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**e-Lective Language Learning:**

**Developing Academic Language Proficiency through  
Self-regulated Learning**

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# What Is e-Lective and How Does It Connect to DynEd?

- e-Lective uses written text as input for language learning.
  - By means of built-in supports, it enables learners to read and understand texts that would otherwise have been too difficult.
  - Developed by Jim Cummins (Toronto) and Sotirios Chascas (Rhodes, Greece).
  - The name “e-Lective” incorporates 3 core features of the system.
  - Intended for learners who have gone beyond the beginner stage and have gained some degree of listening comprehension in the target language.
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# What Is e-Lective and How Does It Connect to DynEd?

- online dictionaries and voice support help learners gain access to textual meanings (= comprehensible input).
  - The system then generates activities that are individualized for each learner, enabling learners to “harvest” the vocabulary that they previously did not know.
  - Any text (in rtf format) can be entered into the system and readability/difficulty levels are automatically computed.
  - The system also identifies high frequency, low frequency, and academic words in each text.
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# Who Is the “Target Learner” for e-Lective?

- All learners who want to pursue the learning of English (or other languages) beyond a basic conversational level.
  - All learners (“ESL” and “EFL”) who need to acquire English for academic purposes (e.g. high school graduation, TOEFL test, community college, etc.).
  - Individuals who want to read original texts (e.g. novels) in English and expand their language knowledge at the same time.
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# Central Rationale

- English is a hybrid language – the basic high frequency conversational vocabulary comes from Anglo-Saxon roots while the low frequency academic vocabulary comes from Latin and Greek roots.
  - Written text relies predominantly on Latin and Greek vocabulary whereas this vocabulary is rarely used in everyday conversation (e.g. **meet vs. encounter; speed vs. velocity; etc.**).
  - In order to expand vocabulary and knowledge of more complex grammatical rules, learners have to be reading extensively because these aspects of language are found almost exclusively in written text.
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# What Is English Language Proficiency?

## Conversational Fluency

- The ability to carry on a conversation in familiar face-to-face situations;
  - Developed by the vast majority of native speakers by the time they enter school at age 5;
  - Involves use of high frequency words and simple grammatical constructions;
  - ESL (immigrant) students typically require 1-2 years to attain peer-appropriate levels.
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# A. What Is English Language Proficiency?

## Discrete Language Skills

- Refers to the rule-governed aspects of language (phonological awareness, phonics, spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.);
  - Can be developed in two independent ways: (a) by direct instruction, and (b) through immersion in a literacy-rich home or school environment where meanings are elaborated through language and attention is drawn to literate forms of language (e.g. letters on the pages of books);
  - English learners can learn these specific language skills concurrently with their development of basic vocabulary and conversational fluency. However, there is little direct transference to other aspects of language proficiency (e.g. vocabulary).
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# A. What Is English Language Proficiency?

## Academic Language Proficiency

- Includes knowledge of the less frequent vocabulary of English as well as the ability to interpret and produce increasingly complex written language;
  - English learners typically require at least 5 years to attain grade expectations in language and literacy skills;
  - Because academic language is found primarily in books, extensive reading is crucial in enabling students to catch up;
  - Frequent writing, across genres, is also crucial in developing academic writing skills. Writing facilitates corrective feedback which is much more difficult to provide in authentic spoken language situations
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## Social Studies Vocabulary (grade 5)

<b>amend</b> <b>annexation</b> <b>bombarded</b>	<b>boundary</b> <b>colonist</b> <b>cavalry</b>	<b>compromise</b> <b>commerce</b> <b>constitution</b>	<b>consultation</b> <b>convention</b> <b>convince</b>
<b>declaration</b> <b>dissolved</b> <b>dynasty</b>	<b>independence</b> <b>induced</b> <b>inference</b>	<b>perpetual</b> <b>petition</b> <b>preamble</b>	<b>ratify</b> <b>rebellion</b> <b>representatives</b>
<b>resolution</b> <b>revolt</b> <b>revolution</b>	<b>sentiments</b> <b>siege</b> <b>skirmish</b>	<b>statement</b> <b>surveyor</b> <b>sustain</b>	<b>traditions</b> <b>treaty</b> <b>tyrants</b>

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# The Centrality of Extensive Reading

**Academic Graeco-Latin words are mainly literary in their use.**

**Most native speakers of English begin to encounter these words in quantity in their upper primary school reading and in the formal secondary school setting.**

**So the words' introduction in literature or textbooks, rather than in conversation, restricts people's access to them.**

**Certainly, exposure to specialist Graeco-Latin words happens much more often while reading than while talking or watching television. ...Printed texts provided much more exposure to [Graeco-Latin] words than oral ones.**

**For example, even children's books contained 50% more rare words than either adult prime-time television or the conversations of university graduates; popular magazines had three times as many rare words as television and informal conversation (Corson, 1997, p. 677).**

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# Empirical Support for the Role of Engaged Reading

Drawing on both the 1998 NAEP data from the United States and the results of the PISA student of reading achievement in international contexts, Guthrie (2004, p. 5) notes that students

“...whose family background was characterized by low income and low education, but who were highly engaged readers, substantially outscored students who came from backgrounds with higher education and higher income, but who themselves were less engaged readers. Based on a massive sample, this finding suggests the stunning conclusion that engaged reading can overcome traditional barriers to reading achievement, including gender, parental education, and income.”

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