ed.), *Schooling and language minority students: A theoretical*

framework. (pp. 3-49). Los Angeles: National Dissemination and Assessment Center.

The Spanish - English Connection

Spanish and English are alphabetical languages that share Latin and Greek roots and the following elements:

Phonological
Morphological
Semantics

Lexical
Syntax
Discourse

Skills and concepts between L1 and L2 have...



Positive Transference

Negative Transference

Partial Transference

Zero Transference

Positive Transference

Similarity of language
concept, condition, rule, skill, task
and expected response

Cognates

presidente - president
transformación - transformation

Negative Transference

- Performance on the first task inhibits or detracts from performance on second
- New response expected from same stimulus

dime in Spanish

dime in English

Partial Transference

Similarity of language concept,
condition, rule, skill and task
with a slight difference
in expected response

Punctuation

Spanish
Question Marks

¿Qué?

English
Question Marks

What?

Zero Transference

There are completely unique aspects in each language and the differences between the two languages need to be taught explicitly and can be taught separately.

Spanish

ñ

English

n

,

Teaching for language transference affirms the following notions:

- Proficiency in Primary Language has a positive correlation to proficiency in a second language
- Human beings do not have to lose their primary language in order to acquire native like proficiency in a second language.

When transference of skills is explicitly taught...

- **Students can avail themselves of known concepts and skills in L1 to learn L2.**
- **Students need the opportunity to learn negative transference skills in a language they understand.**

Think - Pair - Share



Turn to your partner and share

One comment

One question

One thing to remember...

Teaching transferability demands that we understand...



When, in **What** Language and **HOW**
we explicitly teach for the transference of
Spanish to English skills

When and in What Language?

There is statewide consensus on the following...

**Spanish
is taught in
Spanish**

**English
is taught in
English**

There is another possibility...

L1

Teaching
Spanish
in
Spanish

L1 to L2

**Explicitly linking
L1
Concepts and skills to
L2**

L2

Teaching
English
in
English

Three Instructional Contexts for Teaching the Same Essential Skill

L1

Concept
Introduced, taught
and independently
practiced at 85 %
mastery

L1 to L2

Transference
relationship
between
L1 and L2
explained
on previously
taught
concept/skill

L2

Previously taught
concept/skill reviewed
and practiced at
students' level of
language acquisition
using scaffolding and
L2 teaching strategies

HOW ?



Explicitly and Direct

Direct Instruction model enables the explicit teaching of transferable skills
in Primary Language

Using Direct Instruction Model for
transference of the
same skill set in each instructional
setting provides a structure for adhering to
principles of transference.

Principles of Skill Transference:

- Similarity in learning conditions, task, and expected response
- Opportunity for practice in the first learning
- Comprehensible connection between first learning and second learning
- Understanding of rules or generalizations

DI in the Context of L1 to L2 Transference

DI Phases	L	What teachers does
Orientation	L1	Activates prior knowledge Connects L1 to L2 learning State lesson objectives
Presentation	L1 - L2	Explains and demonstrate and gives examples of concept, skill strategy and points out elements of L1- L2 transferability
Structured Practice	L1 - L2	Leads students step by step, clarifying, using concrete/visual representations.
Guided Practice	L2	Provides corrective feedback as students practice on their own.
Independent Practice	L2	Insures students are working at appropriate level of L2 language proficiency

Explicit Instruction

Teach *Orientation*

Teacher clarifies objectives and procedures - activates prior knowledge

Introduce/review academic terms

Show the way concepts are organized (use organizational map and visuals)

Define orthographic (spelling pattern) and morphological (meaning) word structures. Use pictures and realia to codify and access meaning.

*** Provides a comprehensible connection between first learning and second learning**

Model *Structured and Guided Practice*

Model using think loud to show structural features orthographic and morphological word structures.

Engage students in structured and monitor guided practice activities.

*** Points out the similarity or differences in the learning conditions and tasks**

*** Continues to negotiate the rules and conditions applicable to the skill or task**

Apply *Independent Practice*

Provide meaningful and engaging activities that address the standard, which are focused on the objective, and provide the opportunity for students to independently demonstrate they understand the concepts taught.

Provide differentiated activities that take into account students' level of language acquisition.

*** Insures assigned student tasks assigned are at each student's appropriate level of English language proficiency.**

Explicit teaching of skill transference begins with an overt acknowledgement to students that they already know a skill or concept and that they are ready to transfer what they already know to English.



Eleanor Thonis

There are two basic transference routines:

Transferable Skills Routines	Non-Transferable Skills Routine
a. Review known skill in L1	a. Review known skill in L1
b. Review academic terms in L1	b. Review academic terms in L1
c. Introduce academic terms in L2	c. Introduce academic terms in L2
d. Compare L1 and L2 skill explicitly	d. Contrast L1 and L2 skill explicitly
e. Model in L2	e. Model in L2
f. Practice in L2	f. Practice in L2
g. Provide opportunities for independent practice in L2	g. Provide opportunities for independent practice in L2

Table Talk

1. What is the key difference between these two basic routines?
2. How does explicit teaching of transference promote metalinguistic awareness?

Controversy

Transference of L1 and L2

Explicit

or

Assumed

Integration

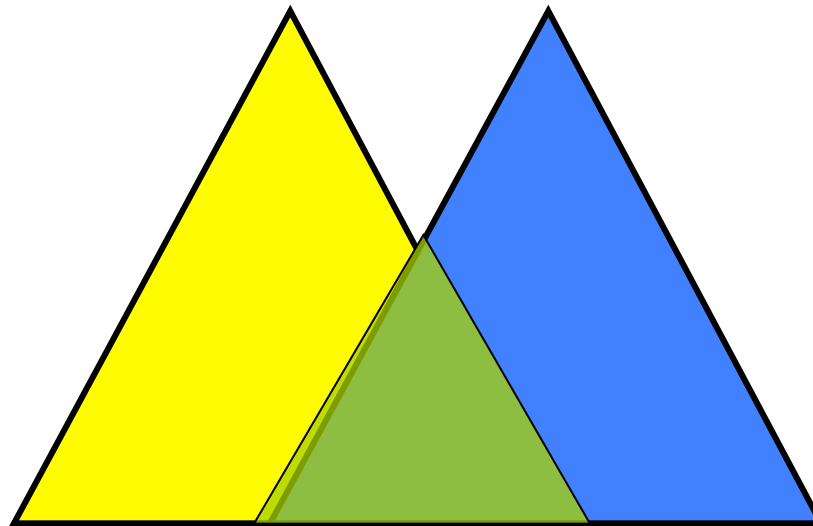
Isolated

Promote

Hold Back

Common

Separate



Organizing Instruction for Transference

Explicit Transference



A Venn diagram consisting of two overlapping circles. The left circle is labeled 'Explicit Transference' and the right circle is labeled 'Concurrent Translation'. The circles overlap in the center, creating a lens-shaped intersection. The circles are empty, serving as a template for notes.

Concurrent Translation

Organizing instruction for transfer requires the
identification
of **essential skill sets**
needed to insure explicit and successful transference
of Spanish-English skills.

Identification of Essential Transferable Skill Sets

- Determine grade level standards targets in L1 and L2
- Analyze the transference relationship between L1 and L2
- Recognize instructional implications
- Teach explicitly in L1
- Explicitly link L1 skills to L2
- Teach explicitly in L2

Preparing for Transference of Skills Chart

Essential L1 Learning	Transferable Skills	Partial or Non-Transferable
Oral Language		
Listening/Comprehension		
Speaking/Viewing		
Word Study		
Vocabulary		
Spelling		
Reading		
Phonics and Decoding		
Strategy		
Skill		
Critical Thinking		
Language Arts		
Writing		
Grammar		

Explicit Teaching of Transferability

- **Alleviates student' s burden of having to learn a skill or concept in a language they do not yet understand**
- **Enables access rigorous grade level skill set**
- **Provides three Direct Instruction venues for teaching and learning the same skill set.**

Big Ideas

- **Transference of skills cannot ever be assumed to occur without explicit teaching**
- **Teachers can consciously and purposefully teach for transfer through cognitive planning and Direct Instruction**
- **The strength of the original learning determines the extent of transfer in the second learning**



Questions?

Ideas?

Next steps?