

# Assessing K-2 English Language Proficiency: *Principles, Purposes, and Practices*

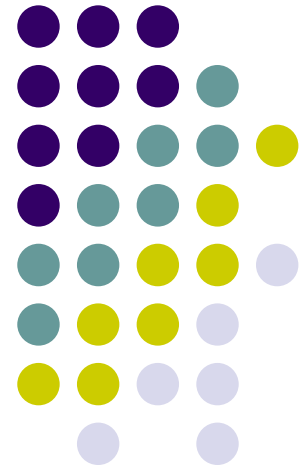
Margo Gottlieb, Ph.D.

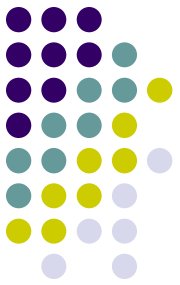
and

Edynn Sato, Ph.D.

Web conference for the National Clearinghouse  
for English Language Acquisition

June 15, 2009

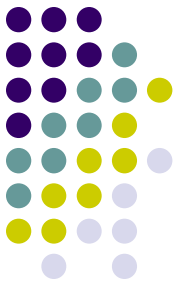




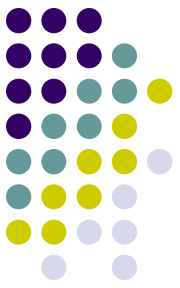
# Overview

Principles, purposes, and practices for K-2 English language proficiency assessment:

- Classroom Assessment (Margo Gottlieb)
- Large-scale Assessment (Edynn Sato)

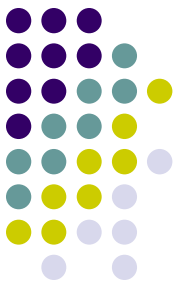


# Classroom-based Principles of Language Assessment



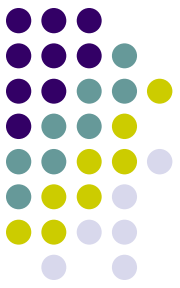
# Principle 1.

Classroom assessment for young English language learners is anchored in state English language proficiency standards and reflects standards-referenced differentiated language targets.



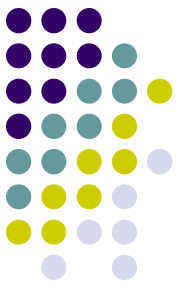
## Principle 2.

Classroom assessment for young English language learners is synchronized with the language goals of the local language education program in concert with its curriculum.



## Principle 3.

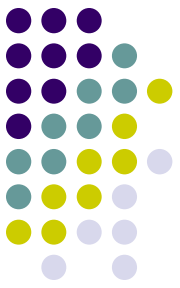
Classroom assessment for young English language learners is developmentally appropriate and is shaped by learner characteristics, such as prior educational experiences as well as language and cultural backgrounds.



## Principle 4.

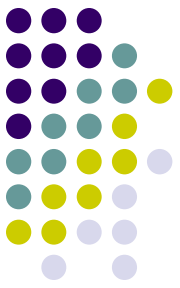
Assessment for young English language learners yields a body of evidence that provides useful and meaningful information about the students' language performance to make sound classroom-based decisions.

# Principle 5.



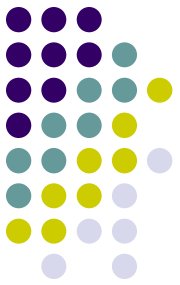
Classroom assessment for young English language learners accentuates what students can do and the results help explain the relationship between the students' language proficiency and academic achievement.



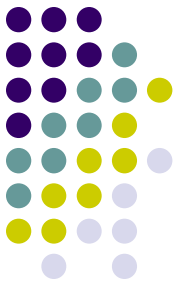


## Principle 6.

Classroom assessment for young English language learners' language proficiency relies on multiple measures and input from multiple stakeholders, including family members and the community-at-large.



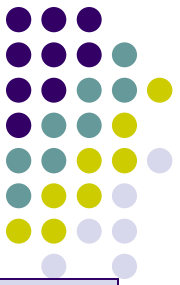
# Principles of Large-scale Language Assessment



# Principle 1.

Large-scale assessment for young English language learners' language proficiency is aligned to the state's assessed English language proficiency standards.

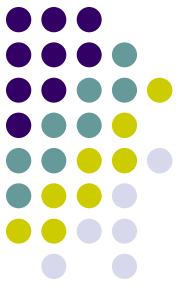
# Principle 2.



Large-scale assessment for young English language learners' language proficiency reflects language skills and knowledge that have research and theoretical bases.

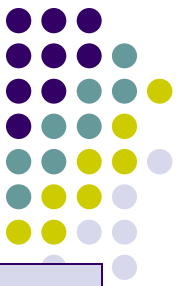
That is, there are research and theory to support the assessed ELP domain, including decisions about

- the relationship among skills and knowledge of the modalities (listening, speaking, reading, writing),
- the relationship of the K-2 standards to the grade 3-12 standards,
- the continuity/discontinuity of skills across grade spans,
- the range of complexity of the language tested, and
- age-appropriate, familiar contextualization.



## Principle 3.

Large-scale assessment for young English language learners' language proficiency is consistent with the intended purpose of the assessment and use of its results.

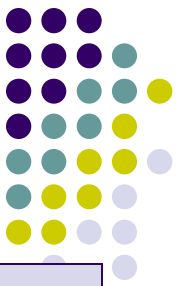


# Principle 4.

Large-scale assessment for young English language learners' language proficiency is appropriate for the student population in terms of considering their

- diversity (e.g., culture, language, experiences)
- differential rates of physical, cognitive, and linguistic skill development and maturity
- literacy skills (e.g., limited, none)
- language proficiency in each modality – listening, speaking, reading, writing (e.g., minimal)

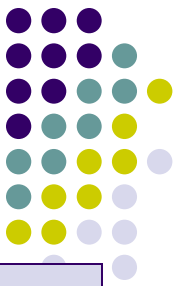
| MATURITY | LEVEL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY <sup>1</sup> |           |           |
|----------|--|-----------|-----------|
|          | Limited  | Moderate  | Adequate  |
| Limited  | Student 1  | Student 3 | Student 5 |
| Adequate | Student 2  | Student 4 | Student 6 |



# Principle 5.

Large-scale assessment for young English language learners' language proficiency is administered in a manner that will best support students' ability to demonstrate what they know and can do. For example, consideration of

- Burden (e.g., student, administrator, scoring)
- Item format, type, style
- Individual versus small group administration
- Familiarity (e.g., setting, administrator, materials)
- Scripting, guidelines for administration
- Practice/warm up activity for students
- Training, professional development



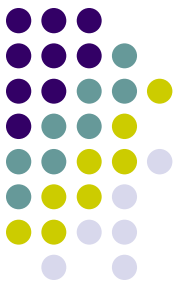
# Principle 6.

Large-scale assessment for young English language learners' language proficiency involves a priori considerations and planning related to technical quality of the assessment. For example, consideration of

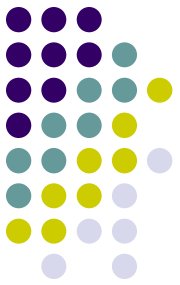
- Validity
  - Content alignment, linkage
  - Multiple sources of information (e.g., cognitive interviews, pilot testing, field testing, expert judgment, external referents)
  - Primary/dominant modality assessed
  - Fidelity of administration
  - Considerations related to scoring, reporting, use of results
- Reliability
- Freedom from bias and sensitivity



# Conclusion: Shared Principles

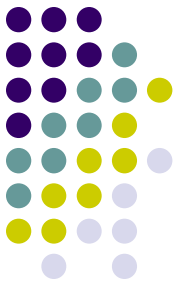


- Assessments are aligned to and representative of standards.
- Assessments are developmentally appropriate and sensitive to learner characteristics.
- Assessments contribute to a meaningful body of evidence (through use of multiple measures) that supports understanding of what students know and can do.



**Your turn!**

**Questions on principles of assessment  
for K-2 English language proficiency?**



# Classroom-based Purposes for Language Assessment



# Purpose 1.

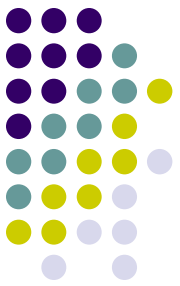
Classroom assessment of language proficiency for young English language learners yields data that complements and corroborates, not duplicates, data from large-scale measures.

# Purpose 2.



Assessment by individual classroom teachers is personalized and geared to professional accountability.

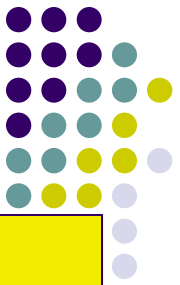
Assessment by teachers across classrooms may be common and aimed at school, program, or district level educational accountability.



## Purpose 3.

Classroom assessment of language proficiency for young English language learners measures students' language development and is not clouded by their knowledge and skills in the content areas.

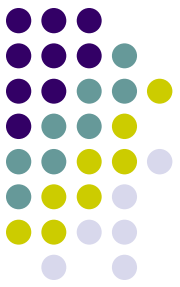
# Purpose 4.



Classroom assessment of language proficiency for young English language learners is designed to:

- Provide ongoing formative information to reflect on, refine, or redirect instruction
- Offer immediate feedback to students in relation to their language goals
- Monitor students' growth in language development
- Diagnose language-related challenges that students face
- Provide summative information to contribute to grading
- Help make instructional decisions.

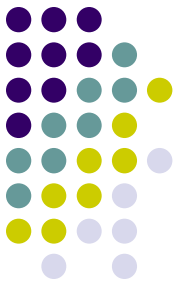
# Purpose 5.



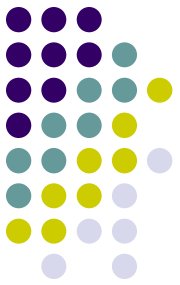
Classroom assessment of language proficiency for young English language learners is one of multiple data sources that, along with large-scale assessment, yield a rich array of quantitative and qualitative evidence of language learning.

Common classroom assessment lends balance to a comprehensive assessment system for English language learners.





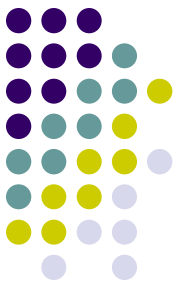
# Purposes for Large-scale Language Assessment



# Purpose 1.

## Screening

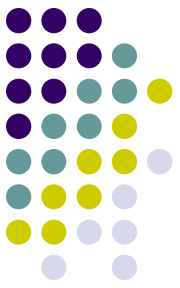
- For identification for instruction or services necessary for students' English language development



## Purpose 2.

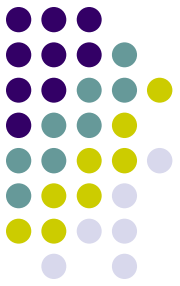
### Achievement

- For a measure of how well students are progressing toward/attaining ELP skills relative to expected levels of performance, as defined by ELP standards



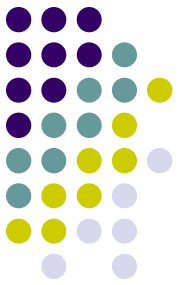
# Conclusion: Shared Purposes

- Assessment results inform decisions (e.g., instructional, programmatic, accountability).
- Assessment results help to target interventions (e.g., student-level, classroom-level, school-level, district-level, state-level).
- Assessment results are used to document and monitor student growth.



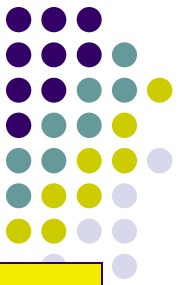
# Your turn!

Questions on the purposes of  
assessment for K-2 English  
language proficiency?



# Classroom-based Practices for Language Assessment

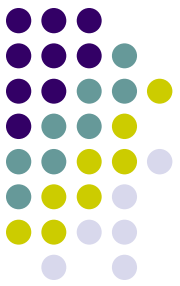
# Practice 1.



Classroom assessment for young English language learners represents standards-based learning that encourages students to:

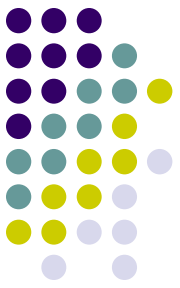
- Engage in learning tasks and projects connected to their lives and experiences
- Produce rich and in-depth work samples
- Focus on their oral language and literacy development within content-centered contexts
- Reflect on their language learning.

# Practice 2.



Classroom assessment for young English language learners' language proficiency is embedded into and often indistinguishable from instruction.

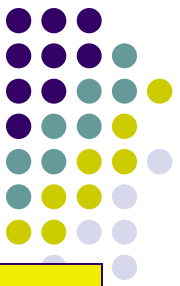




## Practice 3.

Classroom assessment for young English language learners' language proficiency extends the use of supports incorporated into the instructional cycle. These supports facilitate students' access to grade-level content through language.

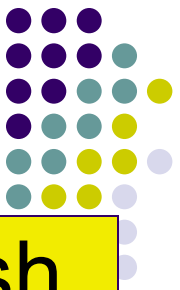
# Practice 4.



Classroom assessment for young English language learners relies on a variety of measures for each or multiple language domains, including, for example:

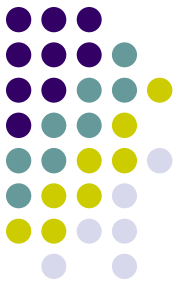
- Listening- Focused observation & checklists
- Speaking (Oral language)- Interviews or conferences & rating scales
- Reading- Dramatizations & holistic rubrics
- Writing (Literacy)- Multi-media reports & focused analytic scales

# Practice 5.

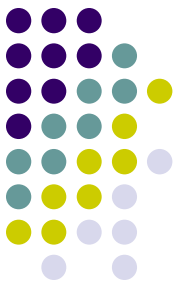


Classroom assessment for young English language learners that is performance, project, or inquiry-based and long term:

- Relies on a shared set of criteria (e.g. through project descriptors or rubrics) to guide and interpret student work
- Has models of language expectations
- Builds language differentiation into language targets.

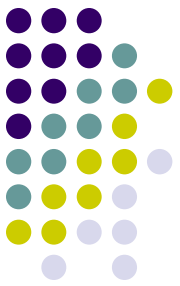


# Practices for Large-scale Language Assessment



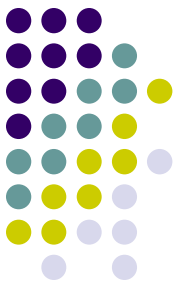
# Practice 1.

Large-scale assessment for young English language learners uses multiple sources of data (e.g., census data, enrollment data, student performance data, teacher surveys) to define and understand the student population – this understanding informs the assessments’ design, implementation, and analyses (e.g., sampling plan, DIF).



## Practice 2.

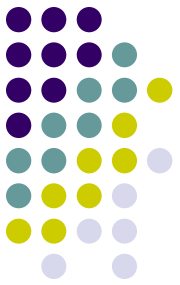
Large-scale assessment for young English language learners has research- and theory-based rationale to support its content and administration conditions (e.g., existing research and theory, cognitive interviews with students, pilot testing, field testing).



## Practice 3.

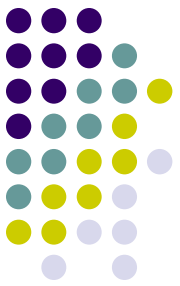
Large-scale assessment for young English language learners has clear and detailed specifications and guidelines for the development of items, passages, stimuli (e.g., pictures), test forms, administration procedures/scripts, and scoring.

# Practice 4.



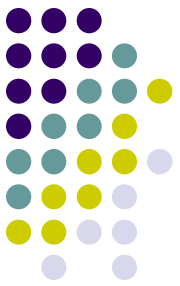
Large-scale assessment for young English language learners involves a relevant range of experts (e.g., applied linguistics, content specialists, early childhood specialists, classroom teachers familiar with the student population, assessment specialists, special education specialists) to review both the content and possible bias/sensitivity issues of test items.





## Practice 5.

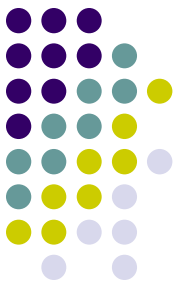
Large-scale assessment for young English language learners involves training (e.g., of test administrators, school/district administrators, classroom teachers) and monitoring to best ensure fidelity with the assessment's intended purpose and use (including intended and unintended consequences).



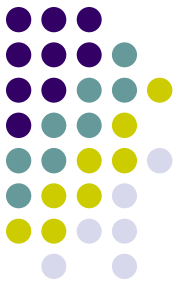
## Practice 6.

Large-scale assessment for young English language learners uses multiple sources of information/data to support its validity, reliability, and freedom from bias and sensitivity issues.

# Conclusion: Shared Practices



- Assessments of language proficiency rely on research that addresses the progression of language development within and across the language domains.
- Assessments connect to students' experiences and are sensitive to their linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
- Assessments include standards-referenced reporting of results specific to stakeholders and audiences.



# Your turn!

Questions on assessment practices for  
K-2 English language proficiency?

# For more information, or if you have additional questions:



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