Contextualized Language Intervention and the Common Core

Teresa A. Ukrainetz, Ph.D.
University of Wyoming
Nancy McKinley Lecture Series
SLP.Com October, 2013

Talk Objectives
1. Explain the Common Core and its embedded language expectations across grades
2. Use the Common Core to form intervention goals and objectives across grades
3. Use the Common Core to plan contextualized and functional intervention activities

Based on the ASHA (2012) panel talk with Barb Ehren (UCF), and Karen Erickson, and Penelope Hatch (UNC–Chapel Hill)

DISCLOSURE: Ukrainetz has no financial or non-financial relationships relevant to the content of the presentation

Knowledge and skills across K-12 to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs
State-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
Released June, 2010
As of 2012, adopted by all but five States but some pushback as “federal intrusion on State rights”

Common Core
State Standards Initiative
Preparing America’s Students for College & Career

English Language Arts Standards
- Reading
  - Text complexity and the growth of comprehension
- Writing
  - Text types, responding to reading, and research
- Speaking and listening
  - Flexible communication and collaboration
- Language
  - Conventions, effective use, and vocabulary

Standards
- Reverse engineered from college and technical training expectations
- Clear, understandable and consistent
- Rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills
- Build upon strengths and lessons of State standards
- Informed by other top-performing countries
- Evidence-based (?)
Common Core Language Arts Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Standards</th>
<th>And the Rest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading: Foundational Skills</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print Concepts</td>
<td>Text Types and Purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonological Awareness</td>
<td>Production and Distribution of Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics and Word Recognition</td>
<td>Research to Build and Present Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>Range of Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Literature and Informational Text</td>
<td>Speaking and Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Ideas and Details</td>
<td>Conventions of Standard English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft and Structure</td>
<td>Knowledge of Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</td>
<td>Vocabulary Acquisition and Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity</td>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Language as a Separate Category

Language is its own strand not because the skills should be handled in isolation but because use extends across reading, writing, speaking, and listening. BUT “language” standard is both more and less than language. AND “language intervention” is more than “language”: concepts, attention, memory, social, decoding, spelling, reading strategies, study skills...

Language is Everywhere

- All language arts categories potential for tx goals and activities
- For K-G5, standards across subjects, using language skills to discuss literature, present science projects, or write history essays
- For G6-12, a similar spirit, conducting purposeful communication but more specifically crafted to subject areas

Start With The End In Mind

- Look at college and career readiness as the BIG end
- Look at competency in functional, purposeful activities as the LITTLE ends
- Look at Common Core as the means to the ends
- Unpack Common Core for language and cognitive underpinnings
- Not as unrelated discrete skills, but as parts of functional wholes

SLP Intervention & The Common Core

- SLPs are not teaching the standards
- SLPs work on language and cognitive underpinnings of standards so struggling students can access the curriculum
- SLPs reference the curriculum and standards for goals, topics, and activities to teach underpinnings
- SLPs work with teachers to integrate targeted components of complex standards back into the classroom

Tx Possibilities in A Single Standard?

6th Grade Writing: Text Types and Purposes

4. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence
   a. Introduce claims and organize reasons and evidence
   b. Support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text
   c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify relationships among claims and reasons
   d. Establish and maintain a formal style
   e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from argument presented
A Plan Rich in Possibilities

- In addition to content knowledge,
- The skills needed for understanding, producing, and evaluating
- Literary and informational texts
- That achieve the communicative purposes
- Of persuasion, explanation, and conveying experience.

(p. 8)

Aiming for Active, Independent Learners

- Students are expected to become self-directed learners
- Who ask questions, request clarification, and seek out resources as needed
- In addition to stronger language skills, tx should be directed at students being better, more independent learners

(p. 7)

Dx and Tx Through Rich Tasks

- Tx of skills through “a single rich task”
  - Often, several standards can be addressed by a single rich task. (p. 5)
  - Tx of skills in whole communicative activities
  - Narrative and expository activities to persuade, explain, and convey experience
- Consider audience, task, purpose, and discipline
  - speak in complete sentences “when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification” (3rd grade, p. 5)

(p. 5)

Using Standards for Tx

- As a source of general goals and specific objectives
  - Skills, activities, support, criteria
- As a source of tx
  - Approach, direction, and activities
- Often not modality specific
  - Reading and writing standards as spoken language goals or taught through spoken interactions
  - 3rd grade reading: “determine the main idea of a text, recount key details, and explain how they support the main idea” (p. 14)

(p. 14)

But Not Blind Adoption for Tx

Two 3rd Grade Language standards:
1. Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences
2. Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement

#1: Too attainable as stated: structure, modality, communicative use
  - X can independently produce relative clause complex sentences in generated written descriptions

#2: As-is, plus a context, a level of support, and a criterion
  - X can independently produce subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement in generated spoken narratives

(p. 5)

Lots for Narrative Language Intervention

- Elementary grades:
  - Kindergartners to tell a story in time order
  - Second graders to give details of actions, thoughts, and feelings in their narratives
  - Fourth graders to effectively transmit subtleties of narrative events
- But not just for the elementary grades
  - Attention to narrative throughout the grades
  - Comprehend and analyze the structure of literary texts
  - Recount experiences using effective techniques, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences
### Common Core Standards for Elementary Narrative Structure

**Kindergarten**
- Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely-linked events, in the order in which the events occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.

**Grade 1**
- Write narratives which recount two or more sequenced events, with some details regarding what happened, temporal words to signal event order, and some sense of closure.

### Contextualized Skill Tx
- Select a set of treatment goals that come together in a single whole purposeful activity
- From domains: semantics, syntax, morphology, & pragmatics
- From levels: word, sentence, discourse
- Txing separately and together in whole-part-whole
- To make noticeable changes in functional competence

*Words are the bricks of language, shaped through morphological variation, mortared together with syntax, and framed by discourse structure into a functional building* (Nelson & van Meter, 2006)

### Tx Goal ➔ Standard for Narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tx Goal</th>
<th>3rd Grade Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Causal and temporal conjunctions in narrative generation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lang.1.h. has no purpose or discourse context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Write.1.c. expository but opinions + reasons = Plans and motivations of characters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Write.3.c. temporal words really matter for chronological adjustments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before that happened</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lang.1.h. Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write.1.c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., because, therefore, since, for e.g.,) to connect opinion and reasons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write.3.c. Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### One Narrative Goal and Three Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tx Goal</th>
<th>3rd Grade Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Write narratives which recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, with details of actions, thoughts, and feelings, and temporal words and closure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Write narratives to develop real or imagined events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. Introduce a situation and a character, use dialogue, actions, thoughts, and feelings to show character response, along with temporal words and closure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Write narratives like above with added aspects of a variety of transitional words and phrases, concrete and sensory details to convey experiences precisely, and a coherent conclusion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tx With Rich Tasks - Making Connections

Beyond surface features to communicative purpose and component skills can link classroom and speech room
- If student knows personal narratives retold in speech and imaginative narratives composed in class both have purpose to convey experience to an audience
- Think about what audience needs to know in both settings
- If teacher knows SLP is working on skills of clausal conjunctions and elaborated episodes and comments on presence in classwork
- Transfer new language skills to classwork
Connecting Rich Tasks - Revisiting Words & Concepts

- Common Core recommends linking learning between grades
- Lots of reading advanced texts on common topic drive vocabulary learning, including never-seen-before new words
- So use thematic units of (rich and drill) tasks for tx
- Thematic instruction ➔ knowledge, vocabulary, and comprehension ➔ students to handle more difficult texts, ➔ improved knowledge and vocabulary ➔ raising SATs ➔ GIF


Performance Levels

- No operationalized performance levels for a particular skill
- Task-dependent; left to LEAs to determine
- For IEPs, can simplify activities or criteria or support
- Reg Ed don’t have that choice

Sense of expectations in increasing task difficulty over grades

- Standards for participating in discussions require adherence to increasing number of rules
- Writing standards move from picture-and-print composition to written composition
- Some standards move from supported to independent performance

3rd graders should “with guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose” (p. 21)

Developmental Asynchronies

- Some standards late for spoken communication, giving our students a chance
  E.g., 4th grade, in speaking and writing, “form and use prepositional phrases” (p. 28)

  The book is on the shelf. My hat is with my coat, in my locker. I can see through the window.

- Others hard to teach no matter the grade
  E.g., 4th grade Lang.1.a.: Use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why)

  The student who yelled got a detention. The window that Joe broke is over there. The bus stop is where everyone is waiting. Whose book is that?

Treating Complex Grammar

- Setting up spoken or written communication that motivates use is hard
- But explaining to a student so he intentionally and meaningfully structures relative pronoun sentences is really hard!
- Requires HIGH metalinguistic awareness
- For SLPs as well as students!

Relative clause explanation: This new type of sentence has a relative clause in it: “The cup that is green is my favorite”. This part that starts with “that” is the relative clause and it gives extra information about this noun, the cup. Let’s practice making up relative clause sentences and then we can try them out in your paper. (Eisenberg, 2006, p. 164)
**Research Evidence Basis?**

- Sometimes a standard trying to be everything for all
- Is it really logically, instructionally, or developmentally ordered? Is it all attainable? Is it all necessary?
- e.g., Phonemic awareness for reading and spelling
  - Phoneme isolation, segmenting, and blending for simple words needed
- But standards list optional other skills, adding unnecessary complexity and work

---

**Kindergarten Phonemic Awareness**

- Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes)
  a. Recognize and produce rhyming words
  b. Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words
  c. Blend and segment onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken words
  d. Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant, or CVC) words (not including final /l/, /r/, or /x/)
  e. Add or substitute individual phonemes in simple, one-syllable words to make new words

---

**Standards as Aims and Guideposts**

- Where we are:
  1. OK: Early elementary learning to read and write
  2. High: Later elementary reading and writing to learn
  3. Agh!: Secondary disciplinary reading and writing
- How to use:
  - As aims and guideposts
  - As sources of goals, activities, and topics
  - Not judgments and legal prescriptions
  - So no spiral downward into NCLB despair!

---

**Reading Standards for Second Grade**

- Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words, including vowel varieties, two-syllable words, words with affixes, inconsistent but common words, and irregular words.
- Read on-level text with purpose, understanding, and sufficient accuracy, rate, and expression to support comprehension.
- Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, re-reading as necessary.
- By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, and informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band independently and proficiently with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
- Identify, describe, determine, explain, compare, and use content and structure of literature and informational texts. (p. 11, 15, 16)

---

**8th Grade cont’d.**

**Craft and Structure**

- Determine meaning of words and phrases as used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings
- Analyze in detail structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept
- Determine author’s point of view or purpose and analyze how author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints

**Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

- Delineate and evaluate argument and specific claims in a text, assessing if reasoning sound and evidence relevant and sufficient
- Analyze a case in which texts provide conflicting info and id where texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation
Current State of Secondary Analytic Communication


- Inability to translate thoughts into coherent, well-argued sentences, paragraphs, and essays
- Severely impeding intellectual growth in many subjects
- Diff between failing and successful students is expressing thoughts on the page
- "New writing standards will deliver a high-voltage shock to the American public"
- Florida, added expository essay to writing test: 10th grade pass rate from 80% in 2011 to 38% in 2012
- Nation's Report Card: in 2007, only 1% of 12th graders could write a sophisticated, well-organized essay

The Way It Was...

- Once upon a time, grammar exercises and essay construction
- Some excelled, most got by, many dropped out
- Next: interesting writing in a social context, process of writing, narratives, poetry, memoirs
- More liked writing (and reading), but little attn to formal composition and analytic communication
- 2001, NCLB mandated tests for math and reading
- What gets tested gets taught
- Focus on Learning-to-Read, DIBELS, RTI, earlier instruction
- Writing (and speaking) longer a way to study, to learn, or to construct new knowledge
- Common Core refocuses attention on analytic thinking, learning, writing, and speaking for all

But Not Even in the Good Old Days...

Never has been an invariant developmental unfolding of academic achievement:

The development of writing is unbelievable relative, to the point that pupil capacity seems to vary as much horizontally throughout a population of one grade as it does vertically through the grades...The past conditioning of the students (and of the teachers) accounts for more variation than anything else...At every turn of the road we ran into the disconcerting fact that what a student could write seemed to depend more on his out-of-school language environment and previous school training than on his age. (Moffett, 1968, p. 54-55)

Take-Home Messages

1. Common Core rich in possibilities for linking language dx and tx to academic success
2. Keep the focus on teaching, learning, and achieving skills within purposeful communicative activities
3. Don’t try to do it all or get overwhelmed by it all; make choices for tx
4. Insist on individualizing expectations and ways to get there
5. Advocate for Common Core to be used as guide not prescription, even for regular education

References