

Preparing Mainstream Teachers and Secondary Content Teachers to Teach English Language Learners: Resources for Applicants and Grantees under the National Professional Development Program

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Introduction

English language learners (ELLs) are the fastest growing segment of the school-age population in the United States. In the 2004-2005 school year, 5,119,561 ELLs were enrolled in grades K-12 in U.S. public schools (NCELA, 2005). While the population of ELL students continues to increase dramatically, the number of teachers effectively prepared to provide instruction to these students has not kept pace with their growing numbers. Nearly half of all teachers of ELL students have not received any preparation in methods to teach them (Waxman, 2004). Although ELL students spend the majority of their school day in classes with mainstream teachers, only one-sixth of institutions of higher education require the preparation of mainstream elementary and secondary teachers with respect to the education of ELL students (Antunez & Menken, 2001).

NCLB requirements for demonstrated improvement of limited English proficient students in English language proficiency and core academic subjects have challenged States, districts and schools to better prepare all teachers of ELL students. Not only must teachers of ELL students be fluent in English and highly qualified in the subjects they teach, but they must also understand how students acquire a second language and how to provide instruction that accelerates the acquisition of language, literacy and diverse content knowledge. A collaborative, capacity-building effort by institutions of higher education and their partners—States, schools and districts—to train all teachers in research-based practices for ELL students will address the need for districts to staff classrooms with teachers who are prepared to meet the language and academic needs of ELL students.

To address the national professional development need for better prepared teachers of ELL students, OELA announced under the Fiscal Year 2007 NPD competition priorities for improved teacher education programs and for the preparation for secondary content teachers. This effort is intended to close the achievement gap between ELL students and their English proficient peers by preparing teachers effectively. The program priorities are for projects that:

1. Are designed to improve a teacher education program in order to better prepare all teachers to provide effective instruction to LEP students. In such projects, IHEs would collaborate with both an LEA and SEA on activities such as:

- Professional development to improve the ability of higher education faculty in preparing prospective teachers to teach LEP students, and
 - Development of teacher education curricula that are 1) aligned with State content standards and State English language proficiency standards and 2) prepare all teacher candidates in an institution to provide instruction that accelerates LEP students' acquisition of language (including academic language), literacy, and content knowledge.
2. Support high-quality professional development that enables secondary content teachers to provide instruction that reflects aligned State English language proficiency standards and State content standards and assessments.

The following citations provide information on ongoing research, research-based practices, implications for professional development, and other resources for the preparation of mainstream teachers and secondary content teachers. Resources for *Developing Language, Literacy and Content Knowledge* were selected based upon presentations made by researchers and practitioners at OELA National Summits. Additional resources are cited in the following sections, *Preparing Secondary Content Teachers* and *Other Resources*. Although they do not represent a complete list of resources on these topics, they are intended to assist applicants and grantees under the NPD program in designing program plans that reflect OELA's priorities.

Developing Language, Literacy and Content Knowledge

“Research-Based Recommendations for Instruction and Academic Interventions” combines the findings from two large studies and a systematic review of empirical research. The product provides evidence-based recommendations for instruction and intervention in reading and math for ELLs. It focuses on the development of academic language skills as the key to school success. Its “...recommendations apply to both a class-wide instructional format and individualized, targeted interventions, depending on the population and the goals of the instruction” (Center on Instruction, 2006, p.2).

Its key recommendations:

- Teachers must understand which strategies effective the academic language of second language learners.
- Teachers must also learn how to explicitly teach phonological awareness and phonics to develop second language learners' decoding skills.
- Teachers need to increase opportunities for building students' sophisticated vocabulary knowledge.
- Strategies to build comprehension of narrative and expository texts, and ways to help students make connections to the text before, during, and after reading are essential for ELL success.

- Teachers must be trained in how to teach and improve reading fluency and comprehension through oral reading activities, vocabulary development, and increased exposure to print.
- Teachers also need to learn ways to teach students to monitor for meaning in understanding texts read and encourage independent reading that is structured and purposeful.

“In late elementary school and early middle school, reading becomes more demanding for students as texts use increasingly more complex language. There has been much research about the challenges faced by students during the early stages of learning to read. We’d like to learn more about the obstacles encountered during later grades as children transition from ‘learning to read’ and begin ‘reading to learn’ (Francis, 2005).

The authors of “Research-Based Recommendations for Instruction and Academic Interventions” are David J. Francis, Mabel Rivera and Hector Rivera, University of Huston, Nonie Lesaux and Michael Kieffer, Harvard Graduate School of Education. The text is “Book 1” of a three-book set (Book 2 is referenced below), is available at www.centeroninstruction.org. David Francis’ most recent publication is Francis, D.J., Snow, C.E., August, D., Carlson, C.D., Miller, J., & Iglesias, A. (2006). Measures of reading comprehension: A latent variable analysis of the diagnostic assessment of reading comprehension. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 10, 301-322.

“Teaching the Language of School: How All Teachers Can Support English Language Learners” by Robin Scarcella outlines research-based instructional strategies for integrating rigorous content with explicit instruction of English. These two areas combine to form academic English, the “language of the school”. This study also addresses age differences in second language development, academic English language development and the role of error correction in second language instruction. An important aspect of this study emphasizes instructional feedback and explicit grammar instruction to support the writing development of high school ELLs. In general, “all students, but particularly ELLs, benefit when they are taught the language of school. In fact most students require instruction to develop school language. A variety of research-based, motivating and effective means are available to teach academic language. These practices are relevant to all levels, but particularly designed for ELLs at the upper elementary and secondary levels. Rigorous content instruction must be integrated with explicit instruction of language, and attention given to both. The PowerPoint presentation by the author, Robin Scarcella, University of California at Irvine, is accessible at http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/summit2005/presentations/RobinScarcella_generalModifiedFinal.pdf. Dr. Scarcella’s latest book is titled [**Accelerating Academic English: A Focus on the English Learner**](#) (Paperback - 2003).

“Reading and the need for strategic lexical development for secondary ESL students” was originally published in *California Social Studies Review* (Fall 2000). The author, Kate Kinsella, presented an updated version in 2006 called “Essential Features of Structured, Inclusive Academic Discussions.” The Power Point slides are available at

http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/Summit2006/Presentations/KateKinsella/KateKinsella_ksynote_handouts.pdf. The slides provide an extensive set of instructions for turning classroom interactions into academic language exercises. It includes “Language Strategies for Active Classroom Participation” (even for expressing polite disagreement & providing reasons), “Examples of Structured Academic Talk”, “The Benefits of Highly Structured and Systematic Student Partnering,” and a “List of Readings Relevant to Closing the Verbal Gap for K-12 English Language Learners and Striving Readers.” Dr. Kinsella is coauthor, with Dr. Kevin Feldman, of Scholastic’s *READ 180* Intervention Program interactive teaching curricula called the *rBook* published in summer 2005, <http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/read180/>.

In “Preventing Reading Difficulties Among Spanish-Speaking Children,” the authors Sharon Vaughn, Sylvia Linan-Thomson, University of Texas at Austin present evidence that some Spanish speaking children will struggle to become readers, regardless of the language of instruction (English or Spanish). Much of what we know about teaching reading to native English speaking struggling readers applies to teaching native Spanish speaking struggling readers. Thus, interventions designed to teach reading should be effective in either Spanish or English. Oracy development and ESL strategies are critical additions to reading interventions for Spanish speaking students. An overview of their study is accessible at

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/Summit2006/Presentations/Vaughn-sharon06.pdf>

See also Vaughn, S., Cirino, P. T., Linan-Thompson, S., Mathes, P. G., Carlson, C. D., Cardenas-Hagan, E., et al. (in press). “Effectiveness of a Spanish intervention and an English intervention for English language learners at risk for reading problems.” *American Educational Research Journal*. The website address for the Vaughn Gross Center for Reading & Language Arts is <http://www.texasreading.org>.

“Project SAILL: Success through Academic Interventions in Language and Literacy,” came to similar conclusions as the Vaughn/Linan-Thomson study (above), but adds that some instructional adjustments are important. Interventions that are effective with struggling native English readers are likely to be necessary but insufficient for improving literacy achievement among the English-language learners. It is possible that combining high-quality instruction in the literacy components with special efforts to enhance English oral language development in the context of this literacy instruction will lead to success. The researchers are Diane August, Elsa Hagan and Ari Sherris of the University of Houston, University of Texas at Austin, Center for Applied Linguistics, University of Miami. Slides of their presentation are available at

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/Summit2006/Presentations/10-30-06RisingStars.pdf>. Dr. August was the Principal Investigator, and Timothy Shanahan the Panel Chair, of the research group that produced *Developing Literacy in Second-Language Learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006. The executive summary is available at http://www.cal.org/natl-lit-panel/reports/Executive_Summary.pdf.

“Researching Academic Success Through Research-Based Vocabulary Strategies” outlines how content teachers can develop comprehension in classroom interactions and text reading via vocabulary building. The presentation illustrates how vocabulary knowledge correlates to comprehension in classroom discourse. The authors, Socorro Herrera, Scott Calder, and Denise Johnson outline strategies to accelerate vocabulary development in ELL students. Finally, they provide examples of three projects where these principles are being researched, across the curricula. The authors argue that it takes multiple, meaningful interactions with a word to understand it and apply it in multiple contexts. Find their slides at

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/Summit2006/Presentations/Herrera.pdf>. Also, Socorro G. Herrera and Kevin G. Murry authored [Mastering ESL and Bilingual Methods: Differentiated Instruction for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse \(CLD\) Students](#) (Paperback -July 26, 2004).

“Successful Strategies to Promote Literacy Skills in Adolescents” provides teachers with methods for teaching adolescent ELLs within the content areas. The authors, Edmund Hamann, Chandra Diaz-DeBose, and Julie Meltzer present that literacy development across the content areas is related to “student motivation and engagement to read and write, implementing research-based strategies for teaching and learning, and integrating reading and writing across the curriculum.” Find their slides at

http://www.alliance.brown.edu/pubs/adlit/adell_litdv1.pdf. Meltzer and Hamann also authored: *Meeting the Literacy Development Needs of Adolescent English Language Learners Through Content Area Learning Part One: Focus on Motivation and Engagement*, which can be found at

http://www.alliance.brown.edu/db/ea_catalog.php#item1076a and

Meeting the Literacy Development Needs of Adolescent English Language Learners Through Content Area Learning Part Two: Focus on Developing Academic Literacy Habits and Skills Across the Content Areas, which can be found at

http://www.alliance.brown.edu/db/ea_catalog.php#item1085a.

Assessing English Language Learners: Bridges From Language Proficiency to Academic Achievement, Jan 13, 2006; Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press,

(<http://www.corwinpress.com/>) is authored by Margo Gottlieb, Illinois Resource Center, and starts with the assumption that student assessment is the cornerstone of standards-based education for all students. However, for the growing population of English Language Learners, measuring their acquisition of language, along with their content learning, is a multifaceted process [Publisher’s abstract]. Dr. Gottlieb examines the unique needs of English Language Learners and describes strategies for implementing both instruction and assessment of language and content to advance the academic language proficiency of English Language Learners through enhanced teaching and assessment techniques. Her text covers

- Rubrics, charts, checklists, surveys, and other ready-to-use tools

- Professional development activities
- An integrated approach to teaching standards, language, and content
- Guidance on how best to address standardized testing and grading

[Publisher's abstract]

See also "Evidence-Based Teaching Strategies for Achieving Academic English and Content. The Theory Behind the Research" at http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/summit2004/PDFs/Margo_GottliebPPT.pdf. It is Part 1 of "How to Design Science-Based Instructional Systems for Achieving Academic English and Content," with Diane August, and Margarita Calderón.

Preparing Secondary Content Teachers

“Research-Based Recommendations for Serving Adolescent Newcomers” is Book 2 of the three-book set, by David J. Francis, Mabel Rivera and Hector Rivera, University of Huston, Nonie Lesaux and Michael Kieffer, Harvard Graduate School of Education. It is also available at www.centeroninstruction.org. The text identifies effective practices and programs to support the academic achievement of this subgroup of ELLs who present unique challenges because of the central role-played by academic language proficiency in the acquisition of content knowledge in middle and high schools.

“Project ExCEL, Excelling English Language Learners,” is a staff development program and an instructional design for middle and high school teachers of English, science, and social studies who have English-language learners (ELLs) in their classrooms. In it, middle and high school teachers of science, social studies, math, -- and even Language Arts and English as a second language – are trained to teach reading to older ELLs and struggling adolescents. Literacy and content coaches are also included in the training. By means of this approach, low-performing middle and high schools in the U.S. are shown how to abandon their obsolete structures and mind-sets, to involve all content teachers in developing literacy and content knowledge to all students, including ELLs. The authors are Margarita Calderón, Liliana Minaya-Rowe and Argelia Carreón. See a program description at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/Summit2006/Presentations/OELADay1ExCELL.pdf>. The authors have also developed a course syllabus for “Training Teachers to Develop ELL Literacy and Subject Matter Knowledge Using Effective, Research-Based Instruction,” described in <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/summit2005/presentations/LilianaMinaya/TrainingTeachers.pdf>. They are the authors of *Designing and Implementing Two-Way Bilingual Programs: A Step-by-Step Guide for Administrators, Teachers, and Parents*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2003.

“Double the Work: Challenges and Solutions to Acquiring Language and Academic Literacy for Adolescent English Language Learners” brings the challenges confronting adolescent ELLs into a focus by defining the five elements that constitute *academic literacy* and six issues for improving the literacy of adolescent ELLs. The authors, Deborah J. Short and Shannon Fitzsimmons, reviewed the literature and conducted site visits to three promising programs. The process resulted in an array of strategies for surmounting the six issues by making day-to-day teaching practices, professional training, research and education policy. Among other important insights, the study identifies the situations in which the same literacy interventions will not necessarily work for both native speakers of English and ELLs. The study is accessible at <http://www.carnegie.org/literacy>.

“The Quality Teaching for English Learners” (QTEL) is a professional development project that specifically focuses on helping teacher educators become better equipped to educate teachers of secondary students who are also learning English as a second language. It offers theoretical and practical strategies for effectively teaching the academic language, conceptual understandings, and skills that are critical for ensuring that English language learners are fully prepared to benefit from a successful education [Publisher’s abstract]. QTEL incorporates multimedia modules designed to develop teacher expertise and student achievement. To learn more, visit: <http://www.wested.org/cs/tqip/print/docs/qt/home.htm>

“The Help! Kit” was created specifically for mainstream secondary educators who are teaching ELLs. It is published by ESCORT with funds from the U.S. Office of Migrant Education and the Department of Education. Comprehensive in scope, this resource helps mainstream teachers with cultural and social implications, strategies, specific guides for integrating content and language in various subject areas, and system-wide reform including ideas for involving parents and gaining funds for the school’s efforts. It is accessible at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/escort/secondaryhelpkit.html>

The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2004, <http://www.cal.org/siop/> or <http://www.siopinstitute.net/>) was developed to provide teachers with a well-articulated, practical model of sheltered instruction. The intent of the model is to facilitate high quality instruction for ELLs in content area teaching (Principals Partnership, 2006). The SIOP Model can be viewed as an umbrella under which other programs developed for improving instruction can reside. It is based on current knowledge and research-based practices for promoting high quality instruction for ELLs. It is used in most of the 50 states and in hundreds of schools across the U.S. as well as in several other countries.

Additional Resources

In 1990, under the Consent Decree, Florida required all teachers to become prepared to teach second language learners. Since then, the Florida Department of Education has

approved all institutes' efforts in including training for ELLs as a part of teacher certification. Two approaches are provided: separate courses (five graduate courses) with a focus on ELLs for in pre-service training, or an infusion model where issues relating to ELLs have been incorporated throughout the courses and experiences. The two options are described in detail at: http://www.firn.edu/doe/profdev/pdf/final_esol.pdf. Look for the "Five Course Sequence" or the "Infused ESOL Model."

"Calexico on the Move" describes the professional development program for mainstream classroom teachers in a district that initially failed to reach its ELL population, but ended up making great strides in reaching all students. One of the contributing factors to success was "extensive professional development and coaching for teachers, principals and curriculum specialists" (Zimmerman, 2004, p. 3). Specific strategies were the foundation of the seminars, focusing on developing content knowledge and language simultaneously while addressing affective factors in the classroom. This professional development program was required for administrators as well as instructors to enhance the whole community knowledge of best practices. The article is accessible in *R&D Alert, WestEd*, 6, 3-4, <http://www.wested.org/cs/we/view/feat/37>

The University of South Florida – St. Petersburg – TAPESTRY Program, <http://tapestry.usf.edu/index.html>, involves professional development for IHE faculty. The lectures of national experts in the ELL/ESL field presented to IHE faculty have been video-recorded. The ESOL TAPESTRY lecture series was designed to support the process of ESOL integration into a wide range of teacher preparation courses and programs. In creating the modules, collaboration with leading experts in the teaching ESOL (TESOL) field became evident. Experts were asked to present the most crucial information in their areas of specialization to the teacher educators. The video lectures, which cover specific issues in brief, are available on their website as well as on CDs. There is an associated resource page for each module, which provides a more in depth coverage of the topic of discussion. Each module begins with a pre-viewing activity and ends with a post-viewing activity (Introduction to TAPESTRY, <http://tapestry.usf.edu/introduction.html>).

"Collaboration between ESL and Content Teachers: How Do We Know when We Are Doing It Right," suggests ways that teacher-educators can prepare their students with the process of co-planning and supporting partnerships between ESL and their content peers. As part of a school-based professional development initiative, it presents an "...emerging framework that draws on teacher talk and critical discourse analysis to describe and evaluate the stages of collaboration, and the different levels of its effectiveness" [Publisher's abstract]. The author of the paper is Chris Davison. His paper is located at <http://eric.ed.gov/>, EJ742510.

"The National Directory of Teacher Education Programs for Teachers of Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students," CREDE is one of exemplary pre-service and in-service programs that effectively prepare teachers to work with culturally and linguistically (CLD) students. The directory includes information on various teacher education and professional development programs, including programs that prepare teachers to teach

content to English language learners (ELLs). The directory is found at:
<http://crede.berkeley.edu/research/crede/tools/directory2-1/main.html>

“Strategies and Resources for Mainstream Teachers of English Language Learners,” The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NREL) has profiled several Northwest schools where teachers are working to improve the achievement of their ELLs. Although no data on the efforts of these schools are reported, profiles of schools that have high and low percentages of ELLs, are found in both rural and urban areas, and demonstrate a variety of strategies used in different contexts, highlighting how they are meeting the challenges of implementing *No Child Left Behind* requirements. The profiles can be found at: <http://www.nwrel.org/request/2003may/index.html>.

Programs that Prepare Teachers to Work Effectively with Students Learning English,” argues for “...new approaches to teacher education based on the belief that English language learner’ access to challenging content can be enhanced through teaching strategies that provide multiple pathways to the understanding of language and content” [Publisher’s abstract]. It examines problems with traditional teacher education programs and identifies two pre-service programs that “...specifically prepare teachers to work effectively with immigrants students” [Publisher’s abstract]. The authors are Josue E. Gonzalez and Linda Darling-Hammond. Their article is located in ERIC, <http://eric.ed.gov/>, ED447724 2000-12-00. Click on title, then on “Full Text.” The article can also be found at the Center of Applied Linguistics’ website. View the article at: <http://www.cal.org/resources/Digest/0009programs.html>.

“The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards” (NBPTS) has identified 12 standards of accomplished teaching as a basis for National Board Certification in the field of English as a New Language. They are organized into three areas of teaching: preparing for student learning; advancing student learning; and supporting student learning.

"Doing What Works" (DWW) Practice Guide on "Effective Literacy and English Language Instruction for English Learners in the Elementary Grades" recommends these strategies:

- Early screening and identification
- Early intervention
- Progress monitoring/Reasonable expectations in beginning reading
- Academic English
- Vocabulary and reading comprehension
- Peer assisted learning
- Early introduction of English language reading instruction for students learning to read in Spanish

Developed by:
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Accessible soon, along with reports on studies of ELL learning, at
<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/>

OELA Resources for NPD Programs