Engaging, Brisk, and Multidimensional Word Study
(Focus on Grades K-5)

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Language: A Growth Construct

Slowly our lexicon grows, through many encounters with the word in varying context over time

Persist!
Beware the Jabberwock, my son!

The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
the weight of the word
The English Language is Complex

• Challenging to learn to read in English
• Greater syllabic complexity
• Greater orthographic depth
  – Based on comparisons with other European orthographies

words in thousands (estimated)
includes multiple meanings, idioms, phrases, slang, etc.

www.languagemonitor.com

English – A Vast Language
Dictionary Ahead!
PROCEED with CAUTION

Dictionary definition of *erode* is ‘to eat out’

Student writes: “My family erodes often.”

– Stahl, 1999, p. 17
Beware!

- Memorizing weekly word lists from the dictionary, with little cognitive engagement, is not likely to be effective

Bos & Anders, 1990; Bryant et al., 2003; Jitendra et al., 2004; Nagy, 2007
Unveiling Academic English
Estimates from a computerized survey of about 80,000 words in the old *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* (3rd ed.), published in *Ordered Profusion*, Finkenstaedt & Wolff (1973)
Sort It
school, which, champagne, chronic, Chardonnay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anglo-Saxon /tch/</th>
<th>French /sh/</th>
<th>Greek /k/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>child</td>
<td>chef</td>
<td>chaos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chin</td>
<td>charade</td>
<td>archaic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ditch</td>
<td>chivalry</td>
<td>charisma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chide</td>
<td>chauffeur</td>
<td>technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>such</td>
<td>panache</td>
<td>anchor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Sort It

phoebe, passé, anemone, side, appliqué, psyche

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anglo-Saxon final silent e</th>
<th>French long a /ā/</th>
<th>Greek long e /ē/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stone</td>
<td>fiancé</td>
<td>epitome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>take</td>
<td>sauté</td>
<td>sesame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bridegroom</td>
<td>risqué</td>
<td>catastrophe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside</td>
<td>touché</td>
<td>calliope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mine</td>
<td>puree</td>
<td>Penelope</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Counting in Greek and Latin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>Latin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>mono</td>
<td>uni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>di</td>
<td>bi, du, duo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>tri, tris</td>
<td>tri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>tetra</td>
<td>qaudri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ten</td>
<td>deca, deka</td>
<td>deci</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>half</td>
<td>hemi</td>
<td>semi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>many</td>
<td>poly</td>
<td>multi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"Kindling students' interest and engagement with words is a vital part of helping all students, but especially less advantaged students, to develop rich and powerful vocabularies”

(Graves, 2006, p. 120)
“Nearly half of incoming freshmen cannot read their textbooks fluently” (Carnegie Corporation, 2002)

This may be true, but...

“Morphological knowledge is a wonderful dimension of the child’s uncovering of “what’s in a word,” and one of the least exploited aids to fluent comprehension” (Wolf, 2007, p. 130)
What’s in a Word?

Are these real words? What might they mean?

ugsome
malductive
vincible
candent
bleachers?
The mind analyzes every stretch of language as some mixture of memorized chunks and rule-governed assemblies.

Pinker (1999)
*Words and Rules*, p.26
Latin: -panis- (bread)
## Word-Savvy Students & Linguistic Forms
### Inflection, Compound, Derivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>base words</th>
<th>boy, farm, cold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>inflections</td>
<td>boys, farmed, farming, colder, coldest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compound words</td>
<td>boyfriend, farmhouse, coldhearted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>derivations</td>
<td>boyish, boyishly, boyhood, farmer, Farmington, farmstead</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Syntax shift*

(Anglin, 1993; Berko, 1958; Tyler & Nagy, 1989; Wysocki & Jenkins, 1987)
Compound Words
A Morphological Process

• doghouse
• ice cube
• red-winged blackbird
• pickpocket
• Lazy Susan
Compound Awareness
Don’t Take it for Granted!

What would you call the grass where bees hide?

*beeggrass or grassbee?*

Morphological Awareness Measure

WordPLAY (Ebbers, 2011)

Circle the whiteball tree
Compound Words
Build, Invent, Describe, Discuss

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pool of word cards</th>
<th>Real word</th>
<th>Invented word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>green</td>
<td>doghouse</td>
<td>horsedog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>night</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dog</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flash</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>house</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verbalize it. Describe the meaning:
A *doghouse* is a house for a dog.
My *horsedog* is a dog that neighs like a horse.
To help students learn words more effortlessly and durably, link phonology, morphology, orthography, semantics and syntax

(see Berninger et al., 2010; Perfetti, 2007, 2011; Wolf, 2007)

Yes, but HOW ?????
Morphemes: Sort by Meaning

unlock
unbroken
unshaken
unwrap
unafraid
unkind
untangle
unable
untrue
untie

Highlight the prefix in each word.

Sort words:
Doing words (verbs)
Describing words (adj)

Write a sentence for each. Try to put two words in one.

We are unable to unlock the door.
We untangle and untie the laces.
Morphemes: Sort by Meaning

- teacher
- kinder
- helper
- painter
- reader
- faster
- swifter
- farmer
- leader
- greater
- larger

Highlight the suffix in each word.

Sort:
- Suffix means “one who”
- Suffix indicates “more”
Morphemes: Sort by Meaning

Which words belong to the same family (share the same base word)?

Sun
Sunny
Sunshine
Sunk
Suntan
Sunniest
Morphemes: Sort by Meaning

act
actor
actress
active
ace
tractor
react&action
activity

Which words belong to the same family (share the same base word)?
The dedicated student was granted a five thousand dollar scholarship.
Morphological Families of Words

Create networks of related words. Make a word wheel for the base word *sun*.
drop

lemon drop
gum drop
teadrop
droplet
droplets
drop
drops
dropping
dropped
eye dropper
eye droppers
dropper
dropkick

“drop in” for a visit
just “drop by”
important morphemic analysis doesn’t always work

report
reporter
unreported

support
supporter
supportive
unsupportive
supportively

transport
transporter
transportation

port: to carry (L.)

import
importer
importation

portfolio
portable
portability

deport
deportee
deporation

important doesn’t always work

report
reporter
unreported

support
supporter
supportive
unsupportive
supportively

transport
transporter
transportation

port: to carry (L.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Example Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. unable</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. review</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. inedible</strong> (immobile, illegal, irresponsible)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. distrust</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. enlighten</strong> (empower)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. nonsense</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. inside</strong> (implant)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8. overload</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9. misguide</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10. submarine</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11. preheat</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12. interview</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13. forewarn</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>14. derail</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>15. transfer</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>16. supersonic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>17. semicircle</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>18. antifreeze</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>19. midterm</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>20. underfed</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Will the Real Prefix Please Stand Up?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>prefix re-</th>
<th>not prefix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>reheat</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>return</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rebuild</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rewind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rendition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reciprocity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Derivational Suffixes!

Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
   The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
   The frumious Bandersnatch!"

What a ____ poem!

(ribatism, ribatious, ribation, ribatize)
“I got a D- on my vocabulary test... Man, my parents are going to be so auspicious!”

Does he know this derivational suffix?
Phonological and/or Orthographic Shifts

• heal → healer → health
• wise → wisely → wisdom
• please → pleasant → pleasure
• ignite → ignition
• provide → provision
Shift happens...rather a lot
Students skilled in morphemic and contextual analysis have the potential to increase their vocabulary breadth and depth substantially.

(Edwards, Font, Baumann, & Boland (2004) in Baumann & Kame ’enui, p. 161)

Note: For Grades 4-12
Efficacy inconclusive for severe reading disability
A Key Goal: Morphemic Analysis in Context

Joe and Stan arrived at the party at 7:00 o’clock. By 9:30, the evening seemed to drag for Stan. But Joe really seemed to be having a good time at the party. “I wish I could be as sociable as he is,” thought Stan.

Adapted from Bringing Words to Life
Beck, McKeown, and Kucan, 2002
By sixth grade, about 60% of the word meanings in printed school English might be inferred through knowledge of morphemes, along with context clues.

(Nagy & Anderson, 1984)
context + morphemes = meaning

This student feels confident and capable when confronted by unknown vocabulary.

I think I can, I think I can…
The little red hen had left the door of the house open.

When her back was turned, the sly young fox crept inside the house.
The wolf was very angry, but he still pretended not to be.

He went to the little pig’s house and knocked on the door. “Little pig,” he said, “if you will be ready at four o’clock this afternoon, I will take you to the fair. We will have some fun on the swings and roundabouts.”

“Very well,” said the little pig.
Morphemic Analysis in Context
(source: Mountain, 2005)

Here’s a new word in our story: tripod. It says, “He put the camera on the tripod.” I wonder what a tripod could be?

Let’s say the word again, syllable by syllable, and look for a meaningful part: tri-pod

Have you heard tri before—in triangle, tricycle, triceratops?

How many sides on a triangle? Three.

How many wheels on a tricycle? Three.

How many horns on the dinosaur triceratops? Three.

Do you think a tripod might have three of something? Three what?

What does the story say about the tripod?
Every Moment Counts

• Leverage spoken language
• Learn language naturally
• Progress to the ____.
• This way to the great ____.
Spoken Language

• Make explicit use of spoken language to teach new words
  – Connect semantics, phonology, morphology, orthography, and syntax
Ex. 1: bunk = bed

Ex. 2: whole ≠ half

Ex. 3: coppery ≈ flashy

1. people ____ things

2. harbor ____ port

3. part ____ whole

4. alone ____ together

5. awoke ____ slept

6. connect ____ link

Discuss It!
A bunk is a sort of bed, but a bunk is usually smallish, and stacked.

From Supercharged Readers (Ebbers)
Enjoy words together!
Verbalize! Express!
Make connections!

Review: Make lasting friends with words
In Sum:

• Kindle interest and engagement
• Use discussions, directions, oral language
• Provide a student-friendly definition
• Provide context
• Link phonology, morphology, orthography, semantics and syntax
• Provide distributed practice
• Invest time in vocabulary daily
For More Information

• Visit *Vocabulologic*
  – An edublog with a focus on vocabulary
  – Email me to join the mailing list

• Questions? Email me at susan@readingway.com or sebbers@berkeley.edu

• To download samples of my books, visit my website www.readingway.com