

ESOL Networking Day
Sketty Hall, Gower College Swansea

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An introduction to teaching ESOL literacy learners

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Aim and objectives

Aim

For participants to:

- understand and make links between the theory and practice of teaching and learning reading and writing at a basic level to adult ESOL learners

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will have

- analysed the reading process and investigated the issues that arise for adult ESOL learners learning to read
- demonstrated understanding of reading development and made links to teaching approaches
- explored the Language Experience Approach (LEA)
- developed their understanding of the skills involved in writing and composing

ESOL literacy learners

Think about an ESOL learner you have taught who had literacy needs.

How would you define an ‘ESOL literacy learner’?



Definition of an ESOL literacy learner

An ESOL learner with literacy needs is someone who has not yet reached Entry 1 (Adult ESOL core curriculum) and:

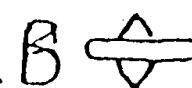
- is learning the *sub-skills* or *mechanics* of reading and writing.
- struggles to read and write a small number of key words, a very simple sentence and very simple text independently.
- but remember ... *A beginner reader is not a beginner thinker!*

ELLs can be found in almost any graded or mixed level ESOL class (and/or an ESOL literacy class).

3 types of learners – basic distinctions

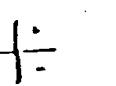
Literacy in expert language	Literacy in English / Roman alphabet	Level of spoken communication
No / minimal	No	Complete beginner
No / minimal	No	From E1/E2 (low elementary) to advanced level
Yes	No	From E1/E2 (low elementary) to advanced level

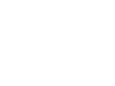
Learners with interrupted formal education

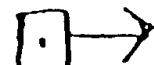
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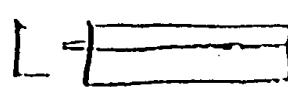
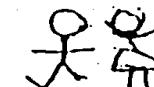
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Feedback discussion

- What kind of text is this, e.g. news article, email, letter, advert, story
How did you know?
- How did you work it out?

What skills were you using?



Good readers make use of four different kinds of clues

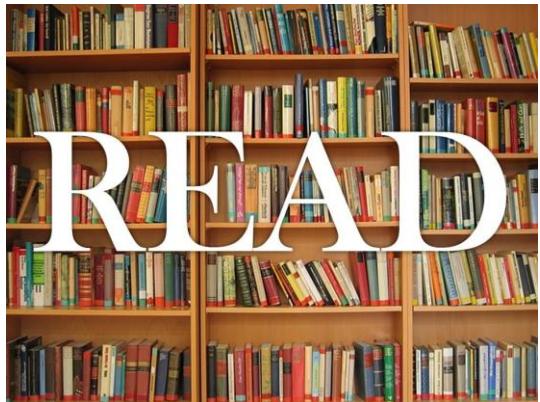


1. **Semantic** clues (meaning and context clues)
2. **Syntactic** clues (word order and grammar)
3. **Visual** clues (recognising letter patterns such as *-ight*)
4. **Phonic** clues (letter/sound correspondences and phonemic awareness)

Good readers ...

- understand and interact with what they read
- regress and re-read
- recognise a large variety of common words and parts of words
- use the sound system to make out unfamiliar words
- use context to monitor meaning (and knowledge of schema)

Teaching reading



What difficulties might ESOL learners have using these **semantic**, **syntactic**, **phonological** and **visual** clues?

Issues for learners

- **Semantic**: lack of/limited vocabulary; polysemy; cultural references; lack of schematic knowledge; lack of knowledge of genre
- **Syntactic**: lack of grammatical knowledge; word order
- **Visual**: capital letters, full stops, writing direction, recognising common words, parts of words/patterns
- **Phonological**: knowing sound-letter correspondences, sounds don't exist in their first language, silent letters, pronunciation difficulties, etc.



Teaching reading involves ...

- **Phonemic awareness**
- **Word analysis** (phonics, decoding & sight words)
- **Fluency** (repeated oral reading, guided reading, peer reading)
- **Vocabulary** (in context, repeated exposure, listening, reading, multiple authentic contexts)
- **Comprehension** (use specific strategies, e.g question asking, question answering, use of graphic and semantic organisers, comprehension monitoring, use of story structure)

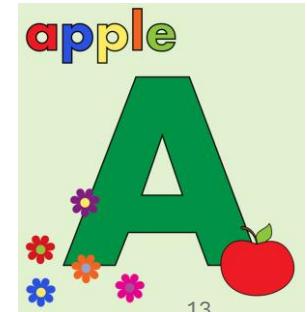
UTA FRITH'S MODEL

Three stages in the acquisition of literacy:

- ❖ **Logographic**: based on crude, visual features
- ❖ **Alphabetic**: based on phoneme awareness
- ❖ **Orthographic**: based on visual analysis
 - independent of sound
 - use of internal lexicon



Consider how this relates to *top-down* and *bottom-up* models of reading development



Language Experience approach (LEA)

Watch the video and note the work being done at text level, sentence level and word level:

- What are the **stages** the teacher works through?
- What does the **process** involve?
- What is the **aim** of language experience work?
- What **materials** does the teacher use?



How could you use this approach in your teaching?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gri-Or9gDrY&feature=youtu.be>

Using 'language experience' texts

Use the students' words to create texts that are meaningful to them. Then use them for practising and developing reading and writing skills, e.g.

- Matching sentence against text
- Sentence against illustration (where applicable)
- Word against text
- Ordering sentences
- Ordering words to make sentences
- As a context for teaching phonics (choose sounds that occur in the text)
- Gap-fill (with or without providing the missing words)
- Copying and/or word-processing text
- Choosing words to learn to spell
- Insert missing punctuation
-

LEA suggested procedure

- Using visuals, video or realia, **introduce a topic relevant to the learners** or discuss a shared experience (such as a food, a local event, a trip). **Spend time talking** and **eliciting** language from the learners.
- Once learners have produced one or more sentences and can say them clearly, **scribe the short text onto a large sheet of paper** (or screen/whiteboard), e.g. *'I like fish and potatoes. My sister cooks potatoes every day. Sometimes she puts green vegetables with the potatoes.'*
- **Read the text aloud**, pointing to each word as you say it. **Read it together** several times (choral reading) and then encourage each learner to **read it individually** as you point to each word.
- Learners can **take a photo of the text** and/or copy it.
- **Cut the text into sentences** first, and then **individual words**.
- **Ask learners to re-order the text** and then the **sentences** (use *Wordwall* or *Jamboard* if working online.)
- **Learners read it again, as many times** as necessary, so that they can say it fairly fluently.
- Once learners are confident with reading the text, **focus on one or more sub-skills**, e.g: identify phonic elements; punctuation (capital letters and full stops); comprehension questions; gap-fill activity; matching words; spelling patterns; etc.
- **Learners copy the text** – either handwriting or digitally.

Writing

- Why do learners need to write?
- What do they need to write?
- What's involved in 'writing'?
- How do you teach writing at a 'basic' level?



সোম বাবু-

মঙ্গল বাবু-

বুধ বাবু-

বৃহস্পতি বাবু-

শুক্র বাবু-

শনি বাবু-

রবিবাবু-

Days of the week

ଅପ୍ରାହେତୁ- ମିନଗ୍ରାମୀ

Monday

ମୋହ ବାବୁ-

Tuesday

ମହାଲ ବାବୁ-

Wednesday

ଶୁର୍ବ ବାବୁ-

Thursday

ବୃଦ୍ଧଭାଇବାବୁ-

Friday

ଶୁର୍କବାବୁ-

Saturday

ଶାନ୍ତିବାବୁ-

Sunday

ରାବିବାବୁ-

How it feels to be a beginner writer



- How did it feel?
- What skills were you using / did you need?
- What strategies did you use?
- What are the implications for the classroom?

What's involved in (hand)writing

- Fine motor control of pen – holding the pen/pencil
- Relationship to paper, position, pen
- Direction of letters – forming the letters
- Size of letters, ascenders, descenders
- Spacing



Contexts and texts for ESOL literacy work

- What contexts and text types have you used/could you use for ESOL literacy?
- What is your view of a suitable balance between real, everyday life texts and classroom texts?



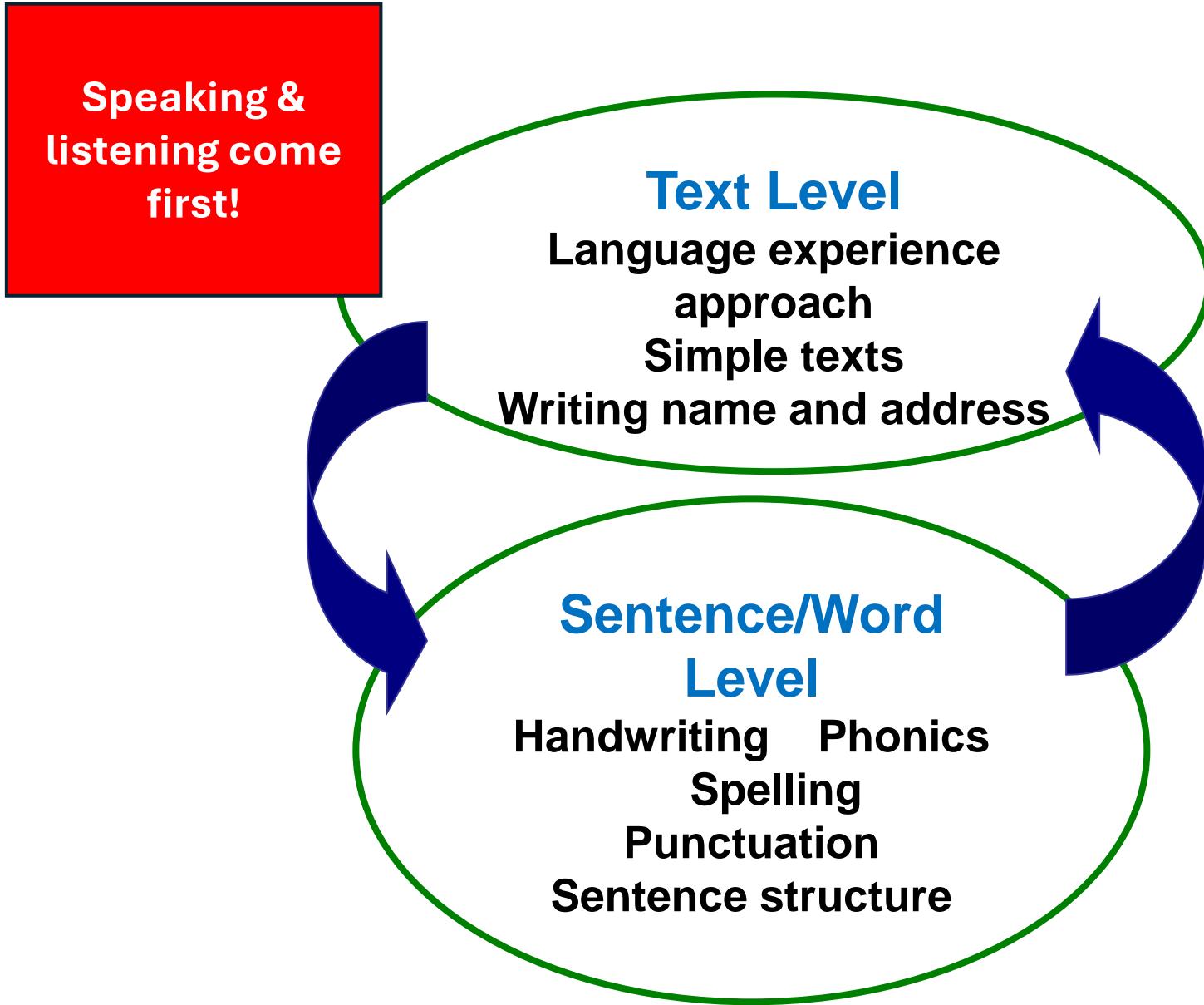
Implications for ESOL literacy learners

- Need to be led by the learners' interests, aspirations, needs, etc. as well as external requirements, e.g. exams
- Need for a balance between classroom texts and everyday, relevant and authentic texts
- Practice, practice, practice!

Working at text level: activities for teaching composition

- Group composition and language experience approach
- Using a model
- Writing frames
- A series of structured questions
- Using a ‘genre’ approach

Where do I start?





TELLs course overview

An online self-access professional development course for ESOL practitioners – available now at just £50.

[Book your place on the online TELLs course now](#)

Course outline

This comprehensive course is 100% self-directed online learning and can be accessed at any time during the twelve-week period you enrol for. There are four substantial content sections (totalling 30 hours), which you can work through at your own pace, plus a final resources section:

[TELLs course overview – Learning Unlimited](#)

New to ESOL Outcomes Framework

supports planning and assessment

New to ESOL Outcomes Framework



[ESOL - Learners New To ESOL Resources](#) Part 1

[ESOL - Learners New To ESOL Resources](#) Part 2

References and resources

- Adult ESOL core curriculum [Adult ESOL core curriculum \(DfES, 2001\) | Skillsworkshop](#)
- *New to ESOL* (pre-entry) resources [ESOL - Learners New To ESOL Resources](#)
- SQA ESOL literacies tutor pack (Scotland)
https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/ESOLLiteraciesNational2TutorGuide.pdf
- Learning Unlimited free downloadable resources [Free resources | Learning Unlimited](#)
- English My Way programme/resources [Former 'English My Way' website content \(padlet.com\)](#)
- Literacy for Active Citizenship readers (and order form)
<http://www.learningunlimited.co/resources/publications>
- NATECLA Scotland ESOL Literacies readers (free) [ESOL Literacies Readers | NATECLA Scotland](#)
- Spiegel, M. & Sunderland, H. (2006) *A Teacher's Guide: Teaching Basic Literacy to ESOL Learners*, LLU+ London South Bank University
- Frith, U. (1985). Beneath the surface of developmental dyslexia. In K. E. Patterson, J. C. Marshall & M. Coltheart (Eds.), (pp. 301-330). London: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Frith, U. (1986). A developmental framework for developmental dyslexia. *Annals of Dyslexia*, 36, 69-81.
- Handwriting worksheets – can be customised <https://www.handwritingworksheets.com/>
- [ChatGPT \(openai.com\)](#) can be used to create short texts, comprehension questions, gap-fill activities. Also [Diffit for Teachers](#)
- Curriculum for use with Students with Interrupted Formal Education (USA) [Wow! A Free-To-Use & Impressive Curriculum For SIFE \(Students With Interrupted Formal Education\) Students | Larry Ferlazzo's Websites of the Day...](#)