Context:

Effective programs for English learners

"What does the research say about effective programs for English-language learners?" The answer to this frequently-asked question becomes even more critical as high-stakes testing drives instructional choices and policy decisions. Unfortunately, it is difficult to provide the questioner with a cogent response that avoids promoting a favored approach.

Usually we refer the question-askers to one of several recognized authorities *or* to the ERIC website [http://www.accesseric.org] *or* to the Center for Applied Linguistics website [http://www.cal.org] *or* to James Crawford's website [http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/JWCRAWFORD] *or* to one of the ten Regional Educational Laboratories [http://www.relnetwork.org] *or* we talk fast about concepts that come quickly to mind. From now on, we'll recommend that the curious get a copy of the National Research Council's *Improving Schooling for Language-Minority Children: A Research Agenda* (National Academy Press, 1997), edited by Diane August and Kenji Hakuta.

This book, funded by federal agencies and private foundations, represents the work of a national committee for analyzing and prioritizing research needs related to the success of English learners and bilingual students. Members of the committee are experts in language development, cognitive development, bilingual education, immigrant education, minority child development, education evaluation, and student demographics. The elements of effectiveness were derived from 33 studies.

The committee reviewed what is known about the linguistic, cognitive, and social processes involved in the education of English learners. This background information is presented in a concise manner, with attention to the research strengths and weaknesses that underlie various conclusions.

This book is a valuable resource and is easily comprehended, but the question-asker (teacher, administrator, parent, journalist, foundation board member, employer, neighbor) might not have the time or inclination to find and read the report. In keeping with the goal of the Southeast Asia Community Resource Center to make information quickly and easily accessible, this issue of *Context* provides an outline of the key points of the report that relate to the essentials of effective programs for English learners.

At the same time, this outline demonstrates a strategy that a teacher of English learners in a subject matter class can use to demonstrate the relationships between the parts of a complex topic and to let students know which parts the teacher considers important to study. Like sheltered English students, the *Context* reader who has plenty of prior experience and background knowledge will be able to attach more meaning to this outline than a person who has no "prior schooling" in this area.

The report is available online at http://www.nap.edu/books/0309054974/html or can be purchased from the National Academy Press.

Acquisition of a second language

- When controlled for socioeconomic status, there are no negative effects of learning a second language; some cognitive benefits.
- Acquisition is influenced by linguistic + cognitive + social factors.
- Older children acquire 2nd language faster.
- First language proficiency predicts better second language acquisition.
- Age and ability have an effect on second language acquisition; personality and attitude don't, consistently.
- Very fast shift to English among immigrants in the US; native language fluency minimal by the grandchild's generation.
- Native language preschool does not delay English acquisition.

Effective schools & classrooms for English learners

- Supportive schoolwide climate.
- School leadership.
- Customized learning environment.
- Articulation and coordination within and between schools.
- Some use of the native language and culture in instruction.
- Explicit skills instruction + student-directed activities
- Strategies that enhance understanding.
- Opportunities for practice.
- Systematic student assessment.
- Staff development.
- Home/parent connections.

Supportive schoolwide climate

- Value placed on linguistic and cultural backgrounds of English learners.
- High expectations for English learners' achievement
- Integral involvement of English learners in overall school operation.
- Teacher expectations raised by creating structures that result in higher student achievement.

School leadership

- "…someone assumed leadership for planning, coordinating, and administering the program…"
- Principal makes English learner achievement a priority (time/resources).
- ... provides ongoing direction & monitoring.
- ... recruits and keeps talented, dedicated staff.
- ... involves entire staff in improvement
- ... provides good physical and social setting.
- ... provides support and exerts pressure.

Customized learning environment

- Should reflect school & community context and goals.
- Should meet diverse needs of students. No one way to educate English learners.
- Identify conditions, adapt models.
- Have a plan for newcomers.

Customized learning environment: Secondary schools

- Variety in courses offered.
- Native language development, ESL, content instruction.
- Advanced as well as low-level.
- Variety in approaches to teaching content.

Articulation and coordination

- Smooth transition between levels of English language development (ELD).
- Smooth transition between elementary, middle, high school.
- Collaboration between content and ELD teachers, integrated ELD/content.

Use of native language, culture

- At a minimum, native language used to clarify and elaborate.
- Environments use native languages for many purposes and functions.
- Models: initial literacy instruction in native language; initital literacy instruction in English: both effective.
- Adapt instruction to cognitive styles, sociolinguistic patterns (reduce mismatch).
- Home culture is seen as a resource to build

on, not a liability to remediate.

Explicit skills instruction

- Phonics, word recognition, comprehension skills, writing conventions, etc.

- Active teaching. Teacher sets and articulates learning goals, actively assesses student progress, frequently makes class presentations, illustrating how to do assigned work.

- Substantial time allocated to explicit skills instruction.

Student-directed activities

- Production of oral and written English.

- Exchange of ideas, use of instructional conversations.

- Cooperative learning, peer teaching, partner reading, and so on.

Strategies to enhance understanding

- Teach metacognitive skills.

- Use routines and written cues.

- Adjust the level of vocabulary and structure.

- Use explicit discourse markers ("first," "next," "most important," and so on).

- Use language in ways that reveal its structure.

- Discuss vocabulary and structure explicitly.

- Demonstrate, explain what to do.

- Provide background knowledge.

- Use manipulatives, pictures, objects, graphic organizers.

Opportunities for practice

- Build redundancy into activities (rehearsal).

- Set up situations that require interaction with English-speaking peers.

- Focus on content of response, not correctness of language (in content classes), align response expectation to level of language proficiency.

- Require frequent writing to explain, communicate, elaborate.

- Ask followup questions that require elaboration, clarification.

Systematic student assessment

- Assess frequently.

- Use results to plan activities.

- Find a way to discuss student progress with other teachers regularly.

- Agree on end results and align teaching.

Staff development

- Plan activities to be characteristic of effective staff development programs.

- Help teachers gain skills that raise student achievement, which leads to higher expectations, rather than just telling them to have higher expectations.

- Involve all teachers, not just teachers of English learners.

- Recruit excellent content teachers, train them in English language development strategies.

- Avoid assumptions about students, rather interview parents and community members to identify local knowledge, values, beliefs, choices.

Home/parent connections

- Recognize parent contributions that are not visible to school.

- Align school expectations with parental efforts (volunteering in class is not the only way that parents contribute).

- Provide specific training on cognitive or academic learning at home.

- Avoid implicit criticism or disapproval with school choice of topics; rather involve parents in identifying topics.

- Arrange for many kinds of connections.

2 scenarios for acquisition of reading

- Psycholinguistic

  Explicit instruction of subprocesses.

  Begins with phoneme and builds to passage ("bottom up").

  Proficiency develops through stages.

  Basal readers, leveled books.

- Social practice

  Literacy emerges from social interaction.

  Begins with passage, moves to words and sounds ("top down").

  Literature, trade books, natural language.

Prerequisites for reading

- Exposure to literacy.

- Abstract knowledge of sound and structure of language.
- Certain level of vocabulary development.
- Skills in oral connected discourse.

Exposure to literacy

- Literate households, communities.

  Child has been read to.

  Child's parents use literacy regularly.
- Understanding of literacy's role in life. Cultural meanings of literacy in the child's community. May be conflict between home and school assumptions about literacy's role & value.

Abstract knowledge of sounds

- Ability to segment into phonemic units.

  Bilingualism promotes this ability.

  Phoneme segmentation transfers across languages under certain circumstances.
- Vocabulary knowledge predicts reading ability—reading aptitude or mark of parental education and socioeconomic status?

  English vocabulary knowledge is primary determinant of English learner reading comprehension.

  Cognates help comprehension.

Oral connected discourse skills

- Uses oral language for nonpresent listeners.
- Recognizes (cultural styles) of genres.
- High transfer of oral discourse skills if both languages are used in educational settings; less so if one is for school, one for home.
- Instruction in second language comprehension can improve second language oral skills.
- Second language oral proficiency related to higher second language reading comprehension for some language groups, not all; less so for older first-language literate students.

Does first language help second language reading?

- First-language literates are better second-language readers (comprehension).
- They focus on unknown words.

  ... use cognates.

  ... monitor comprehension.

  ... make inferences.

  ... actively use prior knowledge.

Initial reading instruction

- Most children learn to read under a wide variety of instructional procedures, even second language before first language.
- Eclectic method is best: embedding direct instruction in meaningful activities.
- English learners with 2-3 years of instruction before arrival in US do better academically.
- Risk factors for poor reading skills:

  Lack of explicit instruction in orthography.

  Absence of background knowledge and skills from literate community,

  Little semantic support (meanings).

Skilled readers

- Fast & efficient decoding & recognition.
- Know more vocabulary.
- Use metacognitive strategies.
- Focus on high-information words.
- Familiar with content.
- Familiar with features of text structure.

Content learning

- Integrate subject matter terminology into ELD classes or integrate content and ELD.
- Transfer of knowledge is quick; developing knowledge is slow; prior knowledge is a significant factor.
- Little research in this area.

Social nature of learning

- There are unwritten rules for classroom talk

  Can be a mismatch (turn-taking, volume).

  Can't assume all are aware of the same rules.

  Classroom talk needs to seem familiar to child, contain familiar structures.

  Talk is for constructing knowledge (different function than talk as social "glue.")
- Keep classroom routine, predictable (child understands goals).
- Encourage assisted performance ("performance before competence")
- Integrate community "funds of knowledge."

Renew subscription to *Context*

This is the final issue of Volume 19 (October 1998 to September 1999). To continue receiving a print copy of *Context*, individual subscribers should return this subscription form, with a check or purchase order for $15.00. This represents an increase from the rate that has been in place for fifteen years.

The Department of Education provides one copy to EIEP coordinators, 2-way program coordinators, county coordinators, Title VII project directors. There is no need for these people to subscribe individually.

Teachers, parents, and others in Folsom Cordova USD may receive a subscription for free by contacting Nguyet Tham at 635-6815 or SEACRC@ns.net. This benefit is the result of the district's support for the production and distribution of this publication.

Some districts support the operation of the Southeast Asia Community Resource Center and receive mass subscriptions. Districts and organizations that provided support from October 1998 to September 1999 are listed on the back page. These districts received a subscription for every $10.00 of support. Generally, districts then provided one or more copies per school. Most figured 1% of their EIEP entitlement as a reasonable amount. Support has provided: part-time clerk, checkout of materials, distribution of the Hmong Literacy Development Materials, and development of the website.

The schedule for Volume 20 (October 1999 to September 2000) is:

Volume 20, Number 138 (Oct/Nov): Linguistic demographics (language census, 1999)

Volume 20, Number 139 (Dec/Jan): Year of the Dragon (stories, proverbs)

Volume 20, Number 140 (Feb/Mar): Heritage language programs; high school language credit

Volume 20, Number 142 (Apr/May): Immigrant demographics (EIEP census, 2000)

Volume 20, Number 143 (Aug/Sep): To be determined

Each issue contains Emergency Immigrant Education Program updates, resources, and a feature article on education and new immigrants. Typical sections include background information, cultural and linguistic comparisons, essential points of current research and recommendations, strategies for instruction, internet resources.

Make checks or purchase orders payable to Folsom Cordova USD/SEACRC. Mail to 2460 Cordova Lane, Rancho Cordova CA 95670. For questions, call 916.635.6815 or email SEACRC@ns.net.
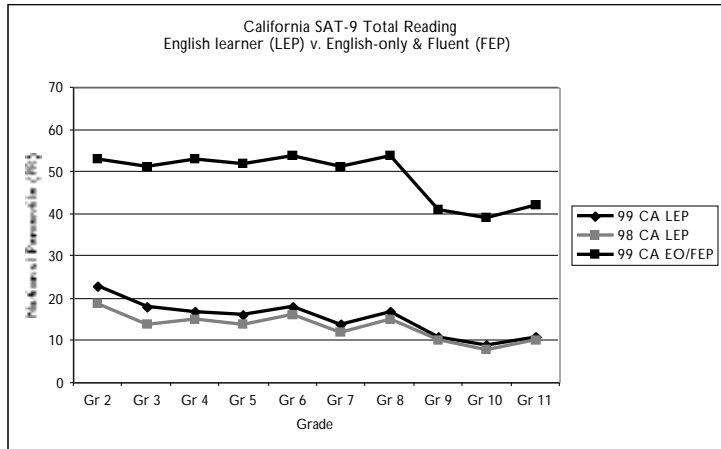
SUBSCRIBE

INDIVIDUAL SUBSCRIPTION

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

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SOUTHEAST ASIA COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER SUPPORT (MASS SUBSCRIPTION)

ORGANIZATION NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

PHONE: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____

AMOUNT OF SUPPORT FOR OCTOBER 1999 TO SEPTEMBER 2000: _____
(recommend 1% of current EIEP amount)

NUMBER OF CONTEXTS _____ (Divide support amount by $12.00). Attach list of addresses if you want us to mail them directly. Otherwise we will mail them all to you at the above address for internal distribution.)

SAT-9 reading results for

LEP v. EO/FEP students

California SAT-9 Total Reading
English learner (LEP) v. English-only & Fluent (FEP)

Legend:
- 99 CA LEP
- 98 CA LEP
- 99 CA EO/FEP

(Line chart: National Percentile (NP) on y-axis 0–70, Grade on x-axis Gr 2–Gr 11)

All we can really say is that the recent Stanford Achievement Test, given to 93.2% of California students in grades 2-11, validated that students labeled as LEP (limited English proficient) do not read English as well as English-only and fluent English proficient (FEP) students. Teachers know this.

What teachers would like to know is how former English learners (i.e., FEP students) perform in comparison to English-only students. They would also like to know if performance has changed over the past year. It would be helpful to know how LEP students read after 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10 years of schooling. It is helpful to know how one's district compares statewide or to other districts. Finally, it would be useful to compare the English reading skills of children of literate vs. non-literate parents.

English learners took the SAT-9 along with all other students, except for those whose parents requested that their children not be tested and except for LEP students in their first two years in the US in certain districts covered by a court order. For Spanish-speakers in California for less than a year, there was a Spanish test; for all others, the test was in English. While it's tempting to regard numerical statements as "truth," there are considerations that are important when drawing conclusions from the data:
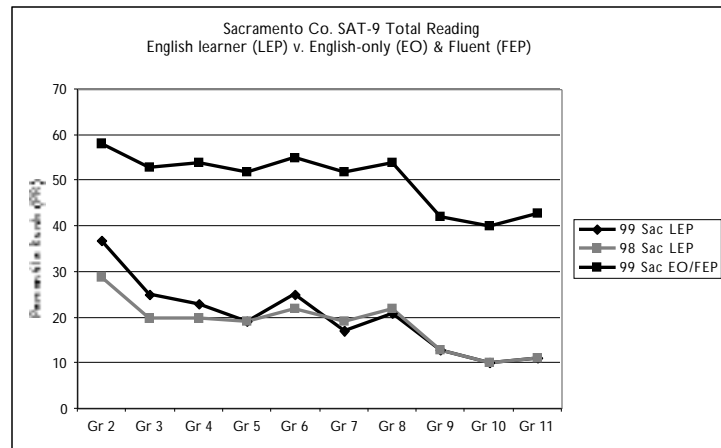
- Comparisons between years or districts/schools must include the percent of students tested. In four Sacramento County districts, the overall percent of students tested varied from 93.5% to 96.7%; the percentage of LEP students

tested in these four districts varied from about 60% to 80% (Number of LEP students tested was divided by the number of LEP students reported on the March 1998 R-30 census, 15 months earlier.) Why the difference? Number of parental "opt out" requests, number of special ed students in self-contained classes, number of Spanish-speakers in their first year in California who took the achievement test in Spanish. In 1999, 419,550 tests, about 10% of the total, were not averaged with either LEP or non-LEP, because there was no proficiency indicator blackened in on the student's score sheets.

- The SAT-9 tells us how our students did compared to a national sample that contained about 2% LEP—not 25% LEP as in California. In addition, most LEP students in the national sample were those at intermediate to advanced levels of English proficiency; in California LEP students included those at beginning levels of English.

- The "LEP" category does not include those who have been successful, skewing the results. There should be a category for those who have "finished" their acquisition of English (have been redesignated as "FEP").

- LEP students, by definition, perform below the majority of their English-only peers in the four areas of language—one of which is reading. The criteria for redesignating a LEP student to an FEP student is a local district decision, not a statewide decision, limiting generalization to the district level.

Want to compare your county or district or school? Go to the Ed-Data website (http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us/star_top.asp) and print out your charts. Or, write down the averge percentile ranks (NP or PR) for each grade level for 99 Total Reading (LEP and nonLEP) and 98 Total Reading (LEP). Use a colored pen to plot the scores on the California chart or on the Sacramento County chart.

Sacramento Co. SAT-9 Total Reading
English learner (LEP) v. English-only (EO) & Fluent (FEP)

Legend:
- 99 Sac LEP
- 98 Sac LEP
- 99 Sac EO/FEP

(Line chart: Percentile Rank (PR) on y-axis 0–70, Grade on x-axis Gr 2–Gr 11)

ELD Standards Adopted

The standards:

- Were approved by California State Board of Education in July 1999.

- Will be used to develop the California English Language Development Examinations that all ELL students will take.

- Identify skills for 5 proficiency levels:

  beginning,

  early intermediate,

  intermediate,

  early advanced, and

  advanced.

- Identify standards for grade ranges K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12.

- Are designed for students in grades 3–12 who are literate in their primary language. For ELL students who enter California schools in grades 3-12 *not* literate in their primary languages, the ELD literacy standards for earlier grades including those related to phonemic awareness, concepts of print and decoding skills apply.

- Explicitly state what it is that all ELLs need to know and be able to do as they learn English and also move toward mastery of the California English Language Arts standards for their grades.

- Integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

- Require that ELL students learn to read in English while simultaneously acquiring oral English fluency.

- Require that ELL students in kindergarten through grade two demonstrate proficiency on the phonemic awareness, decoding, and concepts of print ELA standards appropriate for their grade levels.

- Require that ELLs in grades three through twelve demonstrate proficiency on these essential beginning reading skills by the time they achieve the early intermediate proficiency level of the ELD standards. This is true for students who enter school literate and not literate in their primary language.

The ELD standards are availabe online in "pdf" format. Go to http://www.cde.ca.gov and follow the links to standards and accountability, English learner resources, or the state board of education.

Sample of English Language Development Standards in Reading Comprehension, for 2 of 5 levels of proficiency

LEVEL 1: BEGINNING
Comprehension

Grades K–2	Grades 3–5	Grades 6–8	Grades 9–12
Respond orally to stories read to them, using physical actions and other non-verbal communication (e.g., matching, pointing, drawing).	Respond orally to stories read to them by answering factual comprehension questions, using one- or two-word responses.	Read and orally respond to simple text by answering factual comprehension questions using key words or phrases.	Understand and follow simple multi-step oral directions.
Respond orally to stories read to them by answering factual comprehension questions using one- or two-word responses.	Orally identify relationship between simple text read to them and their own experience using key words and/or phrases.	Understand and follow simple multi-step oral directions.	
Draw pictures from student's own experience related to a story or topic.	Understand and follow simple one-step directions.		
Understand and follow simple one-step directions.			

LEVEL 4: EARLY ADVANCED
Comprehension & Analysis of Grade-Level Appropriate Text

K-2	3-5	6-8	9-12
Read and use detailed sentences to orally identify the main idea and use the idea to draw inferences about text.	Describe main ideas and supporting details of a text.	Identify and explain the main ideas and critical details of informational materials, literary texts, and texts in content areas.	Apply knowledge of language to achieve meaning/comprehension from informational materials, literary texts, and texts in content areas.
Read and orally respond to stories by answering factual comprehension questions about cause and effect relationships.	Generate and respond to comprehension questions related to the text.		
Write a brief story summary (three or four complete sentences).	Describe relationships between text and their experience.		

Comprehension

K-2	3-5
Read and use basic text features such as title, table of contents, and chapter headings.	Locate and identify the function of text features such as format, diagrams, charts, glossaries, and indexes.

Comprehension & Analysis of Grade-Level Appropriate Text & Expository Critique

K-2	3-5	9-12
Read and orally respond to stories and texts from content areas by restating facts and details to clarify ideas.	Use resources in the text (such as ideas, illustrations, titles, etc.) to draw conclusions and make inferences.	Analyze the structure and format of workplace documents, and how authors use these to achieve their purposes.
	Distinguish between explicit examples of fact, opinions, inference, and cause/effect in texts.	Prepare an oral and written report which evaluates the credibility of an author's argument or defense of a claim (include a bibliography).

Resources

Children's Multicultural Literature

The June issue of the *Multicultural Review* (Vol. 8, No. 2) contains several articles on themes in multicultural children's literature. The focus is using stories to address cultural diversity. For subscription information and free sample copies go online to http://www.mcreview.com.

SACBEE Resources

Judy Green publishes a weekly article for the *Sacramento Bee* entitled "The Young Library." She frequently reviews children's books appropriate for and about immigrant and language minority children. Judy Green typically provides short description for each publication as well as ordering information. Examples of her recent articles are: "Mixed-Race People, Real and Fictionalized" (7/1/99) and "Culture and Courage Highlight Picture Books" (6/27/99).

Judy Green's articles for the past six months is maintained on the website at: http://www.sacbee.com. (Once at the site, do a search for "Judy Green.") Print articles can be ordered for $1.95 each.

Building Cultural Bridges

The upcoming winter 1999 edition (Vol. 3, No. 2) of *Reaching Today's Youth* features a series of interesting articles on cross-cultural education. Articles include:

> *Beyond the Tip of the Iceberg: Five Stages Toward Cultural Competence* (Jerome Hanley);
>
> *Overcoming Hidden Biases in the Classroom* (Naomi Tyler);
>
> *Through the Eyes of Children: A Model Project for Spanning Cultural Gaps* (Elba Maldonado-Colon); and
>
> *Mixed-Race Children: Building Bridges to New Identities* (Carlos Cortés).

Reaching Today's Youth is published by the National Education Service, which produces other materials and sponsors conferences and other training/orientation sessions.

NES, 1252 Loesch Road, Bloomington, IN 47404-9107, (812) 336-7700, FAX (812) 336-7790, http://www.nesonline.com.

Catalogue of Spanish-Language Publications

A catalogue entitled *Publicaciones en Español* is published by the US Department of Education.

The catalogue not only contains an annotated bibliography of publications in Spanish, but also lists resources available through satellite education programs, and includes a directory of other federal agencies and centers that provide Spanish-language publications or services.

Education Publications Center
(887) 433-7827 or (800) 872-5327.
Fax-on-demand service: (301) 470-1244.
http://www.ed.gov/pubs

ALR Journal

The *American Language Review (ALR)* now has an online edition located on the web at http://www.alr.org. ALR typically contains a mix of articles on English learner programs and foreign language teaching.

ALR, 6363 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 116,
Los Angeles, CA 90048, (323) 658-7620.

Online Resources Regarding Refugee Students

There are a number of online information clearinghouses maintained by governmental and non-profit agencies and organizations. These web sites are the place to initiate a general search for information on immigrant and refugee students. Many of these sites also contain detailed references on specific language and national origin groups.

> •*UN High Commissioner for Refugees* http://www.unhcr.ch/refworld
>
> •*US Committee for Refugees* http://www.refugees.org
>
> •*Center for Advancement of Language Learning* http://www.call.gov
>
> •*Languages on the Web* http://www.languages-on-the-web.com
>
> •*Office of Refugee Resettlement* http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/orr

From Newcomers to New Americans ...

The National Immigration Forum (NIF) has published the results of a study of immigrants' acculturation to the American mainstream. Using census data and other sources, the study examines four indices of social integration—citizenship, English acquisition, home ownership, and intermarriage. Recent immigrants show a high level of assimilation across all four indicators, particularly English language acquisition. Within ten years of arriving in the US, more than

Note: Web addresses are provided in the text, but remember that there is never a final period in an internet address. The period belongs to the sentence. For example, the addresses in the adjacent text would be entered as:

http://www.sacbee.com

http://www.nesonline.com

If you get an error, check for sequence of characters and spaces.

three out of four immigrants reported speaking English "well" or "very well." Among immigrants who have resided in the US forty years or more, only two percent reported speaking no English. To get an executive summary or to request a copy go to http://www.immigrationforum/org/fromnewcomers.htm. Copies of the complete report are $10 plus shipping.

National Immigration Forum, 220 I Street, NE, Suite 220, Washington, DC 20002, (202) 544-0004.

Research on Language and Ethnic Identity

Joshua Fishman, sociolinguist, edited a collection of 28 papers on the psychological, social, cultural, educational, and linguistic links to ethnic identity. Authors include Skuttnab-Kangas, Spolsky, and Fishman. The *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity* is published by Oxford University Press (1999), http://www.oup-usa.org.

Multicultural Conference

The National Multicultural Institute will sponsor a conference entitled "Building Personal and Professional Competence in a Multicultural Society" to be held October 21-24, 1999, in Washington D.C. For more information, contact the institute at 3000 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 438, Washington D.C. 20008, (202) 483-0700, http://www.nmci.org.

Heritage Languages

The National Conference on Heritage Languages in America, sponsored by National Foreign Language Center (NFLC) and various other agencies, is scheduled for October 14-16, 1999, at the Westin Hotel in Long Beach. For more information contact the NFLC at http://www.nflc.org, or (202) 667-8100. The article, "Tapping a National Resource: Heritage Languages in the United States" by Richard Brecht and Catherine Ingold of the NFLC provides an overview of the conference theme.

The article (EDOFL-98-12) is available at http://www.cal.org/ericcll or (800) 276-9834.

Stabilizing Indigenous Languages

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto is holding the seventh annual "Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conference" from May 11 to May 14, 2000, at the Toronto Colony Hotel. This year's theme, "Language Across the Community," will emphasize the many ways in which all community members can become involved in indigenous language activities. Elders, other community leaders, administrators, educators, researchers, students, media specialists, and advocates are invited to take part in plenary sessions, workshops, and presentations on promoting, preserving, and supporting indigenous languages.

Barbara Burnaby, Modern Language Centre, OISE/UT, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1V6. FAX (416) 926-0469.

USDE Laboratories

The US Department of Education (USDE) maintains a network of ten educational laboratories, which provide a variety of resources and services to school districts. The website http://www.relnetwork.org will provide links to all ten labs' sites. Each lab also has a designated specialty areas. Those specializing in language and cultural diversity are:

Pacific Resources for Education and Learning http://relnetwork.org//speciality.html#prel

Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University http://www. brown.edu

Southwest Educational Development Lab http://www.relnetwork.org/specialty.html#sedl/

The Northwest Regional Lab (NWRL) has produced recently a number of Spanish-language publications for high school students, parents, and staff. http://www.nwrel.org.

Latest CREDE Publication

Fred Genesee, of McGill University, researcher of research and evaluation of immersion and bilingual programs, has edited *Program Alternatives for Linguistically Diverse Students* (1999) for The Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE) of the University of California, Santa Cruz. This series of articles is intended to assist decision-makers in schools in identifying the instructional approaches and programs that would best serve students learning English, would best meet students' educational needs, and match local resources and conditions to program models.

CREDE, (831) 459-3500, FAX (831) 459-3502 http://www.crede.ucsc.edu

Resources, continued

Resources, continued

Cooperative Learning in Diverse Settings

The spring 1999 issue (Vol. 38, No. 2) of *Theory into Practice (TIP)*, a journal published by Ohio State University's College of Education, is dedicated to cooperative learning. (For an overview of cooperative learning, see the article by Dan Holt in this issue of *Context*.) *TIP* contains six articles written by David and Roger Johnson, Robert Slavin, Elizabeth Cohen, and others.

Single copies of *TIP:* $12.00,
TIP Office, 172 Arps Hall, 1945 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43210, (614) 292-3407;
e-mail tip@osu.edu.
Back issues of *TIP*: http://www.coe.ohio-state.edu/tip

AskEDInfo

EDInfo, the US Department of Education's electronic newsletter, now has a companion web site — *AskEDInfo*—where educators can share their worst challenges and best ideas. Currently, the site features 22 topics and 60 questions for discussion. Topic areas include diversity, language learning, technology and school safety. Everyone interested in education is encouraged to participate at: http://oeri3.ed.gov:8000/AskEDInfo.

Census 2000

Census forms will be available in Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese. Guides for completing the forms will be offered in 49 languages. To read more about the Bureau's "non-English language assistance" and other efforts to reduce community undercounts go to: www.ncbe.gwu.edu/pathways/demographic/index.htm and follow the links to Census 2000 "frequently asked questions."

SAT-9 and impact of Prop. 227

"What legitimate inferences can be made from the 1999 release of SAT-9 scores with respect to the impact of Proposition 227 on the performance of LEP students?" is an analysis by Kenji Hakuta of Stanford University. Read it online at: www.stanford.edu/~hakuta/SAT9.

Promotion and Retention

"Taking Responsibility for Ending Social Promotion: Strategies for Educators and State and Local Leaders," from the US Department of Education, offers a set of guidelines and strategies for improving student achievement, such as:

- identify student needs early
- focus on early childhood literacy
- provide high-quality curriculum and instruction
- reduce class sizes in the primary grades
- set clear objectives and expectations for all stakeholders
- extend learning time through before and after-school programs, homework centers and year-round schooling
- use effective student grouping practices
- support high-quality professional development
- hold schools accountable for performance

Read the report online soon at: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/socialpromotion or call (877) 4ED-PUBS now for a print copy.

"Transforming Education for Hispanic Youth: Exemplary Practices, Programs, and Schools" by A.T. Lockwood and W.G. Secada presents findings from the Hispanic Dropout Project and interviews with project staff regarding the best approach to improving the educational future of Hispanics in the US. Previous reports from the Hispanic dropout project, plus related readings concerning the education of Hispanic youth, are also posted to the NCBE web site at http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/miscpubs/used/hdp.

Igniting Change for Immigrant Students: Portraits of Three High Schools

L. Olsen, A. Jaramillo, Z. McCall-Perez, J. White

describes a model approach to education for immigrant students in secondary schools.

http://www.californiatomorrow.org

California Tomorrow, 436 14th Street, Suite 820, Oakland, CA 94612, (510) 496-0220.

EIEP NEWS

Reliance on Web Site

In an effort to better utilize the electronic technology available to us, staff in the Language Policy and Leadership Office will be increasingly more dependent upon the internet to disseminate information regarding the Emergency Immigrant Education Program and Title VII. We suggest very strongly that program directors visit the California Department of Education's (CDE) web site every few weeks to check for new information, program alerts, and funding announcements.

At the EIEP web pages, we feature an administrative calendar of events, which contains a summary of upcoming program activities including the deadline dates for the submission of applications and program reports. The URL for the CDE web site is http://www.cde.ca.gov. Once there, click on "Resources for English Learners" and then on "Emergency Immigrant Education Program."

Continued Emphasis on Standards-Based Accountability

Unless you have been stranded on a deserted island for the last couple of years or so, you are certainly aware that federal, state, and local educational agencies are quickly moving toward a standards-based accountability framework. This means that schools will be required to collect performance data on their student populations and report annually on the number of students who are meeting grade level and graduation requirements.

EIEP and Title VII are no exceptions to this trend. For more than a year, we have been advising EIEP directors to upgrade the data management systems in their school districts and county offices of education to insure that they will be able to collect, analyze, and report on the performance of immigrant students.

To accomplish this, the local educational agencies (LEAs) must not only enter the student performance data (i.e., data on multiple measures) into their databases but also data elements regarding key student background variables. The student background data elements will permit LEAs to disaggregate data for specific groups of students.

For example, in the case of EIEP, the LEAs should include in their database the place of birth and the date of first enrollment in a US school for each student. This will allow for the disaggregation of performance data on immigrant students (pupils born outside of the US) by the number of years the pupils have been enrolled in school in the United States, based on date of first enrollment. By looking at the academic growth of immigrant and language minority pupils over time, schools will be able to more precisely evaluate the programs for these students.

In the case of programs for English learners and immigrant students, longitudinal evaluation is critical. Otherwise, the performance data on the most successful students from these programs, who subsequently are mainstreamed in the regular school, will not be included in the evaluation reports.

New "Handbook" for Immigrant Educators

It is unprecedented for us to "recommend" a non-departmental publication, but we are making an exception in the case of *Turning the Tides of Exclusion: A Guide for Educators and Advocates for Immigrant Students* (1999), developed by Laurie Olsen and Ann Jaramillo of the California Tomorrow organization. This research-based compendium addresses the key elements necessary to develop and sustain successful programs for immigrant pupils. The volume also contains, at the end of each chapter, listings of various human, organizational, governmental agency, and material resources.

Major chapters include the following topics:

- Understanding and responding to the complexity of immigrant students' lives and experiences
- Identifying and supporting the "sparks" or advocates who can change your school
- Using student voices as catalysts for change
- Shaping collaborative professional development
- Using data in effective new ways

This publication is an essential reference for all educators involved in programs for immigrant and language minority students. For further information, contact California Tomorrow at http://www.california tomorrow.org, or contact them at (510) 496-02250, FAX (510) 496-0225.
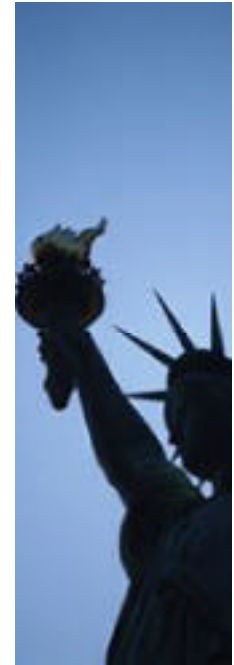
EIEP
EMERGENCY
IMMIGRANT
EDUCATION
PROGRAM

EIEP

EMERGENCY IMMIGRANT EDUCATION PROGRAM

continued

Refugee Student Assistance

In May, the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the US Department of Health and Human Services announced the availability of $3.5 million for the implementation of public school programs and services for refugee children and their families. Funding will be conducted through competitive grants to State Educational Agencies (SEAs). On behalf of the California Department of Education, the Language Policy and Leadership Office submitted a proposal for $2.0 million to provide competitive subgrants to school districts in California that enroll significant numbers of refugee children. If the proposal is funded, an application announcement will be sent to all EIEP program directors in the coming months.

Reauthorization of Title VII, Including EIEP

Title VII (Parts A and B), the federal bilingual education program, as well as Part C, the Emergency Immigrant Education Program, are scheduled for reauthorization along with the rest of the programs in the Improving America's School Act (IASA) in the year 2000. For those interested in the early drafts of the legislative proposals, information can be obtained online at the Center for Applied Linguistics web site at http:www.cal.org/ericll/langlink/current. htm#featurearticle.

Staff Changes at CDE

Several changes have occurred among staff at the California Department of Education (CDE) assigned to the EIEP.

After approximately a quarter century of state service, Hector Burke, former coordinator of the EIEP, officially retired on June 30, 1999. Hector became interested in a career in education based upon his experiences as a youth growing up in a Mexican-American family where he, his siblings, and parents all worked as migratory farm laborers.

Hector began state service as an administrator for the Commission for Teacher Credentialing. In the mid-1980s, he transferred to the California Department of Education as a consultant in the Bilingual Education Office. For several years, Hector assisted the former director of EIEP, Dr. Van Le, with the administration of the program. In 1995, when Dr. Le retired, Hector become the state coordinator for EIEP. During the 1998-99 school year, he worked as a retired annuitant, assisting the new director, Dr. David Dolson, with EIEP operations.

During his retirement, Hector plans to travel extensively with his wife. This fall, they have scheduled a cruise to Alaska. Hector also plans to volunteer his time to non-profit organizations that focus on counseling at-risk youth. We wish Hector the best in retirement and thank him for all his contributions to the EIEP.

Replacing Hector will be Jorge Gaj, an educational programs consultant, who for the last several years has been assigned to the Migrant Education Office. Previously, Jorge worked as a bilingual instructional aide, classroom teacher, resource teacher, and as a child psychologist for various school districts and county offices of education. Jorge identifies with newcomer and language minority students. He comes from a family that immigrated from Poland and what is now called the Czech Republic to Uruguay and later to the US. He is fluent in English and Spanish and is also conversant in Yiddish.

The California Department of Education (CDE) staff roster for the EIEP includes:

David Dolson, EIEP Coordinator

Jorge Gaj, Programs Consultant

Esperanza Muñoz, Analyst

Alice Wong, Analyst

Russell Bates, Office Technician

All of these staff members can be reached at (916) 657-2566.

Cooperative Learning: A Positive Response to Linguistic Diversity

Dan Holt, Consultant,
California Department of Education

Introduction

Dedicated teachers are always looking for better ideas for meeting the many challenges they face in school, especially the increasing linguistic diversity in the student population. Since the Language Census began in 1978, the number of English learners in California has increased. According to the 1999 census, approximately 1.5 million (26 percent) of California's 5.7 million students enrolled in elementary and secondary schools were identified as English learners (California Department of Education, 1999).

Teachers are not alone in trying to cope with the culture shock they may feel as they observe students speaking languages other than English. Students themselves may be disoriented and bewildered by the demographic changes taking place around them. Immigrant students, thrust into US classrooms for the first time, and native English speakers, unable to communicate with newcomers in their schools, can become alienated from one another. Students and teachers need strategies for helping them turn diversity into a positive force for developing themselves as individuals, as well as supporting the growth of others (Johnson and Johnson, 1999). The purpose of this article is to discuss the benefits of cooperative learning for English learners when they are placed in diverse, heterogeneous classrooms. The article attempts to underscore the value of cooperative learning, not as a panacea, but as an integral part of a comprehensive program that promises to accelerate the academic achievement of English learners.

> *All for one, one for all.*
> — Alexandre Dumas

English learners are at risk in many classrooms by being stigmatized for their limited-English proficiency and different ethnic backgrounds. In individualistic, competitive settings, many such students are unable to demonstrate what they know or obtain help for what they do not understand. Cooperative learning is particularly beneficial for creating a supportive climate in which English learners and their fellow students can learn from each other.

Cooperative learning takes many forms and definitions, but most cooperative approaches reflect the following structure: small, heterogeneous teams, usually of four or five members, working together towards completing a group task in which each member is individually accountable for part of an outcome that cannot be completed unless the members work together. In other words, the group members are positively interdependent.
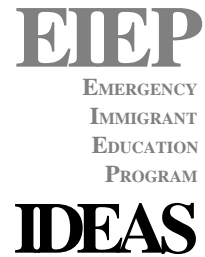
A vivid example of interdependence may be seen in the relationship between English learners and fluent English speakers in two-way immersion programs. This combination of language proficiencies provides a natural structure that facilitates cooperation as students work together to become bilingual and master other tasks. When English is used in an activity, fluent speakers are the resources for the English learners. In other activities when the English learners' native language is used, the English learners become the resources to help the fluent speakers. (For more on two-way immersion, see Dolson, 1999.)

When students work in teams where "all work for one" and "one works for all," team members receive the emotional and academic support that helps them persevere against the many obstacles they face in school. As cooperative norms are established, students are positively linked to others in the class who will not only help them, but depend on them for completing interdependent tasks. By becoming knowers as well as learners in a supportive atmosphere, English learners can establish more equal status relationships with their peers (Holt, 1993). When the environment becomes more equitable and interdependence is fostered, students are better able to participate based on their actual (rather than their perceived) knowledge and abilities.

Interaction

Language acquisition requires that students have opportunities to comprehend *and* produce language in meaningful tasks (McGroarty, 1993). Cooperative learning creates natural, interactive contexts in which students have authentic reasons for listening to one another, asking questions, clarifying issues, and re-stating points of view. Cooperative groups increase opportunities for English learners to produce and comprehend language and obtain modeling and correction from their peers.

To acquire full language competence, English learners need to use language in informal settings with people they know. They also need to understand how to accomplish language tasks in

formal contexts with people they do not know. Cooperative learning provides opportunities for using language in ways that validate the students' own language experiences, as well as extend their abilities to use language in new contexts. Students should be reminded that the world of work requires that they establish productive relationships with people they may neither know, understand, nor particularly like. Through cooperative learning, students can develop the language and cultural abilities that are important for working with others in school and at work.

Interactive tasks also naturally stimulate and develop the students' cognitive, linguistic, and social abilities. Cooperative activities integrate the acquisition of these skills and create powerful learning opportunities. Such interactive experiences are particularly valuable for English learners who face simultaneously the challenges of language acquisition, academic learning, and social adaptation. By stimulating language input *and* output, cooperative strategies provide English learners with natural settings in which they can derive and express meaning from academic content (McGroarty, 1993, and Swain, 1985).

Contexts for Academic Learning

Cooperative learning represents a valuable strategy for increasing the academic performance of English learners (Kagan, 1993; Cohen, 1986). While cooperative methods promise increased academic achievement for all students, the gains for English learners suggest that effective, sustained use of these strategies may actually close the gap between English learners and native-English speakers (Slavin, 1990). Such promise distinguishes cooperative learning from other effective innovations that merely increase outcomes for all students.

English learners, who must master language and academic content simultaneously, are also academically advantaged by the dynamics of the cooperative context itself. Cooperative activities provide settings in which students can verbalize their understandings and make connections between their own experiences and the academic content (McGroarty, 1993). As team members explain concepts to each other, they translate ideas into their own words and tailor information so that others can understand it, thereby strengthening their grasp of academic concepts.

Making Cooperative Learning Work for English Learners

Cooperative activities are most effective when they reflect the best of what is known about cooperative learning. Improved academic achievement and language proficiency should not be expected simply by calling a group activity "cooperative learning." Rather, teachers should design cooperative activities in which students work in small, herterogeneous teams; where students are individually accountable for working towards learning goals; and where interdependent relationships are fostered among the team members. Activities should be structured so that students interact in the most productive fashion to ensure that each student, regardless of English proficiency, fully participates and derives equal benefits from the cooperative activity.

Cooperative learning is an essential element of, not a substitute for, a comprehensive program for English learners. The multiple needs of English learners should be addressed by qualified teachers who collaborate with other staff to build a program that strengthens a student's native language and English, ensures acquisition of rigorous academic content, reinforces the student's native culture, promotes positive relationships between students and staff as well as among students themselves, and enhances linkages between the students' family and the school (Holt, 1993).

As valuable as it is, cooperative learning should not be relied upon to overcome the ill effects of a fragmented program staffed with teachers who are not knowledgeable about second-language acquisition, cultural diversity, family literacy, bilingual methods, and other aspects of high-quality education for English learners. Teachers who understand the language and culture of the student *and* who are thoroughly versed in cooperative learning will be able to adapt cooperative learning to maximize its effectiveness in diverse language settings. For example, teachers will want to ensure that one or more members of a cooperative team can facilitate communication among very limited-English speakers and their peers. In addition, activities that focus on social skill development and team building should be used frequently to facilitate cross-cultural communication and understanding among team members. Teachers will also want to consider questions related to what language—English or the native language or both—should be used by team members to accomplish language, content,

and cross-cultural goals. Frequent use of group processing activities will help teachers and team members identify and solve problems that may be rooted in cultural differences.

Conclusion

Cooperative learning methods hold great promise for accelerating English learners' acquisition of the language, subject matter, and social skills needed for succeeding in school. Like other innovations, cooperative learning approaches need to be used by teachers who are supported with ongoing professional development and collegial support. When designed and implemented by teachers who are loyal to the basic principles of cooperative learning and dedicated to regarding diversity as a resource, cooperative learning helps English learners and their peers succeed in school. When "all work for one" and "one works for all," classrooms, schools, and communities can become more productive and enjoyable.

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Selected Online Resources

Center for Social Organization of Schools (http://scov.csos.jhu.edu). Directed by Robert E. Slavin.

Cooperative Learning: Response to Diversity (http://www.cde.ca.gov/iasa/cooplrng.html). Web page by Dan Holt at Improving Federal Education Programs in California Web site, California Department of Education, 1999.

Cooperative Learning Center (http://www.clcrc.com). Directed by Roger T. Johnson and David W. Johnson.

International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education (http://miavx1.acs. muohio.edu/~iascecwis). Provides information and links to other resources.

Kagan Online (http://www.kagancooplearn.com/index.html). Resources developed by Spencer Kagan.

South east Asia Community Resource Center

2460 Cordova Lane
Rancho Cordova CA 95670
916 635 6815
916 635 0174 fax
SEACRC@ns.net
http://mills.fcusd.k12.ca.us/ctrsite/index.html

Refugee Educators' Network. This group of educators meets at the above address five times per year to share information and oversee the operation of the nonprofit corporation. Meetings are 9:00-11:30, on the 2nd Thursdays of the month.

Sept 9, 1999
Nov 4, 1999 (1st Thu!)
Jan 13, 2000
Mar 9, 2000
May 11, 2000

Hmong Literacy Development Materials, 1999 (call or email for price list).

#9616 *Tawm Lostsuas Mus (Out of Laos: A Story of War and Exodus, Told in Photographs).* Roger Warner. English/Hmong. $18.56 per copy, $89.10 per 6-pack, $445.48 per carton of 40.

#9613 *Introduction to Vietnamese Culture* (Te, 1996. $5.00. Carton price $4.00).

#9512 *Handbook for Teaching Armenian Speaking Students,* Avakian, Ghazarian, *1995, 90 pages. $7.00.* No carton discount.

#9410 *Amerasians from Vietnam: A California Study,* Chung & Le, 1994. $7.00. No carton discount. OUT OF PRINT. Will be available online.

#9409 *Proceedings on the Conference on Champa,* 1994. $7.00.

#9207 *Minority Cultures of Laos: Kammu, Lua', Lahu, Hmong, and Mien.* Lewis; Kam Raw, Vang, Elliott, Matisoff, Yang, Crystal, Saepharn. 1992. 402 pages $15.00 (carton discount $12.00, 16 per carton)

#S8801 *Handbook for Teaching Hmong-Speaking Students* Bliatout, Downing, Lewis, Yang, 1988. $4.50 (carton discount for lots of 58: $3.50)

#S8802 *Handbook for Teaching Khmer-Speaking Students* Ouk, Huffman, Lewis, 1988. $5.50 (carton discount for lots of 40: $4.50)

#S8903 *Handbook for Teaching Lao-Speaking Students* Luangpraseut, Lewis 1989. $5.50.

#S8904 *Introduction to the Indochinese and their Cultures* Chhim, Luangpraseut, Te, 1989, 1994. $9.00. Carton discount: $7.00.

#S8805 *English-Hmong Bilingual Dictionary of School Terminology Cov Lus Mis Kuj Txhais ua Lus Hmoob.* Huynh D Te, translated by Lue Vang, 1988. $2.00 (no carton price)

Add California tax from your city, if applicable. For orders under $30.00 add $2.00 per copy shipping and handling. For orders over $30.00, add 10% shipping/handling. Unsold copies are not returnable.

#S9999 **CONTEXT: Southeast Asians & other newcomers in California**, annual subscription. $15.00 (5 issues, October to September).

Context: