

# AccELerate!

The Quarterly Review of the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition

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## Assessment of English Learners: II

In this fall issue of *AccELerate!* we continue to focus on assessment of English learners (ELs). In the summer issue, the focus was on current policies, accommodations, and promising practices and features of assessment. The papers in this fall issue focus on more specific assessment topics that show promise in developing assessment systems that work for ELs.

Kopriva provides an overview and tips regarding effective classroom assessment of ELs in content areas. Leier and Fregeau focus on the use of dialogue journals in assessing EL literacy development. The alignment of English language proficiency (ELP) and content standards is key to any assessment system: Alt describes a tool that evaluates the degree to which ELP standards align with state content standards, and Irujo shares outcomes of an alignment project in New Hampshire.

The papers that follow deal with assessment features that may be especially helpful to ELs: alternate academic content assessments for EL students with significant cognitive disabilities (Albers, Wohlferd, and Fuhrmann), the effectiveness of three different accommodation strategies (Aguirre-Muñoz), and Universal Design as a technique used in large-scale assessments to provide all students the opportunity to demonstrate achievement on content assessment (Kennedy). López highlights issues in assessment of dual language learners entering kindergarten. We also provide informational topics for teacher development and foreign language projects; see Resources to Know. Don't forget NCELA's assessment-related webinars!

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# Classroom Assessment of ELs in Content Areas: What to Consider and How To Do It? (Part 1)

Rebecca Kopriva

For English learners, effective classroom assessment of academic content is an extremely important but complex and large topic. This article will be the first of a multipart series briefly outlining the high-points of underpinning issues and tips to use when evaluating the academic progress of ELs.<sup>1</sup> Although this series does not address the assessment of ELP, ELs' emergent skills in the development of English will determine how ELs can be assessed best on academic content, particularly when it comes to measuring their higher-order thinking skills effectively. The premise of the articles in the series is that classroom assessment is primarily about informing instruction, actively involving and benefiting both teachers and students through the use of ongoing learning and evaluation processes.

All in all, effective assessment of ELs includes:

- Developing promising instructional activities where inquiry into and exploration of the students' grasp of the content and concepts is embedded in learning;
- Developing effective ways of asking questions using multi-semiotic contexts;
- Designing activities in such a way that students can demonstrate what they know using multi-semiotic representations rather than relying on text;
- Designing activities that allow students to show not only if they 'know the answer' but also, if they

get it wrong, where they misunderstand or might be stuck; and

- Analyzing student responses to inform future instruction and/or inform students about what they should focus on, think about differently, or what next steps they might take in interacting with future learning opportunities.

To date, only a fraction of content is taught to ELs by EL specialists. While EL specialists see themselves as primarily responsible for developing ELP, content teachers and schools see them as experts on ALL things EL. More recently, EL specialists have been encouraged to work with content teachers to help the content teachers teach academic English while they teach content. However, EL specialists play a larger role, drawing on a vast repertoire of knowledge and skills that are invaluable for teaching content. These involve (a) knowing how to *hear* the EL students—how to interpret the instruction and what teachers say, what the ELs do in response, and why the ELs act and react as they do and (b) knowing how to *support language* in academic classroom instruction and assessment with other semiotic representations. The good teachers have multi-semiotic classrooms, especially when they are teaching more complex subject matter, but they don't necessarily consider that these types of activities and evaluation opportunities are needed by ELs to access ALL academic content. As such, EL spe-

## Editor's Notes

The following signs and abbreviations are used in the issue.



— *Success stories* describe a successful project or an instructional approach



— *Resources to Know* provide information regarding PD and teaching foreign languages

**EL or ELL**—English learners or English-language learners

**ELP**—English-language proficiency

**ESEA**—Elementary and Secondary Education Act

**ESL**—English as a Second Language

**ESOL**—English for Speakers of Other Languages

**HS**—Head Start

**LEA**—Local education agency

**OELA**—Office of English Language Acquisition, U.S. Department of Education

**PD**—Professional development

**SEA**—State education agency

**USDE**—U.S. Department of Education

Citations in the text are in [bracketed numbers]. The reference list follows each article in same numerical order. Other notes are marked by consecutively numbered superscripts.

cialists need to work with schools and content teachers over time to show them how to adjust their instructional plans, activities, and assessments to be able to reach, teach, and “read” ELs.

## Underpinnings to Consider when Thinking about Instruction

Beyond academic language, there are several points of context that EL specialists need to remember in order to begin teaching content teachers how to support their ELs in learning content. **First**, proper

planning is key. Effective classroom assessment is about knowing *specifically* what you want students to learn from each class. We often call this the “target.” This specific information covers both the targeted content and the targeted cognitive skills the teacher wants the student to learn. Before beginning a unit, this means:

- Listing what you expect to hear and see while assessment tasks are performed and the targeted concepts are addressed;
- Planning ongoing integration of assessment opportunities into learning activities so the targeted instruction and evaluations can occur effectively and the teacher and students can get a reasonably accurate understanding of where and how the ELs understand the material;
- Evaluating existing commercially developed assessments to use as part of the learning activities; and
- Knowing what prior knowledge students bring to the classroom and to the task.

Assessment tasks should be designed to tell the teacher and the student what the student knows and what problems the student is having and why.

**Second**, it is important that the content teachers plan to teach and assess ELs in the *full range* of content complexity. Frequently we hear: “Just because an EL doesn’t speak much English doesn’t mean she is not thinking in complex ways.” However, it is easy to fall short both in providing learning opportunities in the classrooms that engage ELs and communicate complex thinking, and

in using assessment tasks that provide information about these skills. These learning and evaluation tasks need to involve not just factual learning, but opportunities to identify relationships, compare and contrast, synthesize, generalize, and predict. Content teachers also need to utilize a variety of participatory structures and opportunities to engage in dialogue and self-analysis. All too often content teachers argue that it is “just too hard” to teach and evaluate the more abstract concepts because of the language needed and because they are used to relying on language to teach and assess. EL specialists are in an excellent position to help content teachers broaden their repertoire and teach them how to support language using other modalities, making sure that the integrity of the content’s complexity remains intact and is not “dumbed-down,” which may happen if content teachers are left to their own devices. EL specialists can help them guard against that.

**Third**, EL specialists should work with content teachers to plan for diversity. This includes lesson and assessment planning that considers how the students will hear and understand the material. It also includes planning the evaluation activities, and developing the criteria that interpret how student responses are scored so the questions can tap accurately what students know. Considerations include how students’ different cultural backgrounds affect how they interpret what is being taught, the experiential knowledge associated with the lessons

that the students bring into the classroom, and the tools used for delivering both the instruction and the assessment tasks. They also involve planning the process and participatory structures for classroom interaction so they best match students’ diverse socialization backgrounds, liberal use of multi-faceted techniques that touch the range of learning styles, and allowances for various types of student input.

**Fourth**, it is important for the EL specialist to remember that the depth of teacher knowledge in the subject makes a difference. A content teacher’s own expertise and her ability to understand the information being taught has a substantial impact on her ability to communicate with her students effectively and flexibly. When these teachers know the content deeply they can map their expectations backwards and break down the cognitive demand into smaller ‘chunks’ of information. When the content teachers are not as confident about their content knowledge they tend to depend solely on textbooks or materials without reviewing them critically, which often weakens instruction. The same is true for assessments. Good assessment integrates many ‘mini-feedback loops’ into instructional tasks. Knowing that English learners, as well as many native English speakers, (a) communicate in varied ways, and (b) that various levels of cognitive complexity are often communicated differently, teachers should use a large repertoire of practices when they assess their students. While good teachers with deep

content understanding generally understand (b), rarely do they have a large repertoire for (a). What all this means for EL specialists is that they must assess the content teachers' knowledge base in order to properly guide them in how to instruct and evaluate their ELs. If EL specialists do not account for the

knowledge of content teachers, little headway can be made in making sure the broader repertoire of adapted techniques will be used or used effectively in an ongoing way.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> The articles are adapted from work by Rebecca Kopriva and Ursula Sexton to be published in late 2010.

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## Assessing EL Writing Development through Dialogue Journals: An Applied Linguistics Perspective

Robert D. Leier and Laureen A. Fregeau

ELs vary in the ways they acquire language, and their teachers need effective tools to assess their learning needs and track their progress. We have suggested in earlier work that teachers utilize *dialogue journals* (DJs) defined as written conversations or dialogues between the teacher and student, as a low-stress and high-interest tool for teaching and assessing EL literacy [1,2]. We focus here on the use of DJs for the purpose of assessing EL writing development in ways that standardized or formalized tests alone may overlook.

DJs can provide insights into student creativity, critical thinking skills, the application of new ideas, and information that the student perceives as important [3]. When DJs are used on a daily basis, the instructor has continuous feedback on course or class activities and students' comprehension of content material without having to wait until the end of the week or term exams. Since DJs are a permanent and ongoing record of students' writing [2], they are a valuable tool—for both teachers and stu-

dents—for assessing language skills development. As students read the instructor's responses to their entries, they receive feedback on their use of language and see modeled use of language forms. Using the linguistic categories described below, the instructor (and the students) can assess weekly or monthly development in writing proficiency, as well as conduct a long-term assessment at the end of an academic semester, a year, or preferably, over several years [4].

**Syntax:** Students improve in using grammar. For example, they learn to use the auxiliary verb "am" and progress from "I fine today" to "I'm fine today," or instead of "My dad walk dog" start producing, "My dad walks the dog." The number of language transfer errors is reduced over time. For example, students who initially ignore the rules of plurality in English will begin to utilize these rules in their writing. We initially may see "He has two dog." This will eventually be written as "He has two dogs."

**Semantics:** The student improves in the ability to use expressions that could have several interpretations due to a lack of contextual development. For example, a student will progress from "I am angry at Sam. He is a dog," to "I am angry at my dog Sam."

**Vocabulary:** Students incorporate new and descriptive words into their writing. For example, instead of "The cat caught the mouse," the student may write, "The hungry gray cat pounced on the frightened mouse."

**Spelling:** Students improve in spelling (especially words that sound similar). For example, a student may progress from "That book is mind" to "That book is mine."

**Pragmatics:** Students improve their use of registers and rules of conversation. For example, they learn to use the teacher's title or an appropriate way to respond to the greeting, "How are you?", instead of going into lengthy descriptions of health issues or all the things that happened to him or her that day.

DJ assessments are not a “quick fix” for busy teachers. They are, however, an authentic means to assess writing and language development of ELs over time.

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### Aligning ELP Standards and State Content Standards

*ESEA*, as reauthorized in 2001, requires states to establish ELP standards that are “aligned with achievement of the challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards...” [1] States have been seeking the best way to assure this alignment and have been concerned regarding the criteria that should be used for aligning ELP and content-area standards.

Alignment has been viewed as a means of examining the relationship between standards, instructional practices, and assessment [2], between state assessments and content standards [3], and, more recently, between ELP standards and academic content standards [4]. One of the most prominent approaches to alignment was developed by Norman Webb [3] to evaluate item match, cognitive complexity or Depth of Knowledge (DOK), and breadth of coverage of assessment items in relation to a state's content standards. Cook [4, 5], with the Wisconsin Center for Educational Research, has adapted the Webb approach to evaluate the degree to which ELP Standards align with state content standards. In a typical WCER ELP standards/content standards alignment study, state and district EL teachers and content specialists participate in a two-day institute using the adapted alignment approach. They assign DOK levels to each academic content standard and participate in a consensus process to determine the DOK levels of those standards. They next individually code the DOK levels of the language proficiency standards and assign each academic content standard (or objective) to an ELP standard. The outcome of the institute is a set of statistics that is used to analyze the link (match), DOK consistency ('depth'), and coverage ('breadth') between the two sets of standards. Using Cook's approach, standards are 'linked' if at least one aligned content standard in each assessed subject is represented in the ELP standards. To meet the higher standard—alignment—Cook's approach considers the above criteria related to 'correspondence': cognitive/DOK correspondence between the standards ('depth') and the degree to which a state's content goals within a content standard have corollary English proficiency expectations ('breadth'). For adequate alignment, at least 40% of the ELP standards must be at or above the DOK level of the content standards, and for moderate to strong 'breadth', at least one or more of the ELP standards must be represented by each content goal within a specific content standard. This higher criterion for alignment recognizes that alignment of ELP standards to state content standards will be less of a one-to-one relationship, as the standards are of associated but not highly similar constructs. We believe that emphasizing the 'correspondence' criteria along with the currently required 'linking' criteria would cause greater attention to be given to academic English in the classroom and thereby promote students' progress in content areas as well as annual measurable achievement objective (AMAO) goals.

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## Aligning ELP Standards with State Academic Content Standards: New Hampshire Project

In the fall of 2007, the University of New Hampshire (NH) received a National PD grant from OELA to fund the English Language Learning and Teaching Professional Development Cooperative (ELL Coop). One of the grant's goals was to promote collaboration between ESOL and content teachers by establishing a number of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) across the state. I was asked to facilitate a statewide PLC, which, at the request of the NH ESOL Teachers Network, planned to create an alignment of the state's ELP standards and the NH high school academic content standards.

Our first meeting began with 15 high school ESOL and subject-area teachers brainstorming goals that were later adapted to become the goals of the alignment documents themselves:

1. To give ESOL and content-area teachers information they can use to differentiate instruction by proficiency level;
2. To provide a concrete representation of the ELP standards so ESOL students have access to *all* academic content;
3. To define the ESOL curriculum in a way that focuses on the content areas of math, science, social studies, and language arts, and assists in writing course competencies;
4. To provide a reference of appropriate ESOL teaching strategies for content-area teachers; and
5. To ensure that ESOL teachers know what content is being taught in content-area classes, and that content-area teachers know what can be expected of ESOL students at various language proficiency levels.

NH, as part of the WIDA consortium, has only five English-language development standards, which makes it difficult to align them directly with a multitude of state standards. We therefore decided to transform our model performance indicators (MPIs) to match the NH content standards. The MPIs are organized into strands at each grade span. Each strand includes one MPI at each of five ELP levels, with separate strands for listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In order to limit the scope of the project so we could complete draft alignments of all four high school subjects during the first year, we combined the four domains into one strand and included only those standards that are tested at the state level (Table 1).

ELP Level	Model Performance Indicator
Level 1 Entering	Identifies a pattern or a sequence and continues the sequence, using visual and graphic support and number models.
Level 2 Beginning	Describes a rule for a pattern, represented by a model, a sequence, a table, or a graph, using word or phrase banks and visual support.
Level 3 Developing	Describes rules for arithmetic and geometric sequences, using some technical language (e.g., <i>variable</i> and <i>nth term</i> ), with visual and graphic support.
Level 4 Expanding	Organizes sentences in logical order, with sequential language, to show how to solve problems involving patterns, using tables, models, and graphs.
Level 5 Bridging	Summarizes, implements, and explains procedures for solving problems involving linear and nonlinear patterns.

**Table 1.** NH Standard (Mathematics, Functions and Algebra, Grade 10, Number 1): Identifies, extends, and generalizes a variety of patterns (linear and nonlinear) represented by models, tables, sequences, or graphs in problem-solving situations

Our work continued in 2008-2009, with a larger group of ESOL and content teachers. The previous year's drafts of high school alignments were reviewed and revised, and new draft alignments were created for grade 7 reading/writing and mathematics and grade 8 science and social studies. We have now completed our third year of work, during which the high school reading, writing, and math alignments were reviewed by the NH Department of Education, the middle school alignments were revised, and fourth-grade alignments were drafted. Pending funding, the project will continue for two more years, during which we plan to create alignments for at least one other grade at each of the elementary school and middle school levels. As facilitator, I have been greatly impressed by how hard the members of the group have worked, and how much has been accomplished. The project's success is due to the dedication of the ESOL teachers, the collaboration of content teachers, and the support and cooperation of the NH Department of Education. Once all the alignment documents are completed, reviewed, and made public, the efforts of everybody involved will continue to benefit English language learners in New Hampshire for many years.

### Funding Note

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## Assessing the ELP Growth of ELs with Significant Disabilities

Craig A. Albers, Jessica Wohlferd, and Melanie Fuhrmann

Approximately 500,000 students across the United States are identified as being both an EL and as a student with a disability [1]. As with the non-EL population of students, approximately 1% of EL students have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent them from being able to participate in regular assessments of academic knowledge and achievement, even with accommodations. This assessment challenge is also present when trying to determine their ELP as mandated by the federal government.

The assessment of ELs with significant cognitive disabilities has generally been based on the combination of what we know about the assessment of ELs and what we know about the assessment of students with disabilities. Little, however, is known regarding the ELP assessment of ELs with significant cognitive disabilities. Although research has established that portfolio (evidence-collection) assessments, rating scales, and performance assessments are all alternate assessment approaches that can be used with ELs and with students with disabilities [2], no alternate assessment measure of ELP for ELs with significant cognitive disabilities currently exists.

Such an assessment, however, is currently being developed at the University of Wisconsin, on behalf of the World-Class Instruction Design and Assessment (WIDA®)

Consortium [3]. Funded primarily through an Enhanced Assessment Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, this new measure, hereafter referred to as the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™, will be an alternate assessment of ELP for students in grades prekindergarten through twelve who are classified as ELs and also have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the regular annual administration of the ACCESS for ELLs® ELP assessment.<sup>1</sup> It is being designed to be a valid, reliable, and equitable tool for assessing the ELP growth of ELs with significant cognitive disabilities. Specifically, the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ is being designed to (a) meet the accountability requirements of the *ESEA*, as reauthorized in 2001 [4] and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004* [5], (b) facilitate the involvement of ELs in participating states' accountability systems, (c) provide a method for monitoring the ELP growth of ELs with significant cognitive disabilities; and (d) provide guidance to Individualized Education Plan (IEP) teams in developing appropriate language proficiency IEP goals and objectives.<sup>2</sup>

To accomplish these goals, two parallel alternate assessment approaches are being developed; states will then be able to choose the approach that is more similar to their alternate academic con-

tent assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The evidence-collection approach of the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ has been in development since 2005, and the performance-based approach is currently in the pilot and field testing phases. While the evidence-collection approach is based on teachers' ratings of students' performance on a range of activities, the performance-based approach consists of on-demand tasks administered in a 1:1 setting. Because of the variety of disabilities represented within this group of students, and because of the varying ways in which these disabilities are expressed, both approaches consist of items that allow flexibility in how they are administered and scored. Thus, both approaches are based on the concept of structured flexibility. Within the performance-based approach, structured flexibility is represented by expecting students to demonstrate skills within a specific language task (i.e., structure), yet because of their significant disabilities, these test takers have opportunities for audio, visual, and text-based prompts and response modes that do not rely on traditional multiple-choice items with a heavy English reading load (i.e., flexibility).

Both approaches are based on the newly developed Alternate ELP Standards and Alternate Model Performance Indicators (AMPIs), which include modifi-

cations made to the existing WIDA® Consortium ELP Standards. These AMPLs consider the necessary sensitivity of the goals and skills required for ELL students with significant disabilities to display ELP growth. Three additional levels have been added to the existing ELP standards and will preclude Level 1 of the WIDA ELP Standards, as shown in Figure 1.

### Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™, Alternate ELP Levels

Including additional ELP levels in the Alternate ELP Standards allows ELs with significant cognitive disabilities to demonstrate ELP growth, and also provides these students with an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and application of English in the language domains with which they

may have previously struggled. To determine whether an administration format and corresponding prompt is appropriate or might be allowable, it is necessary to consider what domain is being tested and how the administration and prompt might be changing the construct. For example, if administering the Reading portion of the measure, it would not be appro-

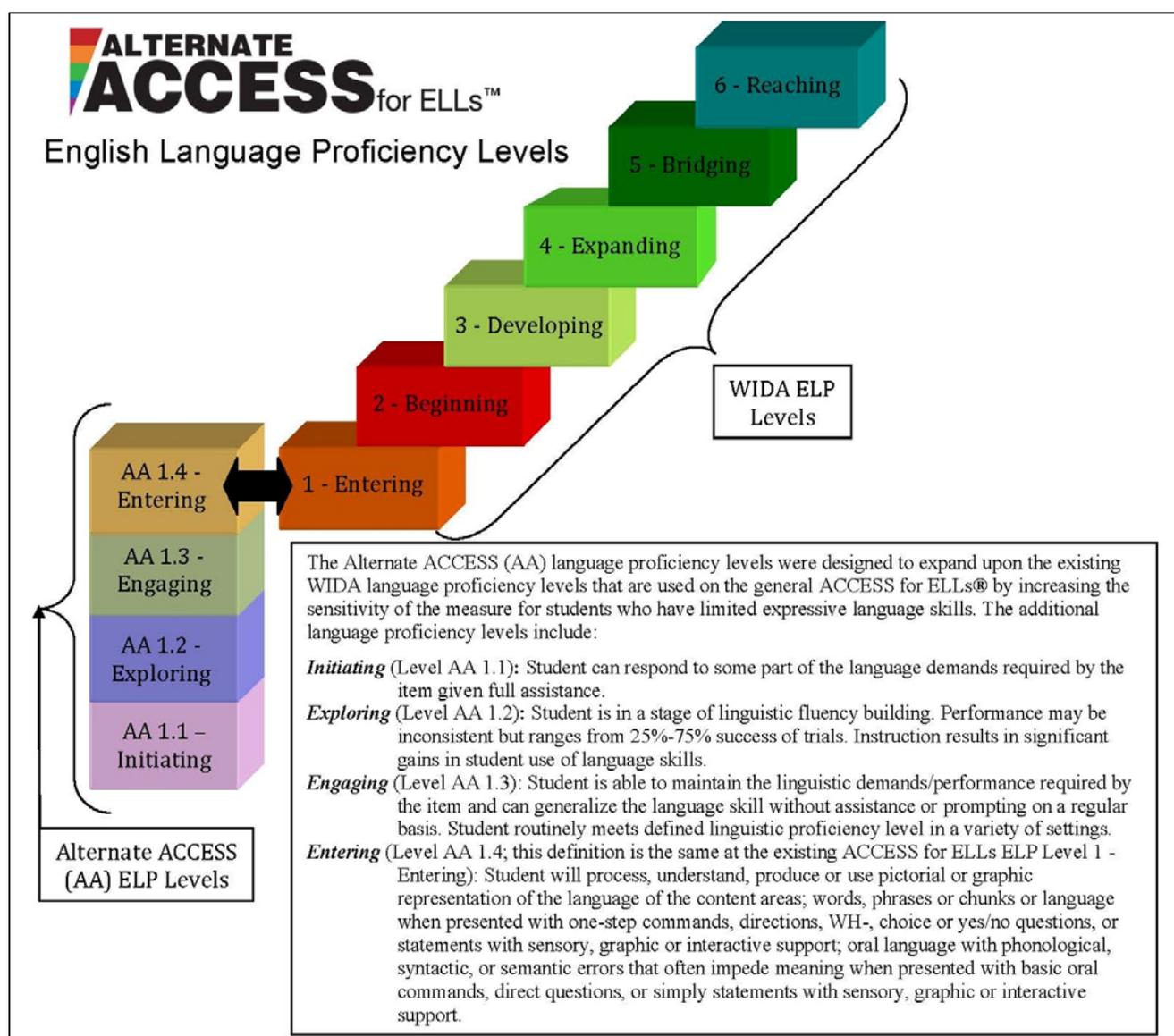


Figure 1. Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ ELP Levels

priate to read the item aloud to the student; doing so would turn the item into a listening task as compared to a reading task. However, if the Reading item asks for a verbal response to the question—and the student is not able to produce a verbal response because of his or her disability—the student should be provided with an opportunity to respond using whatever modality they have at their disposal, whether it be using an assistive technology device, eye gaze, written response, or other means.

### Conclusions

It is anticipated that the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ also will be a valuable tool for teachers and school administrators when planning education programming, including the development of IEP goals and objectives. Scores from the assessment will provide insight concerning the English skills and abilities for each individual student with regard to his or her ELP growth. Additionally, a variety of PD activities are being planned for training related to the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ administration, scoring, and interpretation.

For more information regarding the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ with significant cognitive disabilities and corresponding AMPIs, including the anticipated timeline for materials being available, field test recruitment, research opportunities, and other information, please visit the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ website at <http://alternateaccess.wceruw.org>.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> The development of the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ and the corresponding research were supported in part by an Enhanced Assessment Grant from the U.S. Department of Education to the District of Columbia, Office of the State Superintendent of Education (S368A080004), and a Cooperative Agreement with the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin.

<sup>2</sup> The contents of this article do not necessarily represent the policy of the USDE and should not be assumed as an endorsement by the federal government.

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### askNCELA's Inbox

in which we highlight the answers to commonly asked questions that appear in our e-mail inbox.

**Q:** Where can I get results of state tests and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)?

**A:** The USDE recently has launched a website, *ED Data Express*, designed to improve the public's ability to access and explore high-value state-level education data. Furthermore, it allows users to download information into Excel or manipulate the data within the web site. The address is: <http://www.eddataexpress.ed.gov/>.

For data specific to ELs, you also may visit the NCELA web site: <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/>.

# Assessing Dual Language Learners' School Readiness

Lisa M. López

## Introduction

Dual language learners (DLL) entering kindergarten programs nationally are faced with a myriad of assessments to determine if they are ready for school and to evaluate their ELP. In Florida, for example, DLL children are tested using the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) and the Comprehensive English Language Learner Assessment (CELLA). FLKRS is composed of subtests from the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and the Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS) and is given to all children to determine readiness; it also serves as an accountability tool for preschool providers. The CELLA assesses the English listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of all ELs, determining their level of mastery of the English language.<sup>1</sup>

The FELLA-HS Project (Florida English Language Learners Attending Head Start: A Cultural Analysis) was developed to measure school readiness during the transition of the DLL from Head Start into kindergarten using readily available standardized assessments in English and Spanish. This three-year study was funded by the Office of Planning Research and Evaluation within the Administration of Children and Families to determine whether Head Start was preparing DLLs adequately for kindergarten. The study is a longitudinal cross-sectional analysis of DLLs' school readiness skills

through Head Start and kindergarten.

## Project FELLA-HS

In the *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*, Head Start defines school readiness for all children as demonstrating gains in language development, early literacy, early numeracy, cognitive development, social-emotional development, and, for EL children specifically, their progression toward English language proficiency. Previous research studied DLL children's development of dual language and early biliteracy skills throughout Head Start [1] and into kindergarten and first grade [2]. These studies found that by the end of their preschool year, children already were experiencing language loss in Spanish relating to picture vocabulary and letter word recognition while performing at the same level as the monolingual normative sample on letter word recognition [1]. A major problem area within the assessment of DLLs in the early childhood (prekindergarten-3rd grade) arena, however, is the lack of valid and reliable assessments for understanding the development of DLLs during this timeframe. The current study includes school readiness measures available for the bilingual population. The assessment data collected will allow for analysis of validity and reliability of such measures with DLLs.

## Methods

For the current project, the investigators reviewed common assessments used in research and practice for the assessment of school readiness in DLL children in order to choose assessments that did not over- or underestimate bilingual children's abilities. The summer before kindergarten entry, 56 children were assessed on the chosen battery; the battery consists of assessments most commonly used by both researchers and practitioners in both English and Spanish. These include school readiness subtests from the Woodcock Johnson III (WJ-III)/Batería-3 tests of cognitive and achievement abilities appropriate for this age group and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-4 (PPVT-4)/Test de Vocabulario en Imágenes Peabody (TVIP).<sup>2</sup> The skills tested are oral language (i.e., receptive vocabulary, expressive vocabulary, and oral comprehension), early literacy (letter-word identification and spelling), early numeracy (applied problems and quantitative concepts), and cognition (visual matching, spatial recognition, and picture recognition).

To obtain a more thorough picture of children's development [3] and to determine whether the skill is present (not necessarily whether it is present in English), each child was assessed in English and Spanish on different days by different research assistants in the child's regular Head Start preschool setting. Research assistants

spoke only the language of administration and were advised to accept the correct answer only in that language. Children were rewarded with a toy and stickers for their participation. Once the data were collected, raw scores were converted to standardized scores. Standard scores for each English and Spanish subtest were calculated using the norms provided by the test developers — these were based on monolingual speakers of each language. It is important to note that the norms of the standardized tests used with this population are not based on bilingual children, but instead on monolingual children of each language. Thus our study compared test norms based on monolingual speakers of each language with the abilities of DLLs in each of their languages.

### Findings

The DLL children participating in FELLA-HS scored within the average range on cognitive (mean ranges of 89-128), early literacy (mean ranges of 98-102), and early numeracy (mean ranges of 89-96) tasks in English on the WJ-III subtests, and below average on the oral language tasks (mean ranges of 77-85) in English from the WJ-III and PPVT-4, when compared to the monolingual English norms. The same children scored within the average range on cognitive (mean ranges of 88-129), early literacy (mean ranges of 91-95), and early numeracy (mean ranges of 84-91) tasks in Spanish on the Bateria-3 subtests when compared to the monolingual Spanish norms. These children scored below average in Spanish

on the oral language tasks (mean ranges of 69-77) both from the Bateria-3 and the TVIP.

### Conclusions/Recommendations

The findings presented here show that DLL children entering kindergarten perform on target with monolingual peers in areas of cognition, early literacy, and early numeracy, based on the norms of the Woodcock-Johnson III/ Bateria 3 in both English and Spanish. Children perform below average on measures of oral language (i.e., expressive and receptive vocabulary and oral comprehension in both English and Spanish).

These findings strengthen the argument for a cross-language transfer of certain academic skills, as children perform well on academic skills in both languages, and the importance for assessing all skills in both languages. Assessing children in both languages provides insight into the child's dominant language and their potential for transferring future skills. While mean scores show average performance, the trend indicates children's performance is slightly stronger in their dominant language. Cross-language transfer may account for better-than-expected performance in the second language. On the other hand, language skills must develop in both languages independently without relying on vocabulary transfer (beyond the use of cognates); therefore DLLs are below average in both English and Spanish when compared to monolingual children.

While it appears valid to assess DLL children on academic tasks, such as early literacy and early numeracy using the WJ-III, it is suggested that all skills be measured in both languages when assessing a DLL. It is important to understand what the child knows and understands. This information may not be accurately assessed if the child is only evaluated in one of his or her languages. When using assessments other than those being used here to measure school readiness, it is important to critically evaluate the validity of using such assessments with DLLs. Most assessments are normed on monolingual children. One must be aware that the comparisons are not equal when comparing a bilingual child's standardized score to the norm. Better measures of vocabulary and oral comprehension are definitely needed in order to truly understand the vocabulary and oral language skills of DLL children. With this in mind DLL children transitioning into kindergarten are on target with regard to school readiness skills including cognition, early literacy, and early numeracy. Oral language skills need to continue to be monitored and targeted.

### Funding Note

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fldoe.org/earlylearning/FLKRS2009.asp>; <http://www.fldoe.org/aala/cella.asp>

<sup>2</sup> The WJ-III and PPVT-4 are standardized with a mean of 100 and standard deviation of 15. Average performance is considered within  $\pm 1$  standard deviation of

the mean (raw scores of 85-115). The children in this study performed above average on one measure of cognition in both English and Spanish.

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## Universally Designed Content Assessments for English Learners

Lauren Kennedy

The challenge when including ELs in content assessments is to ensure that the assessments are reliable and valid measures of their knowledge and skills. One way to increase reliability and validity is to examine what factors not related to the content or construct being tested may influence student scores. Any component of an assessment that produces variance in scores not based on the construct being tested is *construct irrelevant variance*. One technique that is used in large-scale assessment to reduce construct irrelevant variance is Universal Design (UD). UD has been applied to large-scale assessments with the goal of providing all students the opportunity to demonstrate achievement on the content being tested regardless of disability, gender, race, or English language proficiency. UD does not affect the content being tested; therefore, all students who have had the opportunity to learn the material will have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills on the assessment produced. The goal of UD is not to make the assessment “easier,” but to make the assessment accessible to the widest vari-

ety of students, including ELs. However, UD is not a replacement for good classroom instruction, nor does it eliminate the need for test accommodations or alternate assessments.

Universally designed assessments should take into account the following seven considerations that should underlie the development of an assessment from beginning to end and should help test designers and reviewers identify potential design issues in test items and tests as a whole [1].

### 1. Does the item measure what it intends to measure?

Items should be written to reflect the targeted content standards for the respective grade level. Thus, item writers and reviewers should understand a state’s content standards. Furthermore, content standards should be written in a clear and explicit manner to help item writers create items that align to state content standards. In item writing, it generally is desirable to minimize the need for knowledge and/or skills beyond those targeted by an item and the associated content standard. However,

**Reliability** is defined as consistency of measurement and refers to the degree to which test scores are free from different types of chance effects.

**Validity** refers to the degree of confidence that we can have in the test results. A test is valid when it measures what it claims to measure.

**The construct** is what is being tested by a test item or assessment. In state assessment, the construct is defined by the state’s content standards for each subject.

this guideline should not take precedence over the need to measure all relevant content standards, especially when a given standard requires overlapping or complementary knowledge or skills.

### 2. Does the item respect the diversity of the assessment population?

Items should be written with sensitivity to the characteristics and experiences of the students who will take the assessment. Item content or features that might unfairly advantage or disadvantage any student subgroup should be avoided, especially where assumptions about shared background knowledge are concerned. Thus, it is important to

would make items easier or harder for any subgroup. Although the goal is to eliminate bias from the assessment, certain biases are inherent in tests (e.g., assessments are written in a specific language and require literacy skills), and attempts to completely remove bias can result in the loss of validity due to test content being excessively “stripped down.”

### 3. Is the text formatted clearly?

A standard font (such as Arial or Times) and minimum point size (recommended minimum 12-point, and 14-point for grades 3 and below) should be utilized consistently to promote readability. Careful review of directions, texts, item formats, and layouts may improve the legibility of the text and the ability of students with disabilities to access the material.

### 4. Does the item have relevant and clear pictures and graphics?

Visuals that are part of items should be clearly labeled and should help students who need visual cues to construct meaning. Visuals should not distract students who do not need the visual aid.

### 5. Is the item text concise and readable?

Language complexity should be considered carefully in the construction of all assessments. Determining the complexity of language relies on a number of factors, such as syntactic structure, word frequency, number of syllables in a word, and sentence length. If reading is not the con-

struct being tested, vocabulary and syntactic complexity should be at least one grade below grade level to ensure that all students, including ELs and those students who are reading below grade level, are able to understand the item and how they are expected to respond. Items generally should employ commonly used words, except when vocabulary or terminology is being tested. Likewise, idioms and phrasal words can be difficult and should be avoided unless they are part of the content being tested.

### 6. Does the item allow changes to its format without changing its meaning or difficulty (including visual or memory load)?

Any item should be adaptable to the test accommodations that will be available (e.g., Braille, American Sign Language, oral presentation, translation to another language).

### 7. Does the test have a clean and organized appearance overall?

As a whole, any test should be well-organized and easy for a student to navigate through, with text flowing in a left-to-right and top-to-bottom direction.

Assessments that incorporate UD have the ability to meet the needs of the largest number of students, ensure that the assessment is not a barrier to the accurate measurement of learning, and support standardized assessment conditions. Although UD will not eliminate the need for accommodations or alternative tests, by incor-

porating features such as plain language, culturally unbiased items, and easy-to-read layout, the standard assessment will be appropriate for more students and more appropriate for all students. When test developers minimize the role of variables that may be construct-irrelevant, such as breadth of vocabulary, readability, and cultural knowledge in a test score, ELs can participate more fully in assessments and better demonstrate achievement on the content being tested.

### Notes

This article presents UD as one possible approach to test development and is for informational purposes only. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education, or NCELA, of UD as a test development strategy is intended and should not be inferred.

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For more information on Universal Design, review the June 2010 webinar provided by Second Language Testing: <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/webinars/event/24/>.

# Assessment Accommodations for ELs: Highlights from a Recent Study

Zenaida Aguirre-Muñoz

Despite reform calling for inclusion of all students in assessment practices, problems in the assessment of EL achievement persist. For native speakers of English, differences in performance are due to differences in familiarity with the test, exposure to the content of the test, and motivation to complete the task [1]. ELs have the added difficulty of the language on the test, which places them at a disadvantage [2, 3]. Although most states allow accommodations for ELs (changes to the test that allow students to access the test content), inconsistencies exist across states in accommodation policies and many do not target the unique needs of ELs [4]. Effective accommodations should allow ELs to overcome the linguistic and sociocultural barriers that may prohibit them from participating meaningfully in assessment and should not give an unfair advantage to students who receive accommodations over students who do not need them [5]. This study investigated three linguistic accommodation strategies to assess ELLs' subject matter (social studies) understanding [6] to answer two questions:

1. To what extent does the type of accommodation impact ELs' performance on an essay task?
2. Does linguistic modification of the text help to reduce the linguistic demands of a test?

## Methodology

A total of 888 students (49% female, 51% male) from eight Califor-

nia schools participated in the study; 76 percent of the sampled students (678) were identified as ELs representing varying levels of ELP. In addition, 210 students whose primary language is English, referred to as English Only (EO) students, also participated.

All students were assigned randomly to one task accommodation: a linguistically modified (syntax simplification) English version [7], a Spanish translation option that included the modified English version, a Spanish translation with no English option, or a non-accommodated English version (for comparison). Each student was asked to complete two content explanation tasks [8, 9] addressing two different topics covered in the seventh grade curriculum (Aztec and Rome). Two topics were used to obtain more in-depth rater consistency information on the outcome measure as well as to examine the effect of accommodation on task topic. Students received the same type of accommodation for both topics, counterbalanced to avoid potential order effects. Students were given primary source materials (letters written during the targeted time period) to read, as well as supplementary materials (maps and graphs) and were instructed to write essays about important issues during the targeted historical time periods, incorporating concepts from the texts they read and information from the supplementary materials.

The explanation tasks were scored on a previously validated focused holistic scoring rubric [6]. The holistic score was based on the elaboration of concepts and principles presented in the essays, the supporting facts and events described therein, the scope of conceptual and factual errors, the integration of resource materials, and the quality of the argument or interpretation of historical events. Exact score agreement, alpha coefficients, and generalizability analyses suggest that, overall, the nine raters who participated in the scoring session were consistent in their judgments of student work.

Separate Analyses of Covariance (ANCOVAs) were conducted for each topic to determine the impact of the modification strategies on ELs' performance. The two independent variables were ELP with three levels (Low, Low Intermediate, Intermediate) and type of accommodation with four levels (no accommodation, modified, Spanish option, Spanish-only). The dependent variables were the essay scores for each topic. For both ANCOVAs, covariates were used to control for group differences in prior knowledge (measured by a 20-item multiple-choice test) and exposure to the content (measured by teacher reports of time spent on the topic).

## Results

Statistical analyses revealed a significant main effect of accommodation on student performance

for both the Aztec and Rome tasks,  $F(3, 545) = 3.06, p < .03$  and  $F(3, 535) = 17.15, p < .001$  (for the Aztec and the Rome tasks respectively). Thus, scores on the explanation tasks varied depending on the type of accommodation a student received. A significant English proficiency main effect also was found for the Aztec task ( $p < .02$ ), but not for the Rome task, ( $p > .60$ ). This may suggest that the accommodations were more effective for the Rome task than the Aztec task at minimizing the language effect on the outcome variable, but is difficult to interpret due to the interaction (see Figures 1a and 1b).

As depicted in Figure 1a and 1b, significant interactions between type of accommodation and English proficiency were found for both explanation tasks,  $F(6, 545) = 3.02, p < .01$  and  $F(6, 535) = 4.83, p < .001$  (for the Aztec and the Rome explanation tasks respectively). This suggests that students with different levels of ELP differed in their performance on the explanation tasks depending on the type of accommodation a student received. Post hoc com-

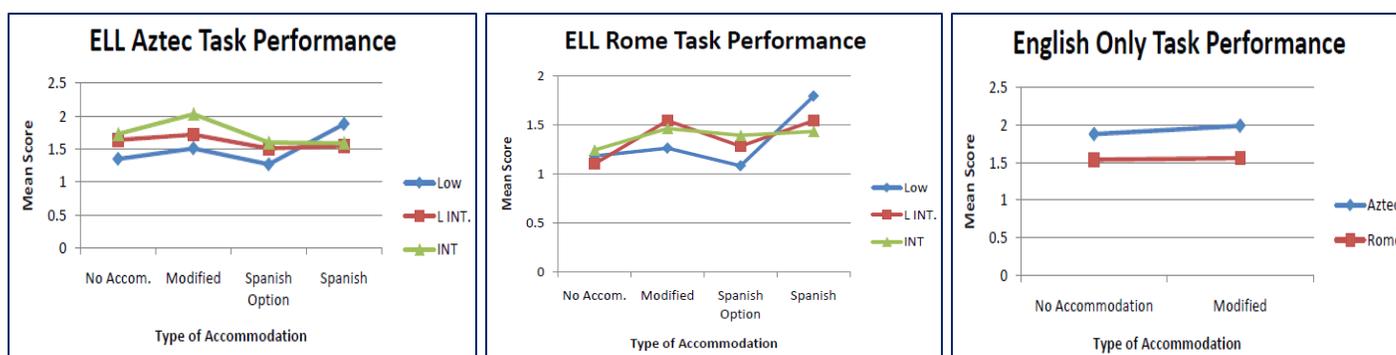
parisons of the adjusted means revealed that students with low ELP benefited the most from the Spanish version of the tasks. An equally important finding was that the modified English version of the task appeared to benefit students with low-intermediate and intermediate ELP more than they benefited from the English with Spanish option accommodation. This suggests that providing students with textual information in two languages may overwhelm them and therefore may not be the best accommodation to use.

The results are mixed in terms of deciding whether linguistic modifications of the English version are better for students of low-intermediate and intermediate English proficiency than Spanish versions. While these groups of students performed better on the modified English version than the Spanish version of the Aztec explanation task, the difference in the Rome task means between these two types of accommodations was not statistically significant. Finally, the two ANCOVAs that examined EO student responses to the non-accommodated and

the modified English versions (Figure 1c) demonstrated that the differences in essay score means were not significant,  $F(1, 120) = .64, p > .40$  and  $F(1, 114) = .03, p > .80$ . These results support the argument that linguistic modification of English text serves to reduce the linguistic demands of the test without making it an easier test.

## Conclusion

Appropriately matching students with linguistic accommodations is an important validity concern. This study investigated how best to match students with linguistic accommodation strategies. An important finding was that each of the accommodations to the explanation task had a differential impact on the performance of various groups of ELs. Those with the lowest English proficiency appeared to benefit the most by the Spanish-only accommodation, while the low intermediate and intermediate students benefited most from the modified English accommodation. This finding suggests that Spanish translations are appropriate for some ELs, but not all. It is therefore not appropriate



a. b. c.  
**Figure 1.** Adjusted mean scores for ELs for (a) Aztec and (b) Rome tasks by type of accommodation and ELP, and (c) for EO students for both tasks by accommodation

to assume that first language versions of assessments will provide valid measures of all ELs' content knowledge. The precise level of ELP should be considered before assigning this accommodation to ELs. There is also some evidence that students with higher levels of ELP may benefit more from modified English versions. If students with higher ELP receive more instruction in English, then this finding also suggests that the language of instruction should also be considered when assigning accommodations to ELs.

#### Funding Note

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<sup>1</sup> Proficiency level was based on scores on the Language Assessment Scale (LAS) and an English writing proficiency measure developed for the project.

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## Finding the Needed Assistance for PD and Teaching Foreign Languages

Judith Wilde

NCELA's mandate is to provide technical assistance information in a wide variety of topics related to ELs, including assessment, professional development, and language instruction educational programs, to a wide variety of clients, including SEAs, LEAs, IHE researchers, grantees, and the U.S. Department of Education. We encourage you to contact NCELA through email ([askNCELA@gwu.edu](mailto:askNCELA@gwu.edu)) or toll-free phone (800.321.6223); to register

for and review our webinars; and to explore our website, including the resource databases ([www.ncela.gwu.edu](http://www.ncela.gwu.edu)).

Beginning with this Quarterly Review, we also will be providing more specific information on resources that are available in the area of professional development and for grantees that focus on teaching foreign languages. On the following pages, you will find

*Promising EL-Focused PD Practices and Language Resource Centers*, each providing the names and contact information for technical assistance agencies and for technical assistance information centers. The PD article also lists some of the specific resources available from some of the centers.

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## Promising EL-Focused Professional Development Practices: An Inventory of Technical Assistance Center Resources

Patricia DiCerbo

A focus for many schools and districts is teachers' knowledge and skills in preparing ELs for academic success. Teacher preparation and PD play a critical role in promoting the use of evidence-based practices and emphasizing the role of all teachers in educating ELs. The PD that is offered, however, is not of consistent quality or effectiveness [e.g., 1]. School and district PD efforts range from single-day workshops held at the start of the school year to more intensive and job-embedded coaching or learning communities. These efforts may be based on significant research evidence culled from multiple settings, or on the wisdom of expert teachers working in isolated classrooms. One of the reasons for this disparity is a relative lack of awareness of the many sources of PD that are available. In an effort to inform the field in this area, The George Washington University Center for Excellence & Equity in Education (GW-CEEE) is working with NCELA to systematically identify EL-focused PD that is available through the federally supported network of technical assistance (TA) and dissemination centers. This article provides a snapshot of PD from a subset of centers examined in the search.

### Technical Assistance Centers

There are over 80 TA and dissemination projects funded by the USDE. A significant purpose is to support SEAs and LEAs in prepar-

ing educators for classroom contexts that include diverse learners. They do this, in part, by collecting and disseminating useful, evidence-based practices that address the PD of teachers and other educators. Among these are 21 comprehensive centers or CCs (16 regional comprehensive centers and five content centers), one diversity center (NCCRESt), and 10 equity assistance centers (EACs). Each center has a particular focus area. CCs work in collaboration to address the differentiated needs of low-performing schools and districts. NCCRESt supports state and local school systems to assure a quality, culturally responsive education for all students. EACs are funded under Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to assist states, districts, and schools in promoting equal educational opportunity regardless of race, gender, or national origin.

### PD Examples from 5 Centers

PD resources available through the centers address different student populations and grades, topics and functions. Across the PD examples described here are research syntheses and practitioner briefs with sufficient examples to inform practice, PD principles grounded in research, and multi-media resources designed to support PD events.

### 1. Comprehensive Center: Center on Instruction (COI)

Type: PD Research Synthesis

Student population/grades: ELs with limited language proficiency, learning disabilities, or both, K-8 emphasis.

Citation & Summary: Rivera, M. O., Moughamian, A. C., Lesaux, N. K., & Francis, D. J. (2008). *Language and reading interventions for English language learners and English language learners with disabilities*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation.

### Comprehensive Centers (Regional)

The Alaska Comprehensive Center

<http://www.alaskacc.org>

The Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center

<http://www.arcc.edvantia.org>

The California Comprehensive Center

<http://www.cacompcenter.org>

The Florida & Islands Comprehensive Center

<http://www.ets.org/flicc/>

The Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center

<http://www.learningpt.org/greatlakeeast>

The Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center

<http://www.learningpt.org/greatlakeswest>

The Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center

<http://macc.ceee.gwu.edu>

The Mid-Continent Comprehensive Center

<http://www.mc3edsupport.org>

The New England Comprehensive Center

<http://www.necomprehensivecenter.org>

The New York Comprehensive Center

<http://www.nycomprehensivecenter.org>

The North Central Comprehensive Center

<http://www.mcrel.org/nccc>

The Northwest Regional Comprehensive Center

<http://www.nwrel.org/nwrcc>

The Pacific Comprehensive Center

<http://www.pacificcompcenter.org>

The Southeast Comprehensive Center

<http://secc.sedl.org>

The Southwest Comprehensive Center

<http://www.swcompcenter.org>

The Texas Comprehensive Center

<http://txcc.sedl.org>

As one of its focus areas, COI provides materials and resources to improve instruction and intervention for ELs, including exemplary delivery models and PD for content and language teachers. This synthesis of research includes classroom examples and scenarios. A separate section provides recommendations for PD, emphasizing the importance of PD that is ongoing and embedded in the general education curriculum, building the capacity of content-area and language development teachers to meet the needs of ELs. According to the authors, considerations for PD include, at a minimum, knowledge of the diversity within the EL population and how to address it, skill in providing explicit, scaffolded and evidence-based instruction with an emphasis on content-area literacy, and practice in administering and using formative assessment. An appendix provides information on each of the studies cited.

### 2. *Comprehensive Center: Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center (MACC)*

*Type:* PD Guiding Principles & Parent Materials

*Student population/grades:* ELs, later elementary-high school

*Citation & Summary:* Rivera, C., Anstrom, K., & Muirhead, M. (2009). *Promoting excellence: Ensuring academic success for English language learners-guiding principles*. Washington, DC: GW-CEEE.

MACC provides technical assistance to build SEA capacity (DE, DC, MD, NJ, PA) to address the needs of schools and districts in

need of improvement. The six *promoting excellence* principles synthesize research on effective EL practices through indicators of high quality that districts and schools can utilize to address: (1) high expectations, (2) full English proficiency, (3) challenging core content, (4) appropriate instruction, (5) valid assessment, and (6) shared responsibility. A parent manual and practitioner guide provide model dialogues, sample questions and strategies to advocate for quality instruction for EL children. These publications have been field tested and used to provide statewide PD.

### *Comprehensive Centers (Content)*

Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center  
<http://www.aacompcenter.org>  
 Center on Innovation & Improvement  
<http://www.centerii.org>  
 Center on Instruction  
<http://www.centeroninstruction.org>  
 National High School Center  
<http://www.betterhighschools.org>  
 National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality  
<http://www.ncctq.org>

### 3. *Comprehensive Center: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (NCCTQ)*

*Type:* PD Evaluation Tool

*Student population/grades:* ELs, unspecified grades

*Citation & Summary:* McGraner, K.L. & Saenz, L. (2009, September). *Preparing teachers of English language learners*. Washington, DC: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

NCCTQ serves as a national resource for strengthening teacher quality, especially in high-poverty, low-performing, and hard-to-staff schools. This document provides policy and research background on effective instructional and PD practices for EL academic instruction. A core section describes the *Innovation Configuration for Preparing Mainstream Teachers of ELs*, a tool for evaluating general education teacher preparation and PD. The tool has two dimensions: key concepts or principles drawn from the literature, and the degree to which these concepts are implemented within course syllabi. Five concepts are evaluated: sociocultural and political foundations for teaching ELs, foundations of second language acquisition, knowledge for teaching academic content, effective instructional practices for teaching academic content to ELs, and assessment practices and accommodations for ELs.

### 4. *Diversity Center: The National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems and Evidence-Based Practices (NCCREST)*

*Type:* Practitioner Brief

*Student population/grades:* culturally and linguistically diverse students, unspecified grades

*Citation & Summary:* King, K.A., Artiles, A.J., & Kozleski, E.B. (2009). *Professional learning for culturally responsive teaching*. Phoenix, AZ: Arizona State University: NCCREST.

NCCREST provides technical assistance and PD to close the achievement gap between students from culturally and linguistically diverse

backgrounds and their peers, and reduce inappropriate referrals to special education. The brief presents examples of PD that include teacher inquiry, professional communities of learning, professional learning schools, and approaches that combine content knowledge with culturally responsive teaching. Together, these examples illustrate NCCRESt's six professional learning principles based on research conducted by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE) as well as the work of McLaughlin and Talbert [2]:

- Ground desired outcomes, content and activities in the diverse, multicultural context that characterizes the school community;
- Collaborate with others in using discourse, inquiry-based activity, and the public practice of teaching;
- Embed within daily professional practice and discourse;
- Measure success through positive learning outcomes for diverse students;
- Examine and improve upon existing content and process of instruction; and
- Distribute knowledge to build sustainable educational communities.

5. *Equity Assistance Center:  
Region IX West Regional Equity  
Network*

Type: Media Lab

Student population/grades: ELs,  
preK-college

Citation & Summary: *Language  
differences media lab: Teaching  
ELs*

<http://www.equityallianceatasu.org/ell>

The Equity Alliance at Arizona State University serves in part as the Region IX EAC, supporting SEAs and LEAs in Arizona, California, and Nevada. PD resources developed by the Equity Alliance build on NCCRESt's six principles. Their language differences media lab offers multimedia artifacts for different content and topic areas (e.g., mathematics, science, assessment, and instruction), student populations and grade levels (e.g., ELs in elementary or high school). A primary resource in the lab is a collection of videos focused on principles of second language learning, and ELs in classroom settings. As one example, *Teaching Science to High School ELs* shows a science lesson in which the

teacher uses visuals and concept webs to develop ELs' understanding of food chains.

### Summary

What this small number of PD resources suggests is the potential range of PD materials available for schools and districts. The examples described represent diverse topics and delivery modes. This reflects the reality of different classrooms and schools, all engaged in the responsibility of effectively teaching a growing EL population.

Common to all five is a shared perspective on an essential feature of PD for teachers of ELs, namely PD that supports collaboration between language education and content-area teachers, and en-

compasses the multiple academic settings in which language is used.

### References

1. Killion, J. (2002). *Assessing impact: Evaluating staff development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
2. McLaughlin, M.W. & Talbert, J.E. (2006). *Building school-based teacher learning communities*. New York: Teachers College.

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### *Diversity & Equity Assistance Centers*

#### Diversity Centers

National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems and Evidence-Based Practices  
<http://www.nccrest.org>

#### Equity Assistance Centers

Region I - New England Equity Assistance Center (NEEAC)  
<http://www.alliance.brown.edu/>

Region II Equity Assistance Center  
<http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/AC.html>

Region III - The Mid-Atlantic Equity Center  
<http://www.maec.org>

Region IV - Southeastern Equity Center  
<http://www.southeastequity.org>

Region V Equity Assistance Center  
<http://www.peo.soe.umich.edu/>

Region VI - South Central Collaborative for Equity  
<http://www.idra.org>

Region VII - Midwest Equity Assistance Center  
<http://www.meac.org>

Region VIII - The Interwest Equity Assistance Center  
<http://www.colostate.edu/programs/EAC/>

Region IX West Regional Equity Network (WREN)  
<http://www.ed.arizona.edu/wren>

Region X—Equity Assistance Center  
<http://nwrel.org/cnorse/>



## Language Resource Centers

### *Second Language Testing, Inc.*

Since 1990, the U.S. Department of Education has provided Language Resource Center (LRC) grants for the establishment and operation of centers that serve as resources through teacher training, research, and materials development that improve the nation's capacity for teaching and learning foreign languages, as well as dissemination projects. More information can be found at:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/iegpslrc/index.html>.

Association	Website	Housed at	Phone/e-mail
Center for Advanced Language Proficiency Education and Research	<a href="http://calper.la.psu.edu">http://calper.la.psu.edu</a>	Pennsylvania State University	T: 814-863-1212 calper@psu.edu
Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition	<a href="http://carla.umn.edu">http://carla.umn.edu</a>	University of Minnesota	T: 612-626-8600 carla@umn.edu
Center for Applied Second Language Studies	<a href="http://casls.uoregon.edu/">http://casls.uoregon.edu/</a>	University of Oregon	T: 541-346-5699 F: 541-346-6303
Center for Educational Resources in Culture, Language and Literacy	<a href="http://cercll.arizona.edu/">http://cercll.arizona.edu/</a>	University of Arizona	T: 520-626-8071 cercll@email.arizona.edu
Center for Languages of the Central Asian Region	<a href="http://www.indiana.edu/~celcar">http://www.indiana.edu/~celcar</a>	Indiana University	T: 812-856-1230 celcar@indiana.edu
Center for Language Education and Research	<a href="http://clear.msu.edu">http://clear.msu.edu</a>	Michigan State University	T: 517-432-2286 clear@msu.edu
Language Acquisition Resource Center	<a href="http://larc.sdsu.edu/">http://larc.sdsu.edu/</a>	San Diego State University	T: 619-594-6177 larc@mail.sdsu.edu
National African Language Resource Center	<a href="http://lang.nalrc.wisc.edu/nalrc">http://lang.nalrc.wisc.edu/nalrc</a>	University of Wisconsin-Madison	T: 608-265-7905 nalrc@mailplus.wisc.edu
National Capital Language Resource Center	<a href="http://www.ncrc.org">http://www.ncrc.org</a>	Georgetown University/ George Washington University/ Center for Applied Linguistics	T: 202-973-1086 ncrc@gwu.edu
National East Asian Language Resource Center	<a href="http://nealrc.osu.edu">http://nealrc.osu.edu</a>	Ohio State University	T: 614-292-4361
National Foreign Language Resource Center	<a href="http://nflrc.hawaii.edu">http://nflrc.hawaii.edu</a>	University of Hawai'i	T: 808-956-9424 info@ncrc.org
National Heritage Language Resource Center	<a href="http://www.nhrc.ucla.edu">http://www.nhrc.ucla.edu</a>	University of California, L.A./UC Consortium for Language Learning & Teaching	T: 310-825-1138 nhrc@international.ucla.edu
National K-12 Foreign Language Resource Center	<a href="http://nflrc.iastate.edu">http://nflrc.iastate.edu</a>	Iowa State University	T: 515-294-6699 nflrc@iastate.edu
National Middle East Language Resource Center	<a href="http://nmlrc.org">http://nmlrc.org</a>	Brigham Young University	T: 801-422-7192 nmlrc-research@byu.edu
South Asia Language Resource Center	<a href="http://salrc.uchicago.edu">http://salrc.uchicago.edu</a>	University of Chicago	T: 773-834-3399 salrc@uchicago.edu

*Second Language Testing, Inc., is a partner in NCELA activities; they focus on various issues related to testing and foreign language. Corresponding author—Catherine Casteel, e-mail: [CCasteel@2lti.com](mailto:CCasteel@2lti.com).*