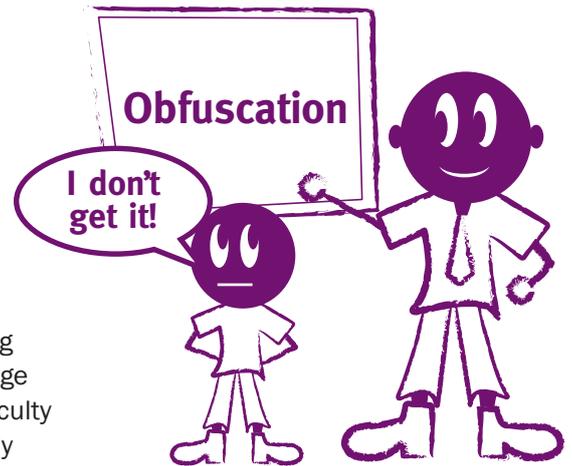


- Students having access to strategies that will help them manage their language difficulties without having to be withdrawn from class
- Facilitating the improvement of oral and written language skills in all students, including those with no language difficulty. (Throneburg et. al., 2000).

The ‘language-friendly’ secondary classroom: Improving curriculum accessibility for students with LI

The Linking Language with Secondary School Learning Program was developed to address support challenges, and incorporates many of the recommended approaches to ensuring effective inclusionary support of secondary students with LI.

Students with oral and written language difficulty often do not have the skills needed for the proficient understanding and learning of the secondary academic curriculum. They may find new vocabulary and terminology overly complex, and the rate of delivery and amount of information presented at any one time too demanding. They may be challenged with processing and retaining information, also with demonstrating their knowledge through oral and written expression. Students with language difficulty may not even attempt a task if they think they cannot successfully undertake and complete it.



Making the curriculum more accessible to students with additional learning needs such as LI aims to:

- Reduce the likelihood of failure by increasing opportunities for the students’ academic achievement
- Increase the students’ classroom engagement in all oral and written language-based activities
- Address the impact of disengagement and failure on students’ behaviour and mental health.

Secondary school teachers are often wary of adjusting the way they present curriculum content. They may be concerned that they are not fulfilling curricular directives or that they are being unfair to other students with no additional learning needs. However, in this program, increased accessibility to the curriculum is brought about through teachers applying instructional language modification techniques to their regular teaching practices, not by making changes to the curriculum content. Additionally, curriculum accessibility involves having realistic expectations of what each student can achieve, and the amount of support needed for the task, thereby giving the targeted students the right tools to become more able learners.

Most importantly, teachers’ use of instructional language modification strategies has been found to improve curriculum access for the benefit of entire classes, not just targeted students (Starling et al., 2012).