English Language Learners and the Common Core State Standards
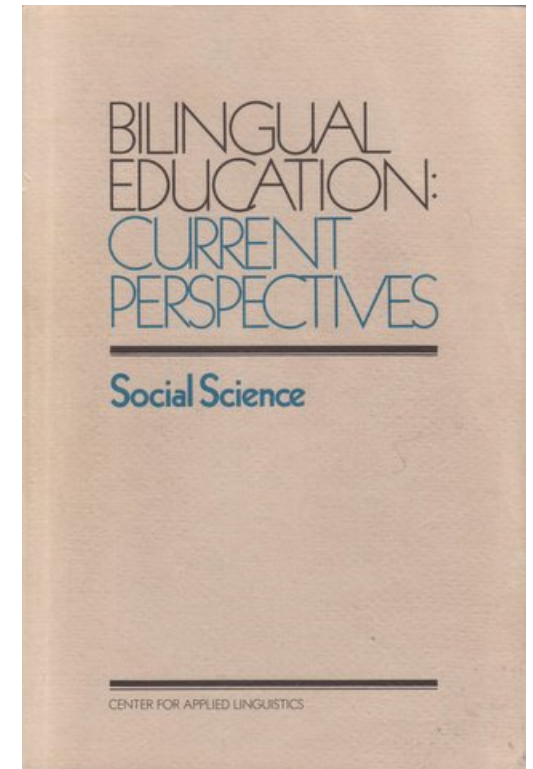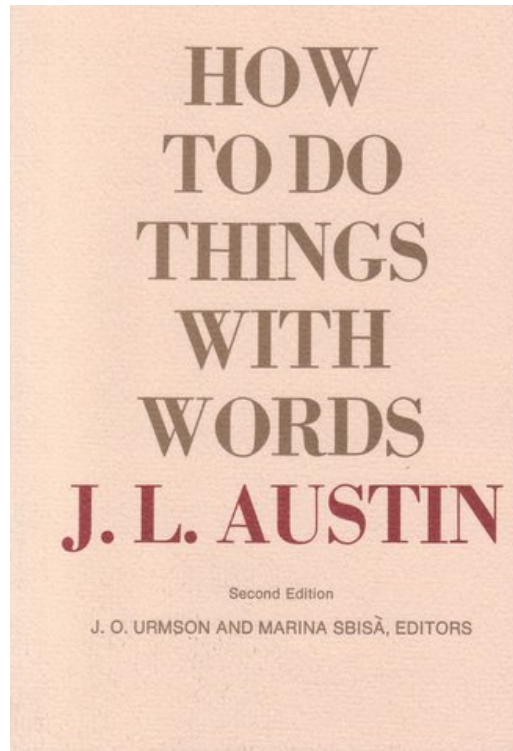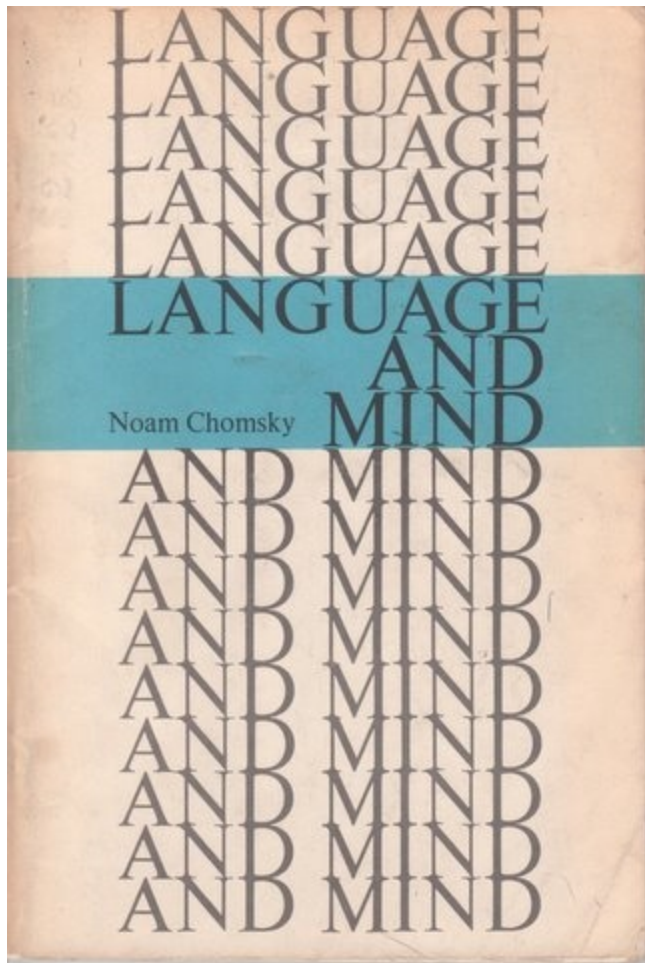
2011

1974

Some Core Epistemological Foundations

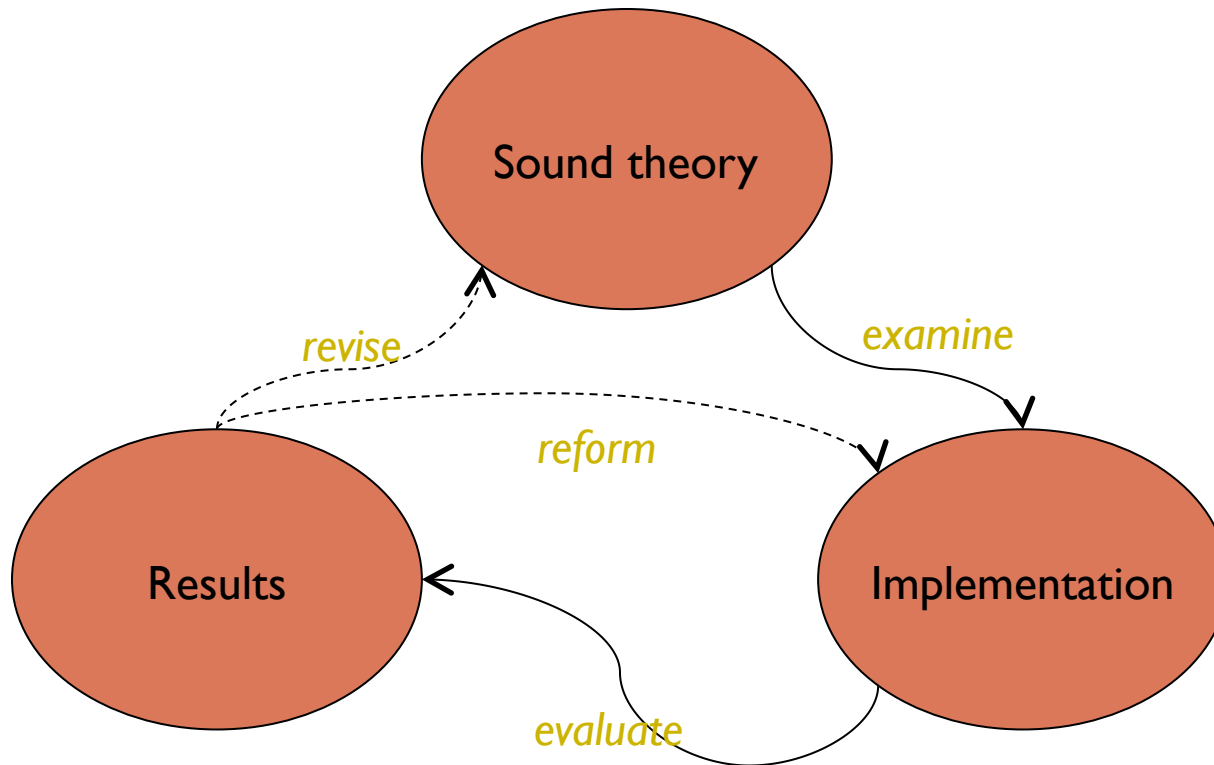# Lau v. Nichols (1974)

There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education.

Castañeda v. Pickard

648 F.2d 989; 1981 U.S.

Continuing dominance of "language of instruction" debate and time frame expectation.

1974

1998

A Nation at Risk (1983)... call for standards

Figure 1. Members of the National Commission on Excellence in Education with Terrel Bell (Secretary of Education) April 26, 1983.

Back Row: L. to R: Bill Baker, Robert Haderlein, Gerald Holton, Glenn Seaborg, Al Quie, Emeral Crosby, Charles Foster, and Anne Campbell

Front Row: L to R: Norman Francis, Annette Kirk, Margaret Marston, Yvonne Larsen, David Gardner, Terrel Bell, Jay Sommer, Shirley Gordon, and Frank Sanchez

Stanford Working Group (1992)
## ... inclusion of ELLs

No Child Left Behind

No Child Left Behind:
Three important pieces for ELLs

- Sec. 1111(a)(3)(ix)(III) the inclusion of limited English proficient students, who shall be assessed in a valid and reliable manner and provided reasonable accommodations on assessments administered … including, to the extent practicable, assessments in the language and form most likely to yield accurate data…

- Sec. 1111(a)(3)(xiii) enable results to be disaggregated within each State, local educational agency, and school by…English proficiency status.

- Sec 3113(b)(2) standards and objectives for raising the level of English proficiency that are derived from the four recognized domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, and that are aligned with achievement of the challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards described in section 1111(b)(1).

Common Core State Standards
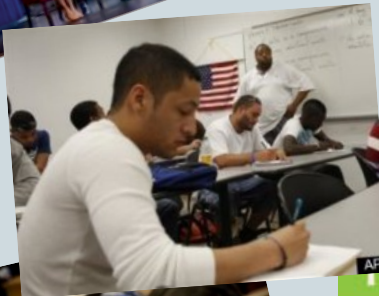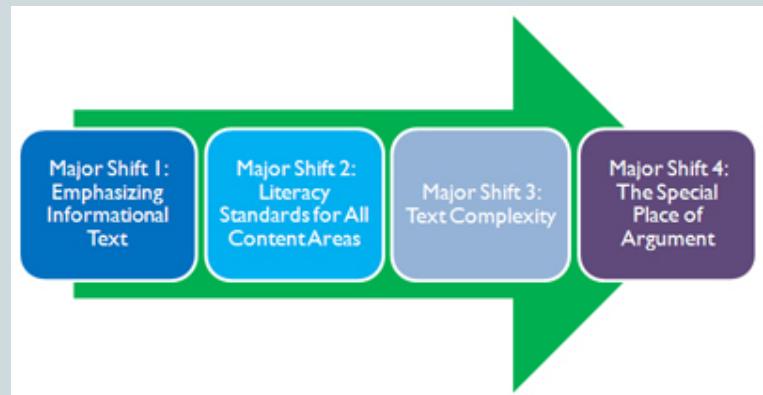
Language and Meaning:
You need language ...

- to communicate with those around you.

- to express and demonstrate to others what you know and learn (discussions, presentations, written work, tests, etc.).

- to learn from teachers, peers, and texts (textbooks, materials, things you find on-line).

- to remember and organize your thoughts about what you learn.

Language and Meaning…
are each complicated in their own way.

- **Language:** We need to learn thousands of words, many with multiple meanings and complex relationships to each other. Even more, we have to put these words together in phrases, sentences, charts and diagrams that in turn build explanations, narratives, discussions, and arguments.

- **Meaning:** Content learning does not exist in isolation. We learn by relating new knowledge to existing knowledge. Language is our essential tool for pulling together different strands of meaning.

The New Standards...

- raise the bar for teaching and learning, and make education more relevant to a globalized, interconnected, highly competitive world.
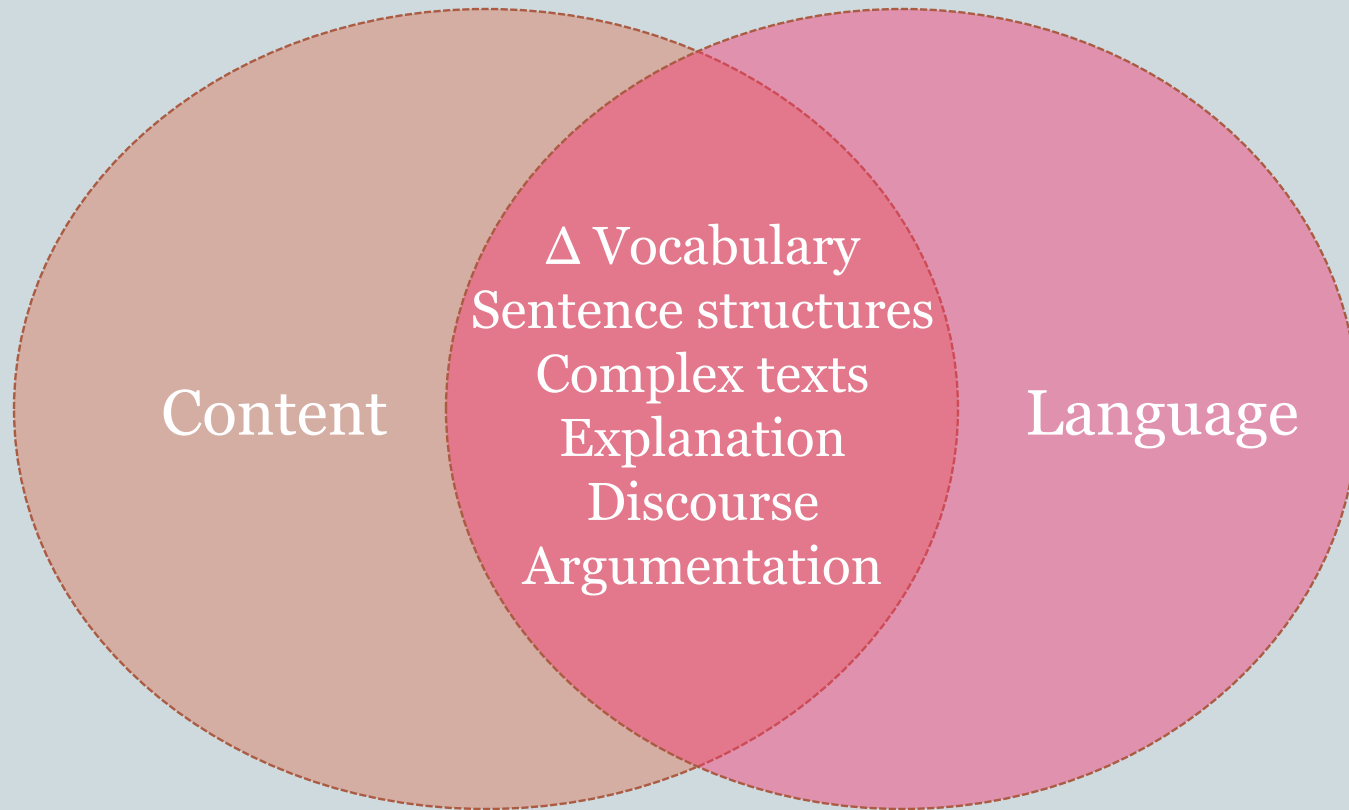
- pose very large challenges for everyone, in part because they call for increased language capacities in combination with content sophistication.

Old Paradigm

New Paradigm

Content

Language

Δ Vocabulary
Sentence structures
Complex texts
Explanation
Discourse
Argumentation
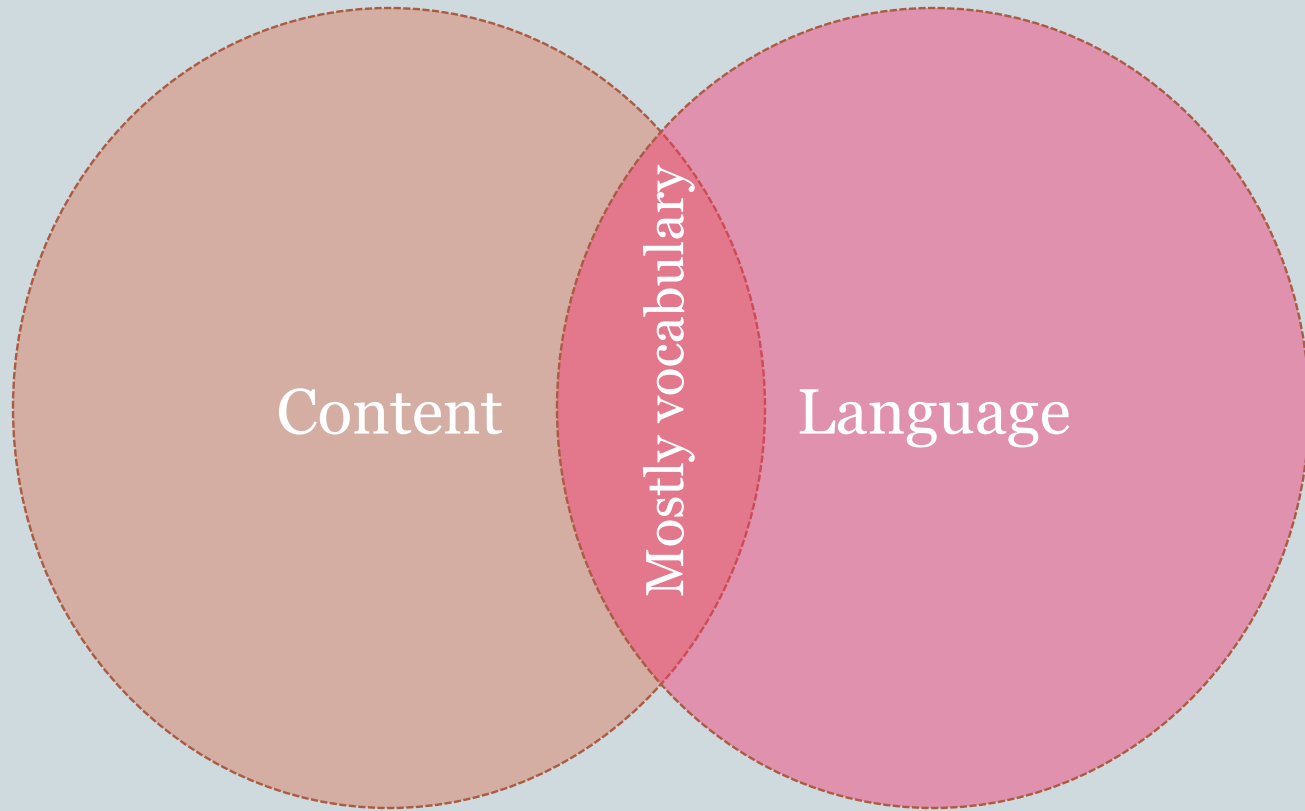
Challenges for Students:
They need to…

- extract meaning from complex texts.

- explain and demonstrate their knowledge using complex language in varying contexts.

- engage in productive group work with peers and effective interactions with teachers.

Challenges for Teachers :
They need to…

- teach for understanding and productive application –much more complicated than teaching bits and pieces of knowledge and skills.

- see themselves as teachers of language in addition to their traditional identity as teachers of their content area.

- develop new ways of motivating and enabling students to use language in the classroom to perform in the content areas.

Challenges for Support Systems

- Existing ways to support teachers and administrators – through coaching and supervision, professional learning communities, and professional development opportunities – must attune to and build capacity to meet the increased demands surrounding content and language.

Challenges for Publishers

- Existing materials are inadequately matched to the new content, particularly as the new content will include far greater use of language.

- Current strategies to make materials more accessible for ELLs (e.g., glossaries and highlighted vocabulary) are inadequate to address the language demands inherent in the new standards.

Challenges for Assessment Systems

- The new content assessments:
  - must yield valid inferences for ELL students at varying levels of English language proficiency.
  - must be unbiased with respect to language, even while language has become part of the new definition of content!
- The new English language proficiency assessments:
  - must reflect and measure the language demands inherent in the content standards.
  - must capture the breadth, depth, and complexity of receptive and productive language capacities.

The Potential of Technology

Technology can increase opportunities for students to engage with and build capacity in language by:

- Building background knowledge through multimedia
- Creating compelling presentations
- Building models (especially in science and math)
- Participating in online communities (speaking, writing and responding to others)
- Providing automated searching and sorting of texts digitized speech materials to support learning.

ELL Students have rights to an appropriate education (not just the same education)

- Teachers
- Materials
- Formative assessment
- Tests
- Systems
- Technology

Goals of the Project

- **Teachers:** tools and models to support aspects of the new standards where language plays key roles.
- **Materials:** guidance to publishers and developers on strategic ways to support ELLs.
- **Formative assessment:** strategies for identifying targeted language support for ELL students at different levels of English language proficiency.
- **Tests:** support to content and language assessment developers to identify key areas of overlap between content and language that might provide linkage between the two systems.
- **Systems:** strategies for school systems to provide comprehensive support for ELLs as they implement the new standards.
- **Technology:** uses of technology to help students and teachers negotiate and make sense of the language and text complexities embedded in the new standards.

Activities of the Project

- A national dialogue.
- Instructional exemplars of language and content support.
- Web-based community.
- District engagement in implementation.
- Guidance on instruction and assessment policy and practice.

English Language Learners and the Common Core State Standards

2011

1974