SPELL-Links™

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Title: The Language of Reading & Spelling: Orthography

Audience: All K-12 educators, language and literacy specialists, and administrators
Instructional Level: Intermediate

Course Description:

Reading, writing, and spelling – *it's about oral language and building the brain for literacy!* Success in reading and spelling requires a systematic way of learning, practicing, and applying knowledge about sounds, letters, and meanings of spoken and written words. Whether you're a classroom teacher new to the study of language structure or a seasoned specialist, this course will provide essential and practical knowledge to deliver word study instruction more effectively.

In this module, we focus on the letters—the orthography—of words. You'll gain an understanding of why individuals require instruction and repeated, meaningful interactions with written words to learn how to represent spoken words in written form and to successfully decode and encode (spell). You'll examine different types of orthographic learning that take place at both the sub-lexical and lexical levels. At the sub-lexical level, orthographic learning includes awareness and knowledge of letter-sound relationships, allowable sequences of letters (orthotactics), orthotactic constraints, and frequencies of orthographic patterns. At the lexical level, orthographic learning involves the development, storage, retrieval, and use of stored orthographic representations of specific written words and word parts including affixes. These stored orthographic representations of words—called mental graphemic representations (MGRs), mental orthographic representations (MORs), mental orthographic images (MOIs) among other terms in the literature—are critical for automatic and accurate decoding and encoding of words and fluent reading and writing.

You'll gain an insight into how students acquire orthographic knowledge at the lexical and sub-lexical levels through implicit learning and how explicit instruction facilitates acquisition of orthographic knowledge and the development of efficient neural networks and robust orthographic representations of words and word parts. You'll examine the differences between using speech-to-print vs. print-to-speech methods for teaching orthographic knowledge and awareness, gain insight into the advantages of using speech-to-print (i.e., mapping from phonemes to graphemes) instruction for the development of encoding *and* decoding skills and for more robust development of orthographic representations in long term memory, and

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explore instructional methods to facilitate student's implicit learning of orthotactics, orthotactic constraints, and regularity of orthographic patterns.

At the lexical level, you'll learn what an MGR/MOI/MOR (orthographic representation) is and what it isn't, gain an understanding of the critical role MGRs/MOIs/MORs play in automatic word recognition, and become familiar with theories of MGR/MOI/MOR development including Ehri's amalgamation hypothesis, Share's self-teaching hypothesis, and more recent multi-linguistic theories supported by the research of Trieman, Apel & Masterson, and others. You'll learn what makes a "sight word" a "sight word", what types of activities facilitate the development of MGRs/MOIs/MORs, and what types of common instructional methods *interfere* with the development of MGRs/MOIs/MORs. You'll learn about best practices in teaching word study to develop students' MGRs/MOIs/MORs, while eliminating common practices that *don't* work.

Through hands-on practice with a variety of words, you'll gain a deeper understanding of the orthographic structure of words and gain the insights that will help you more effectively teach your students to read and spell.

After completing this course, you'll have a deeper understanding of the orthographic structure of words and processes of orthographic learning. You'll advance your working knowledge and skills needed to implement word study instruction more effectively and have a new-found level of confidence in your ability to deliver literacy instruction based on current best practices for developing orthographic pattern knowledge and awareness and orthographic representations in lexical memory within a multi-linguistic model of word study.

 Learning Objectives:

1. Define sub-lexical and lexical orthographic knowledge and give an example of each.
2. Explain the role of implicit learning in the abstraction of statistical regularities and constraints of the orthography of a language.
3. Distinguish between "sight word" and "irregularly spelled" word.
4. Define MOI/MGR/MOR, describe how robust MOIs/MGRs/MORs develop, and explain the importance of robust MOIs/MGRs/MORs in reading and spelling.
5. Explain the basic tenets of Ehri's amalgamation hypothesis, Share's self-teaching hypothesis, and more recent multi-linguistic theories supported by the research of Trieman, Apel & Masterson, and others; explain how each model impacts the way we teach our students.

6. Explain why three common teaching practices—guessing a word from context when reading, writing spelling words multiple times, and flash card drills for sight words—may limit or interfere with students' acquisition and development of orthographic knowledge.