

Content-Based Instruction for English Language Learners

In this course, you'll examine the main characteristics and types of content-based instruction for English language learners. You'll see how teachers balance the dual focus on language and subject matter and learn about a helpful framework for designing content-based courses and lessons. You'll also consider different criteria for choosing and developing the content taught, as well as factors influencing the choice, development, and adaptation of materials.

In addition, you'll examine several useful activity types and consider how to integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing in content-based instruction with students at different proficiency levels. Finally, you'll identify some technological resources available for developing content-based curricula and consider how assessment is affected by using content-based instruction.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to

Module 1

- Explain content-based instruction, including the seven characteristics typical of this type of instruction.
- Describe the four main types of content-based instruction (CBI)—sustained CBI, the adjunct model, sheltered content instruction, and theme-based instruction—and be able to explain the similarities and differences among the models.

Module 2

- Understand the similarities and differences among CBI and (1) immersion curricula, (2) language across the curriculum, (3) content-enriched foreign language in the elementary schools (FLES), (4) English for specific purposes, and (5) general English curricula.
- Assess the Six T's Approach to content-based curriculum development, and be able to apply this approach to developing content-based lessons.

Module 3

- Develop strategies for helping learners acquire both content knowledge and target-language knowledge.
- Explain the roles that relevance, exploitability, instructor expertise, and institutional expectations play in selecting and developing content for a content-based course.

Module 4

- Classify the main criteria for selecting and developing materials for content-based courses and lessons, and explain the role that schema theory plays in working with both commercially produced and authentic materials in content-based lesson.
- Understand different activity types that you can use in CBI, and explain how you can use tasks, visual products, and project work in content-based lessons.

Module 5

- Develop an integrated skills focus that includes prototypical activities.
- Compare and contrast issues and techniques related to using CBI with (literate) beginners, false beginners, intermediate, and advanced language learners.

Module 6

- Understand numerous technological resources that you can use in content-based instruction.
- Explain the main purposes of language testing, and identify criteria that you can use to evaluate language measures.
- Evaluate the role alternative and authentic assessment play in language testing and content-based instruction.

About the Author

Kathleen M. Bailey received her doctorate in applied linguistics from the University of California at Los Angeles. Since 1981 she has worked at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, where she has been the head of the TESOL-TFL MA Program and the director of the Intensive English Program. She is currently the faculty advisor to the Language Program Administration Certificate students and the Peace Corps Master's International candidates. Her research and teaching interests include language assessment, teacher education and supervision, the teaching of speaking and listening, and research methodology. In 1998-99 she was the president of the international TESOL association.

Course Syllabus

Module 1	Introduction to Content-Based Instruction Module Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading: Defining Content-Based Instruction• Reading: Seven Characteristics of Content-Based Instruction• Video: Literacy Strategies – Content Writing• Application: Applying Seven Characteristics of CBI• Reading: Four Main Types of Content-Based Instruction Check for Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application: Choosing the Type of CBI• Module Review Module Journal
Module 2	Key Models and a Framework for CBI Design Module Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading: CBI and Key Curricular Models• Application: Choosing a CBI Curricular Model• Reading: Components of the Six T's Approach Check for Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application: Planning a Lesson with the Six T's Approach• Module Review Module Journal

Module 3	Balancing Language and Content Module Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading: The Shifting Focus of Language and Content• Application: Analyzing Language by Charting Questions• Reading: Themes That Have Been Addressed in CBI Curricula• Video: Introducing Vocabulary to Young ELLs• Video: Introducing Academic Vocabulary in High School Check for Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application: Analyzing a Theme• Module Review Module Journal
Module 4	Selecting and Developing Materials and Activities Module Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading: Materials in Content-Based Instruction• Application: Analyzing a Textbook• Reading: Task-Based Learning• Video: Educating Everybody's Children Check for Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application: Planning Project-Based Learning• Module Review Module Journal

Module 5	Adapting Content-Based Instruction for Various Proficiency Levels Module Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading: Revisiting the Four Skills• Application: Planning a CBI Unit• Reading: Proficiency and Language Learners• Video: Literacy Strategies: Reading Comprehension Check for Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application: Adjusting Activities to Proficiency Levels• Module Review Module Journal
Module 6	Technology Resources and Assessment Issues Module Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading: Technology and the Six T's Approach to Content-Based Instruction• Application: Planning a CBI Lesson with Technology• Video: Assessment and English Language Learners• Reading: Useful Language Assessment Check for Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application: Planning a CBI Assessment• Module Review Module Journal

Resources

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Glossary

A

Achievement tests are tests designed to assess students' mastery of certain course content. Achievement tests are usually given at the end of a course of instruction (e.g., as a final exam).

Adjunct model is a form of content-based instruction in which students are simultaneously enrolled in a language class and a content class (e.g., psychology), and the two teachers coordinate the curriculum and the assignments.

Admissions tests are tests whose results are used to predict whether or not a person is an appropriate candidate for admission to a school or program.

Advance organizers are visual, procedural, or verbal mechanisms that get students to focus on what they already know about a given topic or genre.

Analytical approach to syllabus design is an approach to syllabus design in which "the learner is presented with holistic 'chunks' of language and is required to analyze them or break them down into their constituent parts" (Nunan, 2004, p. 11).

Anchor papers are representative or quintessential examples of performance of a certain task to be rated (e.g., a role-play or a composition). Anchor papers serve as benchmarks for training and norming raters on the use of a rating scale.

Assessment method is a procedure for eliciting and evaluating students' knowledge and skills. Assessment methods are often described in terms of item formats (e.g., multiple-choice, fill-in, cloze passages, role-play prompts).

Authentic assessment is "multiple forms of assessment that reflect student learning, achievement, motivation and attitude on instructionally-relevant classroom activities" (O'Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996, p. 4). Authentic assessment "is characterized by its application to real life, where students are engaged in meaningful tasks that take place in real-life contexts" (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2004, p. 149). In other words, in authentic assessment contexts, students are evaluated on how well they can do certain tasks for which they are learning the language and content.

Authentic materials are materials (whether oral or written) that occur naturally and that were not created specifically for language-teaching purposes.

B

Blog (shortened from "web log") is an uncensored "online diary or journal posted on the Web for all to see" (Pogue & Biersdorfer, 2006, p. 109).

Bottom-up processing strategies are focused on small bits of linguistic information to understand the incoming message (e.g., using pronunciation cues, familiar words, question intonation).

Bound morphemes are morphemes that do not stand alone (e.g., *-ing*). They are attached to free morphemes (complete words that can stand alone) and often form different parts of speech (e.g., *bat* and *-ing* form *batting*). They also add or change meaning (e.g., by adding *im-* to form *impossible*).

C

Carrier topic is a reading, listening, discussion, or writing topic (e.g., basketball, traditional folk dancing) used to introduce grammar and vocabulary items and to "carry" the lesson. A carrier topic is not a topic studied for its own sake, and students are not expected to learn the subject matter.

Clauses are ordered groups of words that go beyond the phrase level. There are two kinds of clauses: independent and dependent clauses.

Cloze passage is a written text with certain words deleted. The learner's task is to fill in each blank with a word that fits in terms of its meaning and its grammar.

Communicative task is "a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form" (Nunan, 1989, p. 10).

Comprehensible input is a term coined by Stephen Krashen (1985) that refers to using speech that second language learners can understand. Making input comprehensible can involve slowing one's speech and using simpler grammatical structures and familiar vocabulary.

Concordancing systems are computer programs that search strings of text in a corpus to find a key word in its surrounding discourse.

Constructed responses are responses to test tasks that require students to generate language themselves (e.g., in a role-play scenario, composition, oral interview).

Content-based instruction (CBI) is an approach to language curriculum design that integrates subject-matter learning with language learning.

Content-compatible language is "language that can be taught naturally within the context of a particular subject matter and that students require additional practice with" (Snow, Met, & Genessee, 1989, p. 201); language that is not required for successful learning of the particular content but can be usefully and naturally contextualized within it (Snow, Met, & Genessee, 1989).

Content-enriched FLES (foreign language in the elementary school) is a curricular model in which the foreign language classes are used to reinforce and review concepts learned in other parts of the curriculum.

Content-obligatory language is "language essential to an understanding of content material" (Snow, Met, & Genessee, 1989, p. 201), and it includes vocabulary, grammar, and functions.

Content schemata are existing knowledge structures in the mind; what we already know about a given topic or subject.

Corpus (plural: corpora) is an electronically stored, searchable body of spoken or written text that shows how language is actually used when people speak and write.

Criterion-referenced score interpretation is a form of scoring used in tests in which learners' performances are compared to predetermined standards (e.g., being able to use certain grammatical forms correctly) rather than to other learners' performances on that same measure. This approach is more appropriate than norm-referenced scoring in diagnostic, progress, and achievement tests, including those teachers develop for content-based assessment.

Curriculum is the "what" of language teaching (lesson content, syllabus content, and program-wide course content) as opposed to the "how" (teaching methods).

Cut-off scores are scores on tests that have been selected to determine, for example, whether or not a person is an appropriate candidate for admission into a given school or able to graduate from a given program.

D

Declarative knowledge is one's knowledge about something; knowing *about* something rather than knowing *how to do* something.

Dependent clauses are clauses (e.g., *while I was at school*) that must be attached to an independent clause to be complete and grammatical, especially in writing.

Diagnostic test is an examination that is intended to identify students' particular strengths and weaknesses so that appropriate instruction can be designed and provided.

Direct test is an assessment task in which students actually perform the skills to be evaluated, whether these are reading, writing, speaking, listening, summarizing, paraphrasing, taking notes, and so on.

Directionality deals with whether the language learner is receiving incoming language (either by listening or reading) or producing language (by speaking or writing).

Discipline-specific vocabulary "constitutes the content of the course itself (psychology, sociology, etc.); it is the vocabulary that is often highlighted in the

textbook, listed in the glossary, defined at the end of the chapter, and included on short answer test questions" (Carson, 2000, p. 27).

Discourse are stretches of language used in context to convey meaning in recognizable forms; "language 'beyond the sentence'" (McCarthy, 2001, p. 48).

Dual immersion (often referred to as *two-way bilingual immersion* or *dual-language programs*) is an approach where minority and majority language speakers are in the same class and learn subject matter content in both languages. For instance, in a Spanish-English bilingual program in the United States (where English is the language of wider communication), children whose native language is Spanish are in the same classes as children whose native language is English. In this model, usually "a portion of the instructional day is taught in English and another portion is in the target language" (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 2003, p. 271). The goal is that all students will become bilingual and bicultural (ibid.).

E

Enabling skills are underlying knowledge thought to enable learners to carry out the macro-skills. For example, the ability to detect errors is assumed to be one of the skills that helps learners write compositions.

English as a foreign language (EFL) is typically used to describe environments where English is not the language of wider communication (e.g., in Chile, Cambodia, Slovakia, Mongolia).

English as a second language (ESL) is typically used to describe English used by nonnative speakers in contexts where it is the language of wider communication (e.g., in England, Australia, New Zealand).

English for academic purposes (EAP) is a form of ESP (English for specific purposes) that prepares students for educational uses of language (e.g., summarizing, skimming, scanning, outlining, academic writing).

English for occupational purposes (EOP) is a form of ESP (English for specific purposes) that prepares students for professional or occupational uses, such as medical English, engineering English, or English for the hospitality industry.

English for specific purposes (ESP) is an approach to English language curriculum design that involves identifying students' particular professional or academic goals and identifying the English language structures, functions, vocabulary, and registers needed to meet those goals.

Exploitability is the concept that the themes and materials chosen should provide many opportunities to teach language through content.

F

False beginners are beginning-level language learners who have had some instruction in the target language but who cannot use the basic vocabulary and grammar they have learned in a productive way. The term *false beginner* is often used to distinguish these learners from *absolute* (or *true*) beginners, who have had little or no experience with the target language and for whom everything (or almost everything) is new.

Formal schemata are knowledge structures about the form or shape of a piece of discourse that enable us to recognize various genres when we are reading or listening. For instance, we know the differences among sonnets, limericks, and haiku because we have seen these forms of poetry before. We recognize their shapes and know their distinctive characteristics. It is our formal schemata that enable us to recognize these forms, or genres.

Free morphemes are complete words that can stand alone (e.g., *boy*).

G

General academic vocabulary are "words that students will see again and again in most of the courses they take, because they tend to be characteristic of all academic texts (e.g., *arbitrary*, *norm*, *analogy*, *versus*)" (Carson, 2000, p. 27).

General English curricula are English courses that do not teach any specific content or English related to a particular occupation or field of study. The focus in general English curricula is typically on the language itself.

Genre is the "regular and recurring patterns of everyday, academic and literary texts that occur within particular cultures" (Hammond & Derewianka, 2001, p. 186). Examples of genre include sonnets, haiku, television advertisements, obituaries, and hymns.

H

High-stakes examinations are tests whose results have an important influence on the test takers' lives (e.g., whether they receive a scholarship or are accepted into a certain university).

I

Idioms are groups of words that have a collective meaning that cannot be interpreted from the apparent primary meaning of the individual words. For example, the meaning of the expression "it's raining cats and dogs" cannot be deciphered based on our knowledge of rain, or cats, or dogs.

Immersion is a model in which children, usually in primary and secondary grades, are educated in the target language, often from the beginning of their formal schooling.

Imperative statements (such as “Sit down”) in which the subject is not overtly stated and the verb is not marked for tense. Imperative sentences are still considered to be independent clauses.

Independent clause is a clause that has a grammatical subject and a verb marked for tense (e.g., “Bill is from New York City.”). The exception to this definition is imperative sentences (e.g., “Sit down.”) in which the subject is not overtly stated and the verb is not marked for tense. Independent clauses are sentences; they can stand alone and feel complete and grammatical to a reader or listener.

Indirect test is an assessment task that taps into the knowledge and enabling skills thought to help learners carry out the macro-skills. For example, synonym recognition is an indirect test of reading, because vocabulary comprehension is a part of reading.

Input is language that is in the learners' environment and is available to be learned, whether it comes from textbooks, teachers and classmates, television and radio, the Internet, print materials, conversations outside of class, the language lab, and so forth.

Instructional scaffolding are procedures for helping students master the concepts involved as well as the forms of the content materials they are using (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2004) (e.g., by using graphic organizers and self-quizzes).

Intake is that portion of the input that learners process cognitively and incorporate into their own developing grammatical system and lexicon.

Integration of processes is a procedure by which the processes involved in all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are practiced in lessons and courses.

Interactiveness is "the extent and type of involvement of the test taker's individual characteristics in accomplishing a test task" (Bachman & Palmer, 1996, p. 25).

L

Language Across the Curriculum is a curricular model that makes language, and particularly literacy development, a key goal in all classes.

Language for specific purposes (LSP) is an approach to curriculum design that involves identifying students' particular professional or academic goals and identifying the language structures, functions, vocabulary, and registers needed in the second language to meet those goals.

Learning strategies are cognitive and social procedures language learners employ to help them learn aspects of the target language. For example, before reading a

passage about Antarctica, a learner might think about what he or she already knows about the subject. Doing this helps the student prepare to read and understand the new information.

Lexicon is our mental collection of words and idioms, along with their meanings.

Linked courses are pairings of language courses and content courses, taught by two different instructors; formerly called the *adjunct model*. The term *adjunct model* has been used in this lesson and previous ones because it is the more common label in the existing literature. However, these days a growing number of teachers and researchers are using the term *linked courses* to avoid the subsidiary or appendage-like connotations of the word *adjunct*.

M

Marked for tense is applied to a verb. In an independent clause, which is made up of a subject and a verb, the verb could be in the present tense or in the past tense, for example.

Mega-theme in sustained content-based instruction is the overarching theme that defines the themes and topics to be covered during a term.

Methodology is the study and systematic description of methods (e.g., teaching methods, research methods).

Mind map is a visual representation, usually consisting of boxes or circles connected with lines, to depict relationships among ideas.

Modality is the channel or "mode" of language use (written or oral).

Morphemes are the meaningful units that make up language. Morphemes can be either free (whole words, such as *run*, *tall*, *giraffe*) or bound morphemes (such as *-ing*, *-est*, or *-s*), that combine with free morphemes (*running*, *tallest*, *giraffes*).

Morphology is the study of morphemes (the meaningful units which make up language).

N

Needs assessment (also called a *needs analysis*) is a range of systematic procedures for determining learners' needs for the language they are studying.

Norm-referenced score interpretation is a form of scoring in which a student's performance is compared to that of other test takers. When you see students'

outcomes represented as percentile scores, the test uses norm-referenced scoring procedures.

O

Objective scoring is a scoring method that involves no judgment whatsoever. Learners' responses can be deemed right or wrong by using a scoring key. Multiple-choice, true-false, matching, and other selected-response item types can be objectively scored.

Output is the language that learners produce, whether through speech or writing.

P

Passive vocabulary is vocabulary that learners may recognize or understand if they read or hear it used but rarely use when they speak or write.

Pedagogical tasks are tasks that learners are not likely to do outside the language classroom but are "created in order to 'push' learners into communicating in the target language, on the assumption that this communicative interaction will fuel the acquisition process" (Nunan, 2001, p. 61). As an example, Nunan cites a "spot the difference" activity in which pairs of students have two similar cartoons. Without showing each other their pictures, they must use the target language to figure out how the two cartoons differ.

Phonemes are individual, meaningful sounds; the vowels and consonants of a spoken language. The following words have different meanings because of a change in one phoneme (the initial consonant): *bat*, *cat*, *fat*, *hat*.

Phrases are two or more words that function together in a predictable pattern to make a meaning unit, such as prepositional phrases (*on the table*) and infinitive phrases (*to sing*).

Pilot testing (or *piloting*) is trying out an assessment system with a group of learners very similar to those for whom it is intended before it is ever used for decision-making purposes.

Placement tests are tests used to put students into appropriate levels of instruction once they have been admitted to a school or program.

Portfolio is a collection of a student's work that reveals the process of development over time and showcases individual products of projects undertaken.

Practicality is the issue of whether the investment put into a test (e.g., in terms of its development, cost, administration, and scoring time) is justified by the information it provides.

Procedural knowledge is one's ability to do something; knowing how to do it.

Procedural scaffolding is moving from teaching to modeling, to the students practicing and then applying the concepts or skills being taught; moving from whole-class instruction to group work and then pair work and individual work to gradually move learners toward independent mastery of the subject matter (Echevarria, Vogt, & Snow, 2004).

Productive skill is the skill with which the learner produces language (speaking and writing).

Proficiency is the ability to speak, listen, read, and write in a language over a range of topics with confidence, native-like speed, and pausing and using native-like rules of correctness; using the language with a high level of fluency and accuracy in all four skills.

Proficiency test is a test intended to evaluate learners' target language abilities regardless of how they learned that language. These tests are not tied to any particular curriculum, textbook, or program of study.

Progress test is a test administered after a period of instruction to determine how well students have mastered the material or acquired the skills covered up to that point in the instructional sequence.

Project-based learning is student work generated over time that leads to the creation of a project or product; "a collection of sequenced and integrated tasks that all add up to a final project" (Nunan, 2004, p. 133).

R

Recasts are the interlocutor's (e.g., the teacher's) repetitions of learners' utterances with corrected forms included (Lyster, 1998). For example, if a student said, "I have seen Mary yesterday after class," the teacher might recast the statement by saying, "Oh, you saw Mary yesterday?"

Receptive skill is a skill with which the learner receives language (listening and reading).

Reliability is the extent to which a test yields consistent results when given repeatedly to a similar group.

S

Scaffolding is providing learners (not just language learners) with just enough guidance (via modeling, guided practice, and comprehensible input) so that they can accomplish tasks on their own.

Schema (plural: schemata) is an existing knowledge structure in the mind. There are content schemata and formal schemata.

Schema activation is when a teacher uses questions or other activities to get learners to think about what they already know about a topic. Doing this helps learners better process incoming information (something they will hear or read) in a lesson.

Schema theory is a theory that explains the role of background knowledge in processing incoming information when we are reading or listening to something (see Carrell, 1987).

SDAIE is specially designed academic instruction in English, which is sometimes called *sheltered content instruction*.

Search engines are websites that "seek out Web pages using words you type in as clues" (Pogue & Biersdorfer, 2006, p. 54).

Selected responses are responses on test tasks that require students to choose from among options provided, rather than generating language themselves. Multiple-choice items, true-false items, and the matching format make use of selected responses.

Sentences are spoken utterances or written statements that consist of one or more independent clauses and any attached dependent clauses. Sentences can stand alone and feel complete and grammatical to a reader or listener.

Sheltered content instruction is content courses taught in the target language to language learners by a content-area specialist, such as a university professor.

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) is an instrument for planning and evaluating lessons used with English language learners in a sheltered instruction setting.

Six T's Approach is a framework for designing lessons, curricula, and materials in content-based instruction first developed by Stoller and Grabe (1997). The six *t*'s are themes, topics, threads, texts, tasks, and transitions.

Speech acts are the functions we perform with language (e.g., complaining, apologizing, requesting, warning, promising, urging).

Standardized tests are tests that have been standardized to meet three conditions: (1) its scores are interpreted against a standard scale that is applied universally, (2) the content of various forms of the test is uniform in terms of what is covered and the difficulty of the tasks, and (3) the administration and scoring procedures are uniform no matter where the test is given.

Stems and affixes are "common morphemes that appear regularly in academic texts, including word roots, prefixes and suffixes" (Carson, 2000, p. 27).

Subjective scoring is a scoring method that involves some judgment on the part of the raters or graders. Raters might assign values to constructed responses either with letter grades (A, B, C, etc.) or with numeric ratings.

Sustained content-based instruction (also called *sustained content language teaching*) is content-based language courses that last for a whole term or an entire academic year. Sustained content-based instruction involves the concentrated, long-term study of a particular subject area (e.g., chemistry) and the language that supports it.

Syntax is the rules of word order in our internalized mental grammar systems. Different languages have different syntactic patterns. English word order, for example, typically follows a subject-verb-object pattern.

Synthetic approach to syllabus design is an approach to syllabus design in which course designers "break the content down into its constituent parts and introduce each part separately and step by step" (Nunan, 2004, p. 11). The students are then expected to synthesize those constituents (i.e., put them together) and be able to use them.

T

Target tasks are things learners would probably do outside of the language classroom, such as filling out an application form, participating in a job interview, or using a map to find one's way through a city (Nunan, 2001, p. 61).

Task-based learning is an approach to defining and organizing activities. It involves specifying a "sequence of communicative tasks to be carried out in the target language" (Willis & Willis, 2001, p. 173) rather than a sequence of language forms to be learned.

Tasks are "the instructional activities and techniques utilized for content, language, and strategy instruction in language classrooms" (Stoller & Grabe, 1997, p. 84). Tasks are the things that students actually do. There are different kinds of tasks, but the two main categories are pedagogical tasks and target tasks.

Test specifications are specific statements about the purpose of a test, its intended audience, the skills and content knowledge to be assessed, and the methods to be used.

Text is stretches of oral or written language of indeterminate length (e.g., a stop sign, a poem, an oral report, a radio announcement, a television broadcast, a memo).

Texts are "content resources (written and aural) which drive the basic planning of theme units" (Stoller & Grabe, 1997, p. 83).

Theme-based instruction is language classes structured around a variety of themes that change several different times during a course.

Themes are the "central ideas that organize major curricular units" (Stoller & Grabe, 1997, p. 83).

Threads are links across themes that are used to generate a sense of coherence in the curriculum.

Top-down processing strategies use background knowledge about the form or the content of an incoming text to help us understand it. This includes using the big picture, the context, and the surrounding environment to help us understand what we are reading or hearing.

Topics are "subunits of content which explore more specific aspects of the theme" (Stoller & Grabe, 1997, p. 83).

Transitions are "explicitly planned actions which provide coherence across topics in a theme and across tasks within topics" (Stoller & Grabe, 1997, p. 84) as well as across texts. There are three types of transitions: topical transitions, task transitions, and text transitions. Topical transitions connect one topic to another. Task transitions connect one task to another. Text transitions are connections that link texts to other texts. Text transitions can also link texts to topics or to tasks.

U

Utterances are something someone says.

V

Validity is the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure.

Verbal scaffolding is a way that teachers can adapt their language to support students' understanding and reinforce students' learning (e.g., through paraphrasing and using contextual definitions) (Echevarria, Vogt, & Snow, 2004).

W

Washback is the effect of a test on teaching or learning.

Workplace English (also called *vocational ESL [VESL]*) is the English used in a particular work setting or in a particular type of work (e.g., English for tourism, English for agricultural work, English for mechanics).

Z

Zone of proximal development (ZPD) is made up of skills and knowledge that have not yet been fully acquired but that the learner can use with assistance. There are a number of ways that learners can work toward acquiring new skills and knowledge: getting help from more capable peers, interacting with peers, helping less capable peers, and tapping their own inner resources (van Lier, 1996, p. 193).