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## INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION ISSUES BRIEF ON IMPORTANCE OF VOCABULARY AND ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN SECOND-LANGUAGE LEARNING

NEWARK, Del. (October 17, 2017) — To progress in developing both receptive and productive language skills, students need ample opportunities for language use in authentic and communicative contexts, ILA stated in a brief released yesterday. One of these contexts is academic language, or the language needed to read, write and respond to original academic and literary texts.

“Most second-language learners are not going to come across academic language in their conversations at home, with friends, or on TV. Academic language isn’t just helpful to academic success—it’s a prerequisite,” says ILA Executive Director Marcie Craig Post. “As educators, we need to provide supportive learning environments where students can gain exposure to, and practice, more challenging discourse.”

According to the brief, oral language proficiency is critical for advancing second-language learners’ academic success, and vocabulary is a core component of oral proficiency.

The brief recommends that educators build students’ vocabulary by teaching *word learning skills*, or strategies that help students infer the meanings of words they do not recognize, and by fostering *incidental language learning*, which occurs during meaningful reading experiences, often accompanied by discussion and writing.

As with vocabulary, intentional learning tends to be the most effective means of oral language development. The brief states that students reach a higher level of oral language development when they engage in authentic discussion, which allows them to grapple with concepts, practice new words and language features, make connections and study others’ verbal behaviors.

As students strengthen vocabulary and other oral language skills, their reading and writing skills are more likely to improve.

To read more, visit the brief [here](#).

### ***About the International Literacy Association***

The International Literacy Association (ILA) is a global advocacy and membership organization dedicated to advancing literacy for all through its network of more than 300,000 literacy educators, researchers and experts across 78 countries. With over 60 years of experience, ILA has set the standard for how literacy is defined, taught and evaluated. ILA collaborates with partners across the world to develop, gather and disseminate high-quality resources, best practices and cutting-edge research to empower educators, inspire students and inform policymakers. ILA publishes *The Reading Teacher*, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* and *Reading Research Quarterly*, which are peer reviewed and edited by leaders in the field. For more information, visit [literacyworldwide.org](http://literacyworldwide.org).

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