

English Language Learners

in the Southeast

Research, Policy, & Practice

SERVE
*Improving Learning through
Research & Development*

POLICY REPORT



English Language Learners in the Southeast:

Research, Policy, & Practice

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First Printing, 2004

Produced by

SERVE
*Improving Learning through
Research & Development*

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This document was produced with funding from the Institute for Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, under contract #ED-01-CO-0015.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	4
Introduction and Purpose of the Publication	5
Definitions of Key Terms.....	9
Chapter One	
Federal and State English Language Learner Policies.....	13
■ Introduction.....	14
■ Federal Legislation and Policies	14
■ State Legislation and Policies	21
■ Summary	23
Chapter Two	
Types of English Language Learner Instructional Models.....	25
■ Introduction.....	26
■ Programs That Promote English Proficiency But Not Bilingual Proficiency	26
■ Programs That Promote Bilingual Proficiency	33
■ Summary	36
Chapter Three	
Research on Instructional Models for English Language Learners	37
■ Introduction.....	38
■ Student Characteristics	38
■ Characteristics of Instructional Program Models	40
■ School Characteristics.....	46
■ Summary	47
Chapter Four	
English Language Learners: National, Regional, and State Trends	49
■ Introduction.....	50
■ National Trends.....	50
■ Regional Trends: The Southeast.....	54
■ Policies and Practices in SERVE States	58
■ Summary	67

Chapter Five	
Examples of English Language Learner Programs in the Southeast	69
■ Introduction.....	70
■ English Language Learner Programs in the Southeast	70
■ Albertville City Schools, Alabama	
■ Morgan County Schools, Alabama	
■ Hillcrest Elementary School, Orange County Schools, Florida	
■ DeKalb County Schools, Georgia	
■ Biloxi Public Schools, Mississippi	
■ Chapel Hill–Carrboro City Schools, North Carolina	
■ Collinswood Language Academy, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, North Carolina	
■ Lee County Schools, North Carolina	
■ Richland School District One, South Carolina	
■ Summary	81
Chapter Six	
Conclusions.....	83
References	87
Appendix.....	97
■ Resources	97
■ Feedback Form.....	105
■ SERVE Organizational Capabilities.....	107

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Introduction and Purpose of the Publication



Shifts in the population dynamics of the United States are a part of our culture and history. Such shifts impact many facets of our lives, including public education. For example, by the year 2030, nearly 40% of all school-age children will be English language learners (Thomas & Collier, 2002) or children for whom English is not a first language. The growth in the proportion of English language learners (ELLs), particularly in regions of the country with little recent exposure to such linguistic diversity, causes educators to ask how best to meet the needs of increasingly diverse groups of students.

In spite of our best efforts to provide answers, however, “available data on student outcomes indicate distressing results for English language learners—both in the short-term outcomes of test scores and teacher judgments and in longer-term outcomes such as high school completion rates” (August & Hakuta, 1998). Additionally, a number of research studies and both state and national data suggest that the majority of ELLs do not receive the services needed to produce a level of English proficiency that will assist in the elimination of the achievement gap that separates them from their English-speaking peers (Borden, 2001; Grissmer, Flanagan, Kawata, & Williamson, 2000; NCES, 2001a, 2001b). As a result, English language learners are more likely to be held back, tracked into low academic groupings, placed in special education, or to drop out of school altogether (Borden, 2001; Council of Chief State School Officers, 1990; Zehr, 2001a).

These trends are indeed troubling. Although federal legislation and court decisions have long maintained that districts establish programs for ELLs that are based on sound educational theory, well implemented, and regularly evaluated, the evidence suggests that too many ELLs are not gaining proficiency in English and mastery of academic content. In light of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 and the accountability measures included therein, it becomes clear that the question of how to improve educational outcomes for English language learners requires an immediate answer.

This question is particularly relevant to states in the SERVE region: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Though only one of these states, Florida, hosts over 100,000 English language learners, four states (Alabama, Georgia,

North Carolina, and South Carolina) experienced over 350% population growth of ELLs from 1992 to 2002 (NCELA, 2002a). Moreover, demographic projections suggest that this pattern of growth is likely to persist into the foreseeable future.

To help educators in the Southeast meet the needs of English language learners, SERVE has developed this report, which provides a synthesis of federal and state policies, descriptions of and research on instructional programs, and a closer look at trends, policies, and programs in the Southeast. The summary data presented here should be viewed by educators in the Southeast as a starting point when developing strategies to best serve the needs of ELLs. Together with ongoing research, resources listed in the appendices, and the findings of the National Literacy Panel, this publication should help decision makers identify practices that appear to differentially impact English language learners. Certainly, finding answers related to addressing the needs of English language learners will better enable all of us to draw upon linguistic and cultural diversity to enrich our future, just as it has our past.

Definitions of Key Terms



Though many terms are used to refer to students whose native language is not English and to describe programs designed to support these students, there are important and, sometimes, subtle distinctions between them. The list below is a good starting point. For more in-depth glossaries, please refer to the resources listed in the Appendix.

Bilingualism: On the surface, defining *bilingualism* is an easy task. In most cases, and in this report, *bilingualism* is defined as the ability to use two languages. People develop this ability either by acquiring two languages in childhood or by learning a second language after having acquired their first language. Related terms include *multilingualism*, or the ability to use more than two languages.

On closer examination, however, defining *bilingualism* becomes problematic. In some contexts, *bilingualism* refers only to proficiency in speaking and aurally comprehending two languages, not to the ability to read or write in two languages, which some people refer to as *biliteracy*. When referring to educational programs, however, *bilingual* describes various programs that use the student's native language, as well as English, for instructional purposes.

Some bilingual programs are transitional in nature, using the student's native language for a limited amount of time (generally one to four years) until the student is able to function in an all-English environment. Other bilingual programs aim to help students become fully bilingual—that is, able to comprehend, speak, read, and write in two languages. Such programs continue to provide instruction in both the student's native language and English beyond the one-to-four-year period.

Also complicating the definition of *bilingual* is the fact that individuals not only vary in their proficiency across language skills (aurally comprehending, speaking, reading, writing) but also may be more proficient in one language than the other, especially across settings, functions, and purposes. Language proficiency also varies over time (Baker & Jones, 1998). These are all important factors to consider when determining what a given writer means by the term *bilingual*.

Biliteracy: Commonly refers to the ability to read and write in two languages. However, sometimes this term also incorporates *bilingualism*, so *biliteracy* may refer to the ability to aurally comprehend, speak, read, and write in two languages.

English language learner: Following the suggestion of the National Research Council (August & Hakuta, 1998), the term *English language learner (ELL)* is used throughout this document to refer to students from a non-English-speaking background who have not yet developed sufficient proficiency to master an English-only curriculum and instruction in school. It is important to note that this definition addresses both linguistic and academic achievement; ELLs are students who could not reach their academic potential due to limited English proficiency. This group is also referred to as *limited English proficient (LEP)* students. Rooted in legislation, the definition of *limited English proficient* can be found in Part A, Section 9101 of Title IX of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Both *ELL* and *LEP* are often used in legislative and policy contexts (Lessow-Hurley, 1991), referring primarily to individuals aged 3 through 21. Increasingly, *ELL* is used in place of *LEP*.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL): *EFL* is used in reference to non-native-English-speaking students who are learning English but do not reside in a country where English is a primary language (TESOL, 2004).

English as a Second Language (ESL) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): *ESL* is used to describe programs in English-speaking countries where students learn English as a second language. While sometimes used synonymously with *ESL*, *ESOL* is more common in contexts where learners are multilingual and may be learning English as a third or fourth language. *ESOL* is also a more general acronym that may be used to refer to both *ESL* and *EFL* simultaneously (TESOL, 2004).

EFL, *ESL*, and their related acronyms refer to the field, discipline, and teacher education programs. As examples, *Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL)* and *Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)* usually refer to teacher education programs. *Teachers of English to Speakers of Others Languages (TESOL)* refers to both the field and a professional organization.

First language: The language a child learns as his or her *native language* or *mother tongue*. *First language* is often abbreviated as *L1*.

Second language: A language an individual learns in addition to his or her first language. *Second language* is often abbreviated as *L2*.

Language majority speaker: An individual who speaks the primary language of the country in which he or she resides. For example, a person whose first language is English and lives in the United States is referred to as a *language majority speaker*.

Language minority speaker: A person whose native language is not the primary language of the country in which he or she resides; hence, a person living in the United States whose first language is not English is referred to as a *language minority speaker*.

Other specialized vocabulary related to English language learners, such as names of instructional programs, will be explained upon first reference. More extensive glossaries can be referenced using the websites listed in the Appendix.

Chapter One Federal and State English Language Learner Policies



Introduction

Although the U.S. government annually allocates funding directly and indirectly to programs that target English language learners, no single federal agency is charged with the responsibility for coordinating policies, programs, resources, or research in this area (United States General Accounting Office [US GAO], 2001). Instead, policies and practices pertaining to the education of English language learners are governed by a variety of legislative acts, court decisions, recommendations, and interpretations thereof at the federal, state, and district levels.

Federal Legislation and Policies

The United States has a rich history of linguistic diversity and, correspondingly, schooling options for speakers of languages other than English. Throughout the eighteenth century, for example, Native American and immigrant groups formed community schools that used varying degrees of native language instruction (Hacsi, 2002, p. 66). By the end of the eighteenth century, however, instructional models for non-native English speakers were being more intensely debated. From the 1920s through the 1960s, few resources were targeted for these students, who were held at grade level until they were proficient enough in English to master the subject matter. As a result, many immigrant students left school having learned just enough English to “get by” (Hacsi, 2002, p. 68).

However, two major legislative acts in the 1960s proved instrumental in helping students who spoke languages other than English gain access to educational services. Title VI of The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any federally assisted program (NCELA, 2004). Additionally, Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1968 (The Bilingual Education Act) established federal policy for bilingual education for language minority students who were economically disadvantaged, recognized the challenges non-English-speaking students encountered, and allocated funding for innovative programs (NCELA, 2004). Together, these two Acts would help ensure that English language learners received sufficient academic and linguistic support to succeed, not just “get by.”

The Civil Rights Act of 1964

Forming the basis of numerous court decisions that would impact educational services for ELLs, Title VI of The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any federally assisted program (NCELA, 2004). Perhaps the most cited of these cases is *Lau v. Nichols*. In 1974, a class action suit filed by parents of Chinese-American students not proficient in English against the San Francisco Unified School District resulted in a ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court that identical education does not constitute equal education under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The court ruled that school districts must take affirmative steps to overcome educational barriers faced by non-English-speaking students in the district [414 U.S. 563 (1974)]. In a ruling that disallowed a “submersion” approach, placing non-native speakers of English in regular classrooms with no additional support, Justice William O. Douglas wrote: “There is no equality of treatment merely in providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education” (as cited in Hacsí, 2002, p. 71).

The *Lau v. Nichols* decision was extended to all schools when Congress passed the Equal Educational Opportunity Act (EEOA) of 1974, a civil rights statute that prohibited states from denying equal educational opportunity by the failure of an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs [20 U.S. C. § 1203 (f)]. Despite the *Lau v. Nichols* ruling, however, districts and states still had unanswered questions. In response, the Office of Education in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare formed a panel to craft the Lau remedies, a set of guidelines that were not law but helped shape district and state policies related to the instruction of non-native speakers of English.

In what is considered one of most significant court decisions affecting language minority students, second only to *Lau v. Nichols*, in *Castañeda v. Pickard*, a federal court agreed with the plaintiffs’ claim in that the Raymondville, Texas School District’s language remediation program violated the EEOA. Moreover,

the Fifth Circuit Court went on to establish criteria used to determine school district compliance with the EEOA (NCELA, 2004).

In what became known as the “Castañeda Test,” the following criteria were put forth to determine school district compliance with the EEOA regarding programs for English language learners:

1. *Theory*: The school must pursue a program based on an educational theory recognized as sound or, at least, as a legitimate experimental strategy.
2. *Practice*: The school must actually implement the program with instructional practices, resources, and personnel necessary to transfer theory to reality.
3. *Results*: The school must not persist in a program that fails to produce results [648 F.2d 989 (5th Cir., 1981)].

The “Castañeda Test” soon demonstrated its reach. In 1983, in *Keyes v. School District #1*, a U.S. District Court found that a Denver public school district had failed to meet the second criterion by not adequately implementing a plan for language minority students.

Today, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) is charged with enforcing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Neither federal law nor the OCR requires or advocates a particular program of instruction for English language learners. Instead, all programs for English language learners must be based on sound educational theory, adequately supported so that the program has a realistic chance of success, and periodically evaluated and revised, if necessary (OCR, 2004). In order to assist districts and states, the OCR offers guidance, including policy documents, as well as resources related to ELL program development and evaluation, ELL teacher qualifications, and criteria for exiting students from ELL programs (US GAO, 2001).

Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

The Bilingual Education Act, Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) enacted in 1968, recognized the challenges non-English-speaking students encountered, established federal policy for bilingual education for language minority students who were economically disadvantaged, and

allocated funding for support services to LEP students. Subsequent reauthorizations and amendments to Title VII of the ESEA in 1978, 1984, 1988, and 1994 continued to shape policies regarding the education of English language learners. The 1978 reauthorization of Title VII, for example, emphasized the strictly transitional nature of native language instruction, expanded eligibility to all students who were limited English proficient, and allowed English-speaking students to enroll in bilingual education programs.

The 1984 and 1988 reauthorizations allowed for some native language maintenance, provided funding for programs for LEP students with special needs, supported family English literacy programs, increased funding to state education agencies, expanded funding for certain English-only programs, placed a three-year limit on participation in most Title VII programs, and both emphasized and established a fellowship program for professional training (NCELA, 2004). When reauthorized in 1994 as part of the Improving America's School Act, Title VII was restructured to give states an increased role and priority to applicants seeking to develop bilingual proficiency (OCR, 2004; Zehr, 2001b). LEP students also became eligible for services under Title I on the same basis as other students.

Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act

Most recently, Congress passed Title III, Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, which reauthorized and renamed Title VII. While essentially continuing the core tenets of the original Act, Title III consolidates the 13 current bilingual and immigrant education programs. Title III impacts states in that it requires state education agencies (SEAs) or specially qualified agencies to submit funding requests outlining:

- The process for awarding subgrants
- How the agency will establish standards and objectives for raising the level of English proficiency that are aligned with state standards
- How the SEA will hold districts, eligible entities, and schools accountable for meeting all annual measurable achievement

objectives and making adequate yearly progress (AYP) for LEP children (USED, 2002)

To help ensure that programs are successfully implemented at the local level, state education agencies whose appropriations exceed a designated threshold must agree to spend at least 95% of their allotment to award formula subgrants to districts. In addition to ensuring that funding is used for resources in ELL classrooms, Title III also provides guidance regarding personnel who work with ELLs. Teachers of ELLs must be proficient in English and in any other language used by the program, in both oral and written language domains (USED, 2002). Additionally, districts are required to provide high-quality, research-based professional development to classroom teachers, principals, administrators, and other personnel.

Although it includes specific requirements regarding how resources are distributed and personnel who support ELLs are trained, the legislation provides discretion over instructional methods. However, just as with the “Castañeda Test” and OCR criteria, districts must use Title III funds to provide “high-quality language instruction programs that are based on scientifically based research, and that have demonstrated that they are effective in increasing English proficiency and student achievement” (USED, 2002, p. 93).

Results and accountability are measured under Title III primarily in terms of student achievement data. Under Title III, states must hold subgrantees accountable for making adequate yearly progress as described in Title I and for meeting all annual achievement objectives. As a result, states are required to establish standards and benchmarks designed to both raise the level of English proficiency that ELLs attain and ensure that ELLs meet challenging academic standards that are in line with state and Title I achievement standards (USED, 2002).

In addition to requirements regarding the instruction and academic performance of ELLs, Title III also obliges local education agencies (LEAs) to communicate with parents of ELLs regarding program placement. LEAs must explain to the parents of English language learners why their children need a specialized language instruction program and allow parents to

choose between programs if more than one type of instructional program is offered, as well as to remove their children from a program if they wish.

It is too early to judge what impact the federal law will have on state and district policies and, ultimately, English language learners. Nevertheless, advocates have cheered the instructional flexibility encouraged by the law but expressed concern about the possible high-stakes nature of the annual testing for students with limited English proficiency (Zehr, 2001b).

Two concerns often expressed by educators regarding the testing required of ELLs under NCLB are that ELLs are tested before they have had the necessary time to gain proficiency in English and that students who have gained proficiency in English are no longer considered ELLs, so their scores are no longer included for that subgroup. Two new policies announced by Secretary of Education Rod Paige in February 2004 address these concerns.

The first policy, which applies to ELLs in their first year of instruction in U.S. public schools, allows schools to substitute an English language proficiency assessment for the reading competency assessment. All ELLs, however, would continue to take the mathematics assessments, with appropriate accommodations. Schools could, but would not be required to, include the results of English language learners' proficiency tests toward adequate yearly progress goals, while the test would be credited toward the 95% participation rate for the subgroup (USED, 2004). In short, this policy allows schools one more year to help ELLs gain English language proficiency before their reading competency test scores affect AYP calculations (USED, 2004).

The second policy permits states to include the test scores of ELLs who have gained English proficiency in calculations of AYP for the LEP subgroup for up to two years after the students have gained proficiency. This optional policy should help states better understand and demonstrate how well ELLs are improving their English language proficiency from year to year, as well as rewarding schools that continue to support ELLs even after they have reached certain acceptable levels of English language proficiency (USED, 2004).

Key Activities for Districts Under Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002

✓	Use Title III funds to provide high-quality language instruction programs based on scientifically based research, whose effectiveness in increasing English proficiency and student achievement has been demonstrated.
✓	Provide high-quality professional development to classroom teachers, principals, administrators, and other personnel in order to improve the instruction and assessment of LEP students.
✓	Be accountable for making Adequate Yearly Progress as described in Title I and meeting all annual achievement objectives.

(USED, 2002, p. 93.

Key Activities for SEAs Under Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002

✓	Award subgrants to improve education of LEP students.
✓	Approve subgrantees' evaluation measures.
✓	Develop annual measurable achievement objectives for LEP students.
✓	Hold subgrantees accountable for meeting annual measurable achievement objectives and for making adequate yearly progress (AYP).
✓	Require subgrantees failing to make appropriate AYP to develop an improvement plan and require sanctions if subgrantees fail to meet the annual measurable achievement objectives for four consecutive years.
✓	Report to the USED on program activities and on the effectiveness of programs in improving education provided to LEP children.

(USED, 2002, p. 93.

State Legislation and Policies

In a recent report to Congress, the U.S. GAO (2001) summarized the current policy climate for issues related to English language learners in the following manner: “Policymakers are faced with particularly difficult decisions with regard to students with limited English proficiency because their needs are varied and experts disagree about the best methods to teach them” (p. 31). Because federal policies allow discretion concerning instructional programs for English language learners, it is state and district policymakers who are tasked with providing legislative guidance and funding for ELL instructional programs, in addition to ensuring that ELLs receive effective instruction at the school level.

States vary considerably in terms of legislation and funding for ELL programs.

- States that have both legislative provisions and funding for LEP instructional programs include Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.
- Other states, including Kentucky, Montana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Wyoming, as well as the District of Columbia, offer legislative guidance but no funding.
- Meanwhile, states such as Alabama, Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia have neither legislative provisions nor funding for LEP instructional programs in place (McKnight & Antunez, 1999).

Within the SERVE region, Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina have legislative provisions and funding for ELL programs, while Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina do not. Thus, although a general consensus exists and, indeed, is mandated concerning the goals of instruction for ELLs in terms of both English language proficiency and mastery of academic content, states vary in their approaches.

One reason states vary in their approaches is that there is no general consensus regarding how language proficiency and mastery of subject matter are best achieved (US GAO, 2001). This lack of a consensus concerning how to best educate English language learners is apparent in states with high proportions of English language learners, especially in reference to legislation regarding bilingual education (Thomas & Collier, 1997). Hence, though instructional programs are described more fully in Chapter Two and research on instructional programs is presented in Chapter Three, instructional models, particularly bilingual programs, should also be mentioned within the context of state legislation and policy.

State Legislation and Policies on Bilingual Education

Prior to the *Lau v. Nichols* ruling, some states had already passed laws supporting bilingual education (Hacsi, 2002, p. 73). Massachusetts was the first state to require bilingual education, mandating it in school districts where at least 20 English language learners spoke the same language. Other states that backed bilingual education early on, either through law or funding, included New Mexico, Colorado, Michigan, and Connecticut. Other states were pushed into action by lawsuits on behalf of various groups of students or by the Bilingual Education Act, as amended in 1974 and 1978. The amended Act required that children attending public schools who had little or no proficiency in English be taught in their native language to the extent that such instruction would help them succeed in school. However, in the early 1980s, in light of growing opposition to bilingual education and difficulty recruiting bilingual teachers, districts were allowed more flexibility as long as they protected the civil rights of and effectively educated English language learners (Hacsi, 2002, p. 75).

Examples of recent legislative action in opposition to bilingual education include when, in 1998, California voters passed Proposition 227, severely limiting the use of students' primary language in instructional programs for English language learners. In practice, a wide array of approaches to teaching English language learners are still in use in California, including bilingual education, since such programs were allowed to continue in schools where parents requested them (Hacsi, 2002, p. 93). Researchers and evaluators are currently assessing the impact

of Proposition 227 on student performance on state tests (Gandara, 2000; Zehr, 2001c).

Similarly, in November 2000, Arizona followed California's lead when 63% of voters approved a ballot initiative to repeal instruction for ELLs in their primary language (Zehr, 2000) and to limit ELLs to one year of English-immersion courses (Education Commission of the States, 2000; Hacsí, 2002, p. 94). While the California law allows parents to apply for waivers in order to have their children taught in bilingual classrooms, the Arizona law is even more restrictive and limits parents' opportunities to seek waivers (Zehr, 2000). Efforts to ban bilingual education gained momentum in Colorado and Massachusetts (Sutner, 2001; Yettick, 2002) in 2002. The ballot issue was defeated in Colorado but passed in Massachusetts.

In contrast to states that have adopted policies restricting bilingual education, some states report that more than half of LEP students receive instruction in their native languages. These states include Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, New Jersey, and New Mexico. States where English is the exclusive language of instruction for more than 95% of ELLs include Alabama, Georgia, Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia (Kindler, 2002).

Summary

Policies and practices regarding the education of ELLs are governed by a variety of legislative acts, legal decisions, guidelines, and interpretations thereof at the federal, state, and district levels. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1968 (The Bilingual Education Act) helped ensure that districts established programs for ELLs that increased their proficiency in English and mastery of academic content. Such programs, as outlined in decisions such as *Castañeda v. Pickard*, should be based on sound educational theory, well implemented, and regularly evaluated and revised.

Similar to the "Castañeda Test" and OCR recommendations, Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, which reauthorized and renamed Title VII, states that school districts should

provide “high-quality language instruction programs that are based on scientifically based research and that have demonstrated that they are effective in increasing English proficiency and student achievement” (USED, 2002, p. 93). Implementation of such programs is addressed by requiring that school districts help ensure quality instruction of ELLs by providing professional development to teachers and administrators.

Demonstrated effectiveness is integral to Title III, which requires each state education agency receiving funding to outline how it will raise the level of English proficiency for ELLs and holds districts and states accountable for meeting all annual measurable achievement objectives and making adequate yearly progress for LEP students (USED, 2002). Thus, though states enjoy flexibility regarding the design and funding of programs to meet the needs of diverse groups of English language learners, all programs must meet pre-established requirements.

Chapter Two Types of English Language Learner Instructional Models



Introduction

As mandated by law, public school students identified as LEP should be placed in instructional programs designed, at minimum, to assist them in becoming proficient in English and mastering content area subject matter. Though many program models exist (Genesee, 1999; Liguanti, 1999; Zelasko & Antunez, 2000) and all programs strive to help students meet these goals, they differ according to variables such as the underlying goals and objectives, the degree to which the student's native language is used and maintained, the resources and local conditions required, and the manner in which they are implemented at the building level (August & Hakuta, 1998; Genesee, 1999; Zelasko & Antunez, 2000).

The program descriptions that follow are based on those outlined by Genesee (1999) and fall into two main categories—those program models that strive to promote bilingual proficiency and those that promote proficiency only in English (Genesee, 1999; US GAO, 2001). In the section that follows, each program model is described, the goals and theoretical underpinnings explicated, and necessary local conditions or resources noted. The program models are also summarized in chart form later in this document.

These descriptions are offered in the spirit that there is no one best approach. Instead, “many different approaches can be successful when implemented well. Local conditions, choices, and innovation are critical ingredients of success” (Genesee, 1999, p. 4). Indeed, as will be discussed in Chapter Three, quality programs for English language learners seem to share some common features. Moreover, many districts, realizing that ELLs are a diverse rather than monolithic group, combine approaches to meet the needs of these learners.

Programs That Promote English Proficiency But Not Bilingual Proficiency

When districts seek to help a group of ELLs become proficient in English as quickly as possible and master academic content, but either do not desire to promote bilingualism for this group of students or do not have the necessary local resources to do

so, they adopt one or more of several program models. These program models may include a transitional bilingual education model, a newcomer program, sheltered instruction, or ESL classes. Both newcomer programs and sheltered instruction are often combined with other program models. Indeed, because of its flexibility and use across program models, sheltered instruction is often described as an instructional approach rather than a program. Hence, though they are discussed in this section, newcomer programs can be designed to support bilingualism or not, and sheltered instruction is best viewed as an approach that can be integrated with any program model.

Transitional Bilingual Education

Transitional bilingual education (TBE) or early-exit bilingual education (Ramirez, 1992) is the most common form of bilingual education for ELLs in the United States (Genesee, 1999, p. 18). TBE does not aim for bilingual proficiency. Instead, TBE programs, which usually start in kindergarten, use the students' first language for instruction while helping them gain oral proficiency in English. English is the language of instruction in non-academic subjects, such as art, music, and physical education (Medina, 1995). As students become more proficient in English, they are gradually taught academic subjects, one at a time, in English rather than the students' first language. As students transition into English instruction, math computations are often the first content area they begin to learn in English. As students gain proficiency, they also begin studying science, then social studies, in English. Most students are mainstreamed into regular classrooms within three years (Genesee, 1999).

Some of the theoretical underpinnings of TBE programs include that such programs avoid putting students at academic risk because students can gain the literacy skills and grade-appropriate academic skills that they might not be able to if instructed only in English. That is, proponents maintain that it is easier for students to learn in a language they know than in one they do not know and are simultaneously learning to speak. Supporters of TBE programs also suggest that literacy skills from the first language will transfer to the second language (English), that the knowledge gained through instruction in the first language will

help students subsequently learn the information in English, that such programs speed up the process of learning English, and that TBE programs increase parental involvement since families' cultures and native languages are validated.

Some considerations that need to be taken into account when using a TBE model, or any model, center on the student population to be served, as well as available resources and personnel. First, TBE models require a sizeable population of English language learners who speak the same language. Since all students in TBE programs will need support when transitioning from the native language to English, the transition should be gradual, and teachers should both employ sheltered instruction strategies as well as point out similarities and differences between reading and writing in the students' first language and English (Genesee, 1999, p. 20). Moreover, because TBE programs are transitional in nature, districts should provide follow-up programs to ensure that English language learners perform as well as their native English-speaking classmates after they have transitioned out of the program and are in regular classrooms. Teachers in TBE programs should be proficient in both languages and have access to bilingual teaching materials and assessments in order to provide the instruction and meaningful activities that are part of strong TBE programs.

Newcomer Programs

Newcomer programs are designed to help ELLs with limited literacy skills or previous schooling acculturate to the U.S. school system and develop the linguistic and academic skills necessary to participate in existing programs for ELLs. Newcomer programs offer intensive, specialized instruction that is usually limited to one or two years (Genesee, 1999, p. 14). Although newcomer programs exist for all grade levels, they are most common at the middle and high school levels. Some newcomer programs may have additional goals, such as promoting students' native languages. Thus, newcomer programs may promote bilingual proficiency or only English proficiency, depending on how the newcomer and follow-up programs are designed.

The organization of newcomer programs varies considerably. In many cases, districts share a common intake center where

students are assessed. In some cases, students may travel to study at one or a handful of district newcomer centers, then, upon completion of the program, transition to their home schools. In contrast, other newcomer programs are within the student's home school. Students in newcomer programs based at their home schools participate in art, music, physical education, and other non-academic classes with native English speakers.

The most common rationale for establishing a newcomer program is that some students, especially those with limited literacy skills or previous schooling, need additional support beyond what the district offers to ELLs. For example, proponents of newcomer programs may point out that a refugee who enters the U.S. at age 15 and has never attended school has very different needs than an immigrant who arrived in the U.S. at age seven, already having studied English in school in his or her native country.

Special considerations to take into account when establishing a newcomer program include the recruitment of qualified teachers. Such teachers should be trained in literacy development, second language acquisition, strategies for integrating content and language objectives, and cross-cultural awareness (Genesee, 1999, p. 16). Indeed, because some students in newcomer programs might have very limited previous educational experiences, teachers in these programs should be comfortable using special literacy strategies for adolescents. Additionally, courses or activities should provide student orientation to U.S. schools and even to the community. Appropriate instructional materials for newcomer programs should be cognitively demanding, available in English and the students' first languages, and in line with students' proficiency levels. As with other transitional programs, the process for exiting newcomer programs and entering follow-up programs should be well articulated (Genesee, 1999). This is especially true for ELLs who will be transitioning away from a districtwide newcomer center to a new school. Finally, depending on the type of newcomer program desired, transportation from students' home schools to districtwide newcomer centers may need to be arranged.

Sheltered English Instruction

Sheltered Instruction (SI) integrates content area objectives and goals for language development. SI can be used "wherever and

whenever English language learners receive academic instruction in English” (Genesee, 1999, p. 9). SI can be used not only as an instructional approach for English language learners and incorporated within the framework of a program, but it can also be the sole approach a district takes in supporting ELLs. Thus, SI can be thought of as a way of teaching. When delivering SI, teachers use the core curriculum but modify it to meet the needs of ELLs (Institute for Policy Analysis and Research, 2000). Though SI uses the strategies found in quality language instruction for native speakers of English, it is characterized by the teacher’s careful attention to the distinctive second language development needs of ELLs (Genesee, 1999, p. 9). As result, SI is a way of teaching that, if implemented effectively, “ensures that English language learners comprehend academic instruction when it is delivered in English” (Genesee, 1999, p. 41). In some contexts, SI may also be referred to as *Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English*, *Structured Immersion*, or *Content-Based ESL* (NCELA, 2004).

The theoretical rationale behind SI is that learners can acquire knowledge, concepts, and skills related to content at the same time that they improve their second (English) language skills (Genesee, 1999, p. 9). Those who support SI maintain that language acquisition is enhanced by meaningful interactions using the second language (Genesee, 1994). SI lessons are often characterized by modeling and techniques designed to make content more accessible to students, such as demonstrations, graphic organizers, adapted texts, and visual aids. Lessons integrate skills from all four language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and teacher-student interaction is characterized by frequent discussion, sufficient wait time for student responses, encouragement to elaborate comments about lesson concepts, and the explicit teaching and opportunities to practice conversational skills via meaningful activities (Genesee, 1999, p. 10).

Because SI integrates content and language objectives, it requires districts to develop grade-level curricula for each subject they offer, with clearly defined objectives and standards that reflect a sequential pattern for learning. Another consideration those who create an SI program should bear in mind is that teachers must be trained in SI strategies. Teachers in SI programs may be ESL

teachers with content-area training or content specialists with training in second language acquisition processes, ESL methodologies, and cross-cultural awareness (Genesee, 1999, p. 11). Given requirements concerning “highly qualified” teachers under the No Child Left Behind Act and the importance of ensuring that ELLs complete credit requirements in a timely fashion, districts may adopt a whole-school approach, training teachers who are already certified in content areas in SI strategies. Finally, schools and districts should be able to offer flexible scheduling so that students can enter mainstream classes one subject at a time as they are able, as well as offer support for teachers and students, including after-school tutoring and resource classes to help students who have been mainstreamed.

ESL

ESL (or, often, *ESOL*) is a broad term used to describe diverse educational approaches that use English as the language of instruction for ELLs. Some descriptions of program models for ELLs do not list ESL as a separate category; however, it is a designation often used by school districts and practitioners.

For ESL programs, the rapid acquisition of basic English proficiency is the goal for beginning students (Zelasko & Antunez, 2000). To accomplish this goal, English language learners attend ESL classes in which English, the language of instruction, has been adapted to match students’ proficiency levels. Students may share the same first language or be from different language backgrounds (NCELA, 2004). ESL programs can be combined with other programs. Thus, while not in ESL classes, students may be in mainstream classrooms, an immersion program, or a bilingual education program. Students are often grouped according to proficiency level.

ESL programs vary primarily in terms of the focus of instruction and the amount of time students spend in classrooms with English-speaking peers. Some ESL programs may use a special curriculum and focus exclusively on the use of the English language. Such ESL programs are usually pull-out programs, meaning that students leave classrooms where they study with English-speaking classmates to spend part of their day receiving ESL instruction (NCELA, 2004). The amount of time students

in pull-out programs spend in ESL classes varies from about 30 minutes per day to a half-day (Thomas & Collier, 1997).

Once students attain basic English proficiency, they are usually mainstreamed, meaning that they attend classes with English-speaking peers. After being mainstreamed, ELLs may attend no or a few ESL classes designed to provide ongoing support and promote higher levels of proficiency. Thus, the instruction students receive in pull-out ESL programs varies over time and according to proficiency levels. As an example, a beginning student may spend the majority of the school day in ESL classes, which might initially focus on speaking and aural comprehension. Later on, the same student might spend less time in ESL classes, which now focus on vocabulary and grammar. Even advanced students may attend ESL resource classes, where they receive individualized instruction.

Other ESL programs seek to promote English language proficiency and mastery of content at the same time. Such ESL programs integrate content area curricula with language objectives and offer content-based ESL rather than focusing instruction solely on the use of the English language. Programs of this type are often self-contained, meaning that ELLs spend the majority of their day learning academic content away from English-speaking classmates. These programs are sometimes referred to as *content-based ESL*.

Because ESL is broadly used for programs that vary widely, general statements regarding the theoretical rationale and resources needed to implement ESL programs will not apply to all programs. Content-based ESL programs, for example, share similar theoretical underpinnings and require the same resources as do programs based on sheltered instruction. ESL programs that focus on the use of the English language are often based on the belief that ELLs need explicit, supplemental language instruction that they cannot or do not receive in content area classes they attend with their English-speaking peers.

Most ESL programs require districts to develop grade-level curricula with clearly defined objectives and standards that reflect a sequential pattern for learning. Depending on state guidelines, teachers in ESL programs may be initially licensed in ESL or

initially licensed in another area, then gain ESL licensure as an add-on. Teachers should be trained in second language acquisition processes, ESL methodologies, cross-cultural awareness, and, depending on the program, specific content areas to be taught. Finally, schools should be able to offer flexible scheduling so that students can enter mainstream classes one subject at a time, as they are able, in addition to ongoing support for ELLs who have been mainstreamed.

Programs That Promote Bilingual Proficiency

As with all program models for ELLs, those described in this section strive to improve English language learners' proficiency in English and their mastery of academic content. Unlike those program models outlined in the previous section, however, the programs described here also seek to promote students' proficiency in their first language. These programs include developmental bilingual education programs and two-way immersion programs. Two additional programs, newcomer programs and SI, though described in the preceding section, can also be used to promote bilingual proficiency. In the descriptions that follow, each program model is outlined, the goals and theoretical rationale explained, and some considerations that should be taken into account mentioned.

Developmental Bilingual Education

Developmental bilingual education (DBE) programs are also known as *late-exit bilingual programs* (Ramirez, 1992) and were formerly referred to as *maintenance bilingual programs* (Genesee, 1999). DBE programs are described as additive programs or enrichment programs. Rather than aiming to replace English language learners' first language with English, additive programs such as DBE strive to develop the students' first language while also helping them master academic content and become proficient in English. DBE programs usually begin in kindergarten or first grade, with schools adding one grade each year (Genesee, 1999, p. 24). Academic subjects are taught in both English and the other language. Although both languages are used for instruction in DBE programs, each language is used separately, and teachers instruct students in one language for prolonged periods of time, rather than switching between languages within

a given lesson. Students learn together for most or all of the day, regardless of their proficiency levels in either language (Genesee, 1999, p. 26). Since there is some evidence that more proficient bilinguals reap cognitive advantages that their less proficient counterparts do not (Cummins, 1981) and that ELLs may not close the achievement gap until after four-to-seven years of bilingual instruction (Collier, 1992, 1995), districts ideally support DBE programs through high school.

Some theoretical arguments used in favor of DBE programs include that developing a student's first language results in cognitive advantages (Cummins, 1996), especially when the first language is developed through Piaget's formal operations stage at puberty (Genesee, 1999, p. 25). Thus, promoting students' native languages rather than replacing the native language with English results in uninterrupted cognitive development that leads to increased academic achievement. In other words, by engaging students in cognitively challenging work using their first language and engaging them in meaningful content in the second language (English), the academic growth of ELLs can be accelerated, thereby narrowing the achievement gap between them and their native English-speaking classmates (Genesee, 1999, p. 25). In fact, proponents point out that students in effective DBE programs can outperform their monolingual English-speaking peers on standardized tests across the curriculum (Thomas & Collier, 1997). Moreover, some researchers cite sociocultural and affective reasons for using DBE or other models that make extensive use of students' first language, arguing that building on the knowledge students gain at home and in their communities can have positive impacts on learning (Moll, Amanti, & Gonzalez, 1992).

Before trying to establish an effective DBE program, districts should first ensure that enough ELLs speak the same language and that demographic projections suggest that this will continue to be the case. Additionally, parents and the community need to understand and agree to actively support bilingualism. Another consideration related to DBE programs is the recruitment and training of bilingual teachers who are proficient in using both languages for academic purposes, certified in content areas, and adept at integrating content and language objectives. In cases where teachers are proficient in only one language, classes may

be team taught, with each teacher working alternately with two classes of students and serving as an academic model in only one language (Genesee, 1999, p. 27). Finally, both languages should be integrated into all domains of schooling.

Two-Way Immersion Programs

Two-way immersion (TWI) programs, also known as *two-way bilingual education* and *dual language immersion programs* (Genesee, 1999, p. 36), strive to ensure that two linguistically diverse groups of students master academic content, attain proficiency in their first languages, attain proficiency in a second language, and become more cross-culturally aware (Christian, 1994). Language and content are integrated, with academic subjects taught in both English and the other language. Most TWI programs require that the non-English language be used for at least 50% of instruction (Sugarman & Howard, 2001; Torres-Guzman, 2001). Thus, two-way immersion programs are additive programs since students develop, not replace, their first language while becoming proficient in a second language.

Though TWI programs vary, they share some similarities. TWI programs usually start in kindergarten or first grade and continue for four-to-six years. Each class is typically composed of 50% native English speakers and 50% native speakers of the other language. Languages are used separately, meaning that teachers instruct for extended periods of time in one language, rather than switching between languages in a single lesson. Students are integrated, meaning that native speakers of each language study together for all or most of the day, with students sometimes separated by language background for instruction in language arts (Genesee, 1999, p. 36).

Theoretical assumptions that underlie TWI programs include that the first language provides a basis for the acquisition of literacy and those skills transfer without difficulty from the first to the second language. Another argument used in favor of two-way immersion programs is that, for all students, acquiring academic knowledge in one language makes it easier to acquire the same knowledge in another language (Collier, 1989). Additionally, supporters of TWI suggest that language is used best as a medium of instruction and for real communicative needs

rather than the exclusive focus of instruction (Genesee, 1999, p. 36). Finally, those who advocate TWI programs maintain that language-majority students can develop “advanced levels of second language proficiency without compromising their academic achievement or first language development” (Genesee, 1999, p. 36).

Several factors should be considered in reference to TWI programs. Just as with DBE programs, districts should ensure that enough ELLs speak the same first language, that both languages have equal status and are integrated into all domains of schooling, and that teachers are proficient in at least one language (ideally, both languages), certified in content areas, and skilled in integrating content and language objectives. Additionally, a sizeable proportion of the majority language (English) speakers, their parents, and the administration must support bilingualism.

Summary

As educators strive to find ways to meet the educational needs of English language learners but are limited in terms of human and financial resources, decisions must be strategic and well informed. Certainly, the minimum goals for all programs designed to support English language learners have been defined. Programs must be based on scientifically based research, be well implemented, and be evaluated and revised on a regular basis. Thus, all programs must minimally strive to promote English language proficiency and mastery of academic content among ELLs. Instructional program models vary primarily according to their theoretical underpinnings and the additional goals they assume for students. Examples of these additional goals include first language proficiency for ELLs, second language proficiency for native speakers of English, or cross-cultural awareness.

Determining what is “best” for English language learners thus depends on a variety of contextual and local factors. Such factors include the district’s goals and resources (Genesee, 1999), the school community, and the needs and characteristics of its students (August & Hakuta, 1998; Genesee, 1999; Hakuta 2001; Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002).

Chapter Three Research on Instructional Models for English Language Learners



Introduction

Although a considerable body of research exists on second language acquisition and topics related to the education of English language learners, few conclusions regarding how best to educate ELLs can be drawn. In some cases, the research is strong but may not have implications for instructional practices in settings such as ESL classrooms. In other cases, the research lacks rigor or offers contradictory findings. In still other areas, there simply is not enough research. As the National Literacy Panel finishes its review of all the available research printed in *English on second language learners*, stronger conclusions and more guidance should emerge (for findings of the National Literacy Panel, please see www.cal.org).

Until then, educators should benefit from the research reviews presented in this section. The first section on possible student characteristics related to the differential success of second language learners, whatever the instructional program, provides readers with an appreciation of the diversity among English language learners. The second section outlines research related to characteristics of instructional programs for English language learners, with special emphasis on the use of students' first languages and the length of time students are enrolled in ELL programs. The final section reviews some common program models regarding local practices that may help increase the success of English language learners.

Student Characteristics

A multitude of factors have been examined to determine the degree to which they may or may not differentially impact learners' rates of acquisition and ultimate attainment of second languages. Such factors include but are not limited to age, aptitude, social-psychological factors, attitude, personality, cognitive style, brain hemisphere specialization, gender, and prior experience (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991).

Of these factors, age is perhaps the one most often cited to explain learners' varying degrees of proficiency in a second language. It is also a variable that is often misunderstood. Conventional wisdom assumes that language acquisition is easier

for younger students. Although researchers have disagreed over the existence of a critical period for language learning and the degree to which constraints on language learning may be biologically driven, it has long been recognized that younger students have advantages for some aspects of second language learning and disadvantages for others, just as older learners do (Bucuvalas, 2002; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991).

Moreover, claims regarding the impact of age on language acquisition sometimes fail to consider important points. Misconceptions then result that can influence perceptions regarding young English language learners' needs. For example, as Catherine Snow points out, "younger language learners, like older ones, work hard and struggle while learning" (Bucuvalas, 2002). As a result, they need appropriate support. Additionally, while younger second language learners are more likely to attain native-like proficiency in the second language (Bucuvalas, 2002; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991), they are also more likely to lose proficiency in their first language (Bucuvalas, 2002). Thus, although older students might not reach the same levels of proficiency in the second language as younger learners tend to, they usually meet the cognitive and linguistic demands necessary to maintain two languages.

Such distinctions have important implications for ELL instructional program models. For instance, new immigrants between the ages of four and seven sometimes need two more years of linguistic and academic support than those between the ages 8 and 11 (US GAO, 2001).

In addition to age, other individual student characteristics, such as the amount of formal schooling a student received in his or her home country and others too numerous to discuss here, are also important to consider when developing instructional programs for English language learners (US GAO, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2002).

Especially given the language barrier that ELLs face, accurately identifying and serving English language learners with disabilities is emerging as a growing challenge (Brice & Roseberry-McKibben, 1999; Ortiz, 1997, 2001; Zehr, 2001a). English language learners may be over-represented in special education

when some aspect of second language acquisition is mistakenly interpreted as a learning disability. Conversely, English language learners may also be under-represented (Development Associates, 2003) when just the opposite occurs—learning disabilities are mistakenly attributed to the process of acquiring a second language. Whether students are over identified or under identified, their limited English language skills can mimic or mask a disability (Artiles & Ortiz, in press; Zehr, 2001a). Misdiagnosis may be caused and compounded by the fact that there is a shortage of special education assessment specialists and teachers who are able to address students’ “language and disability-related needs simultaneously” (Ortiz, 2001, p. 1), so that, contrary to the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) policy, some students may be assigned to special education programs on the basis of criteria that measure and evaluate English language skills rather than learning disabilities. The Appendix offers resources on this topic.

Characteristics of Instructional Program Models

Use of Primary Language in Instruction

The evaluation literature on instructional program models for English language learners has focused almost exclusively on comparisons between broadly defined bilingual programs and English-only programs. That is, most studies have strived to provide insights regarding the efficacy of one approach or the other (August & Hakuta, 1997). As a result, one limitation of the research is that variations and subtleties of instructional models, whether bilingual or not, have rarely been compared in order to determine what might work best. Furthermore, many who have conducted and reviewed research in this area claim that some of the evaluation literature is problematic (Baker and de Kanter, 1983; Willig, 1985). Despite these limitations, however, questions and suggestions regarding evaluation methodology and program implementation, as well as hypotheses regarding ELL instruction emerge from the existing body of research.

Evidence Cited Against Using Students’ Native Languages in Instruction

Some studies that have raised questions concerning the efficacy of bilingual education either have found little conclusive

evidence that English language learners in bilingual programs perform better than those in English-only programs (Baker & de Kanter, 1983; Rossell & Baker, 1996) or that students in bilingual programs fare worse in some way (Danoff et al., 1978). In the first large-scale evaluation of bilingual programs, researchers at the American Institutes for Research (AIR) found that students in the bilingual programs they examined performed as well in math but worse in English than did native Spanish speakers who were not enrolled in bilingual programs.

The AIR report has been criticized for confounding correlation and causation in the case of first language instruction and second language measures, mistakenly including students who were fluent in English and for not distinguishing between bilingual programs that varied widely (Hacsi, 2002). Similarly, critics point out that Baker and de Kanter (1983) reviewed hundreds of summaries but used only 28 for their review (Hacsi, 2002), and, though they concluded that English-only instruction was preferable to bilingual education, they suggested that an adult who spoke the students' first language might be needed in the classroom. Finally, critics of the Rossell and Baker (1996) review suggest that inappropriate studies whose instructional approaches were ambiguous and that did not control for student differences were included (Greene, 1997) in that review.

Evidence Cited For Using Students' Native Languages in Instruction

A number of studies suggest that bilingual education programs can have significant, positive effects on English language learners' academic achievement and language proficiency levels (August & Hakuta, 1997; Cummins & Corson, 1997; Greene, 1998; Willig, 1985; Sugarman & Howard, 2001), as well as their attitudes (Willing, 1985) and social development (August & Hakuta, 1997). In terms of academic achievement, students enrolled in bilingual education programs have been found to perform better in math, reading, and other subjects than students who do not receive instruction in their first language (Greene, 1998; Houston Independent School District, 1997; Thomas & Collier, 1997; Willig, 1985).

Despite common misconceptions, learning in two languages simultaneously does not seem to jeopardize the development of second (English) language proficiency. Instead, the knowledge and literacy skills that children in quality bilingual programs receive allow them to more easily comprehend information in and transfer literacy skills to the second language (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Such findings led the National Research Council to conclude that English language learners should be taught to read first in their native language (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Indeed, Petitto and Kovelman (2003) maintain that “early-exposed bilingual children exhibit neither ‘language confusion’ nor ‘language delay.’ Instead, they develop into fully healthy language users, and as if they had two monolingual brains in one” (p. 16).

In spite of these positive findings, however, test scores of English language learners enrolled in bilingual programs may sometimes lag behind those of their counterparts in English-only classes, especially in the early grades (Ramirez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1997). In both of these studies, however, English language learners who received some instruction in their native language ultimately outperformed their peers who received English-only instruction, either by third grade (Ramirez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991) or the end of high school (Thomas & Collier, 1997). In particular, English language learners who attended bilingual programs were most successful at closing the gap, finishing school with average scores at or above the 50th national percentile (Thomas & Collier, 1997). In contrast, ELLs enrolled in the highest-quality content ESL programs closed only about half of the total achievement gap (Thomas & Collier, 1997, p. 334), while ELLs who were immersed in mainstream classes showed large decreases in reading and math by grade five and were most likely to drop out of school.

Just as with the literature that supports English-only instruction, some of the research above that supports bilingual education has been criticized. For example, critics suggest that the evidence presented in the Thomas and Collier (1997) study is less robust than the authors claim (Hacsi, 2002). Though 700,000 student records were examined, only 42,000 were included in the study. Attrition affected the results, but it is uncertain to what degree or in which direction (Hacsi, 2002). Additionally, claims the study makes

concerning how well programs were implemented or the socio-cultural responsiveness of classrooms have been questioned, given that the number of classrooms precluded observations. Though hardly a problem unique to this study and one that many educational studies struggle with, the students self-selected into instructional programs, making it difficult to account for individual level variables. Despite these limitations, however, even critics concede that many of the claims the study makes have merit (Hacsi, 2002). Moreover, Thomas & Collier (1997) report that studies conducted by the three districts from which the data were obtained confirm the results presented in the study.

Clearly, the evaluation literature on ELL instructional programs provides insights and poses questions that are valuable to educators interested in making informed decisions. Many researchers in linguistics and learning agree that English-only instruction and transitional bilingual education are less robust options for improving long-term academic achievement in English language learners than programs that are intended to develop both bilingualism and biliteracy (August & Hakuta, 1998; Cummins & Corson, 1997). It appears that the impact of primary language instruction, though perhaps limited, is statistically significant and educationally meaningful (Greene, 1997; Willig, 1985). As with any educational program, available resources and quality of implementation are important factors to consider. This point, too often overlooked, has led some to suggest that “the biggest problem may be that we have had far more mediocre programs, of all kinds, than excellent ones” (Hacsi, 2002).

Several of the studies cited above, from both sides of the bilingual debate, present secondary findings that are often omitted from discussions but offer important points related to program quality. When implementing and especially evaluating programs, it is always important to note how faithful program practice is to the model. Ramirez, Yuen, and Ramey (1991) found that immersion programs and TBE programs were the most faithful to their models, with developmental bilingual programs the least faithful. Teachers in these programs were found to use far less Spanish than what was called for, particularly in the upper grades. Indeed, recruiting qualified teachers with the language proficiency required in academic contexts seems to be problematic for some

bilingual programs. Almost half of the teachers interviewed in the AIR report, for example, admitted that they were not proficient in the language in which they instructed students.

As observed in several studies, the process used for mainstreaming ELL can sometimes be problematic (Danoff et al., 1978; Ramirez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991). Transitions from bilingual classes to English-only classes seemed to impact student achievement in at least one case, with those students in DBE math classes that received more Spanish in the later grades scoring higher on math scores than did those whose classes shifted abruptly to English (Ramirez et al., 1991). Indeed, researchers suggest that ELL programs track the academic success of English language learners once they have been mainstreamed in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional support they receive. Last but not least, quality of instruction was also noted in several studies (Ramirez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1997), with the claim that instruction for ELLs should be cognitively challenging in both languages and on grade level (Thomas & Collier, 1997).

It is not surprising that quality, challenging instruction helps English language learners perform well linguistically and academically. In fact, as some preliminary findings in these studies suggest, English language learners benefit from many of the practices associated with quality schooling, just as other students do. With research efforts focused on the question of instruction in the primary language, however, other questions have remained unanswered.

Duration of Enrollment in ELL Instructional Model

The answer to the question of how long English language learners should remain in ELL programs seems an easy one—for as long as they need to. Some indications that ELLs have received support of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration are that, once exited from support programs, ELLs

1. Keep up with their English-speaking classmates.
2. Participate successfully in all aspects of the school's curriculum without the use of simplified English materials.

3. Have in-grade retention and dropout rates that are similar to those of their English-speaking peers (Williams, 1991).

Beyond the somewhat simplistic response of “as long as needed” and the suggested indicators regarding whether or not ELLs have been mainstreamed too early, however, “no clear consensus exists among researchers and educators on the length of time needed for children of limited English proficiency to become proficient in English” (US GAO, 2001, p. 12). Several factors seem to make generalizations difficult (US GAO, 2001). First, individual student differences affect the rate of acquisition of English, just as they do other learning tasks. Additionally, the variability in both instructional programs and the measures states use to determine proficiency complicate attempts to determine a figure such as the average number of years students need to attain proficiency. Finally, just as with instructional program models, there is a lack of research (US GAO, 2001).

Keeping these limitations in mind, the research that follows is offered in light of the fact that research and practice regarding length of enrollment often do not coincide. For example, while many schools aim to exit students from English-only programs within two-to-three years, Thomas and Collier (1997, 2002) found that it generally takes from five-to-seven years for a typical student who is achieving on grade level in their native language to reach the 50th NCE (normal curve equivalent, a score similar to percentile ranks) in the second language. Further, it takes most students in ESL programs seven-to-ten-or-more years to reach the 50th NCE (Thomas & Collier, 1997). Based on these findings, Thomas and Collier (2002) suggest that students who have no proficiency in English should be placed in programs that provide support and instruction for a minimum of four years.

Based on nearly 20 years of research on English language learners in California, De Avila (1997) reached similar conclusions to those articulated by Thomas and Collier. De Avila (1997) noted that there is a large discrepancy between oral second language skills and reading and writing proficiency in English in the early grades. For example, while the aural comprehension skills of English language learners are close to 80% proficient by the third

grade, their reading and writing skills remain below 50% proficient compared to those of native English speakers. It is not until after grades five or six (or later for English language learners who begin at older ages) that biliteracy, or proficiency in reading and writing in the second language, begins to appear. As a result, De Avila (1997) suggests that acquiring English as a second language for students entering school with no proficiency in English takes approximately six-to-seven years. Similarly, Hakuta, Goto-Butler, and Witt (2000) concluded that it takes students three-to-five years to attain oral proficiency and four-to-seven years to attain the academic proficiency that enables students to succeed in school.

Thus, in answer to the question of how long English language learners should remain enrolled in ELL programs, the answer remains “as long as they need to.” Student characteristics and the type of instruction should certainly factor into estimates, as should differentiated rates of acquisition related to different language domains (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Unfortunately, if ongoing and future research confirms that presented above, perhaps “as long as they need to” is longer than most programs are currently designed to offer support.

School Characteristics

As mentioned in the discussion regarding instructional models, quality instruction for English language learners seems to be associated with practices typical of high-quality schooling for all children. In addition to being based on sound educational theory, well implemented, and regularly evaluated and revised (OCR, 2004), programs for ELLs may benefit from the practices outlined here. These practices do not comprise a definitive checklist, but are offered as “best guesses” still in need of empirical support.

In terms of district and school culture, programs for ELLs benefit from a strong and knowledgeable leadership that is sensitive to the needs of English language learners, coordination of efforts among and between schools, and a supportive schoolwide environment (August & Hakuta, 1997; Genesee, 1999). Concerning curriculum and instruction, English language learners likely benefit from a developmentally appropriate curriculum and

instructional materials that incorporate both basic and higher-order skills, as well as explicit skill instruction. Additionally, English language learners should be held to high standards, regularly and systematically assessed, offered a “customized” learning environment, taught by qualified staff, and enjoy opportunities for student-directed learning.

In particular, instructional personnel should be able to implement strategies that

1. Integrate language acquisition and academic achievement.
2. Promote proficiency in English (and the students’ native language, where applicable) for academic purposes, including literacy.
3. Ensure that academic instruction through the students’ second language is meaningful and comprehensible.
4. Link assessment methods to instructional objectives and inform instructional planning and delivery (Genesee, 1999).

Finally, ongoing and appropriate professional development that focuses on the development of specific strategies to identify the needs of English language learners, well articulated exit plans for ELL instructional programs that require such, and parental involvement (Goldenberg, 1993, 2004; Jeynes, 2003) may help improve English language learner outcomes, regardless of the program in place (August & Hakuta, 1997; Genesee, 1999). In particular, gradual-exit plans can help avoid the problem of mainstreaming students before their knowledge and literacy levels of English are adequate (Torres-Guzman, 2001). Once students are mainstreamed, their progress should be monitored and ongoing support provided.

Summary

While it has long been clear that instructional programs for English language learners should be based on sound educational theory, well implemented, and regularly evaluated and revised (OCR, 2004), questions regarding the “best” approach for teaching English language learners have often resulted in a debate between program models (August & Hakuta, 1997). Drawing upon the available research, it appears that instructional program

models that use English language learners' first language result in statistically significant and educationally meaningful outcomes for English language learners (Greene, 1997; Willig, 1985). Furthermore, it also becomes clear that English language learners need long-term, ongoing support in order to perform well academically. However, simply adopting one sort of program does not guarantee that English language learners will thrive. Instead, schools and districts often adopt more than one program model in accordance with various student characteristics and available resources. These programs should be regularly evaluated and revised, as well as aligned with practices in place at the school level that help all students succeed.

Chapter Four English Language Learners: National, Regional, and State Trends



Introduction

The ELL population is growing at a faster rate than the rest of the school-age population (NCBE, 2000), and patterns of immigration are affecting some districts and schools that have not traditionally enrolled significant numbers of English language learners. In order to help educators place their experiences in context, the following paragraphs provide a broad overview of national trends related to the language backgrounds and enrollment patterns of ELLs, as well as how states identify, place, assess, and instruct ELLs. After the overview of national trends, trends within the SERVE region are discussed. Finally, this chapter briefly describes ELL education policies and practices within each SERVE state.

National Trends

Language Backgrounds

In 2000–2001, states reported more than 460 languages spoken by LEP students (Kindler, 2002). Although Spanish is the native language of about 79% of English language learners, there is substantial regional variation in terms of linguistic diversity. In nine states, Spanish was not the dominant language among ELLs. Instead, the dominant languages were Blackfoot, French, Hmong, Ilocano, Lakota, Serbo-Croatian, and Yup'ik (Kindler, 2002).

Enrollment Patterns

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of English language learners enrolled in public schools increased by more than 100% to approximately 4.5 million nationally. In contrast, the general school population increased just 12%. California has the greatest number of ELLs, over 1.5 million (Kindler, 2002). The chart on the following page shows the nation's leaders in numbers of ELLs as of 2000–2001.

Most English language learners, 44%, are enrolled in pre-kindergarten through third grade. Grades four through eight account for 35%. High schools enroll only 19% of English language learners (Kindler, 2002).

State	Number of English language learners (2000–2001)
California	1,511,646
Puerto Rico	598,022
Texas	570,022
Florida	254,517
New York	239,097
Illinois	140,528
Arizona	135,248

Source: Kindler, 2002

Identification, Placement, and Evaluation of English Language Learners

The first step in providing support to English language learners is identifying them as such as outlined in federal legislation. For this purpose, in the 1999–2000 school year, most state education agencies (SEAs) nationwide used tests, home language surveys, teacher observations, teacher interviews, and parent information (Hacsi, 2002; Kindler, 2002). More than half of SEAs also used student records, student grades, informal assessments, and referrals. About a dozen states, as of the mid-1990s, required schools to use tests they had approved (Hacsi, 2002, p. 96). Once English language learners are identified, they are assessed for proficiency in English and, sometimes, in their native languages. The most commonly used language proficiency tests include the Language Assessment Scales (LAS), the IDEA Language Proficiency Tests (IPT), and the Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey (Woodcock-Muñoz).

Evaluating the progress of ELLs has traditionally taken into account several measures, including retention rates, reclassification rates, and standardized test scores. While states vary

in reference to the number of ELLs retained, nearly all states were using a formal assessment in the 1999–2000 school year to reclassify (Kindler, 2002), in addition to other measures such as student grades and teacher observation. The reclassification of English language learners in most states for the 1999–2000 school year was based on the LAS, IPT, or Woodcock-Muñoz. Nationally, rates of reclassification vary by grade, with the highest proportion of ELLs reclassified in the third and fifth grades and the lowest proportion reclassified in K–2 and grade 9. Sometimes, as in California, states mandate how long ELLs may remain in instructional programs, regardless of how the students perform (Hacsi, 2002, p. 97). Despite the popularity of using measures such as retention rates, reclassification rates, and standardized test scores to evaluate the progress of English language learners and programs designed to support them, some researchers (Thomas & Collier, 1997) and groups suggest that they are not appropriate. Instead, the long-term academic success of ELLs is promoted as the real measure of a program’s effectiveness (Hacsi, 2002, p. 97).

Instructional Models

Nationally, English-based instructional approaches are more common than bilingual approaches (Institute for Policy Analysis and Research, 2000). In the 1999–2000 school year, approximately 23% of English language learners nationwide received instruction that incorporated the student’s native language, while 54% received instruction in only English (Kindler, 2002, p. 14). However, reliable data on instructional approaches are difficult to attain and categorize. One reason why such classification is difficult stems from the fact that “the instructional approaches used to teach children with limited English proficiency are far more varied than the categories typically used to capture this information” (US GAO, 2001, p. 19).

Moreover, ELLs often receive more than one type of instruction during a school day. Multiple research studies have documented that schools generally utilize a variety of ELL instructional models to fit the diverse needs of their particular student population (US GAO, 2001; Institute for Policy Analysis and Research, 2000; Gandara, 1999). As articulated by the Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (2000), “A school might have a dual-

language program for Cantonese LEP students and English-speaking LEP students but have a transitional bilingual program for Spanish-speaking students. [Or,] a school might have different programmatic approaches at different grades. For example, the school might employ a transitional bilingual design in the early grades and then have sheltered instruction after students have ‘exited’ the transitional program” (p. 42).

Furthermore, the type of instructional programs offered to ELLs also tends to vary according to age group. As confirmed by a national study of all Title VII Comprehensive schools (i.e., schools that qualify for federal grants because they enroll significant concentrations of English language learners), native language instruction tends to be used more frequently in early grades, with English becoming more prevalent as students progress (Institute for Policy Analysis and Research, 2000).

Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

In terms of who was delivering the instruction, on national average in the 1999–2000 school year, there was one teacher certified in ESL for approximately every 44 ELLs and one teacher certified in bilingual education for every 47 ELLs. However, these numbers vary from state to state, with teachers most scarce in North Dakota, South Dakota, and South Carolina, where the ratio is over 1:600 (Kindler, 2002).

Undergraduate programs in ESL are not very common (Coltrane & Morrison, 2002), with many teachers opting instead for a degree in education with an endorsement in ESL. Though ESL has traditionally been an “add-on” endorsement, some states are offering initial, stand-alone certification in ESL. Graduate-level programs in ESL, only some of which include K–12 certification, may be housed in linguistics departments, education departments, English departments, or foreign language departments (see Garschick, 2002, for a directory of teacher education programs in TESOL). Graduate programs vary, but most require courses in linguistics, language acquisition, and methods in English language teaching (Coltrane & Morrison, 2002). An understanding of educational linguistics, in particular (Fillmore & Snow, 2000), can enable teachers to grasp how language impacts teaching and learning, enhance instructional practice

in general and literacy instruction in particular (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998), and prepare teachers to work with English language learners (August & Hakuta, 1998).

Once in the classroom, teachers should receive quality professional development that will better enable them to help English language learners perform well academically. Because “there is a growing consensus in the literature regarding the elements of effective professional development” (Clair & Adger, 1999), current professional development for teachers of linguistically diverse students emphasizes, as does most teacher professional development, the need to “embed knowledge and skill acquisition within a framework of teacher growth and development, collaborative programs, and interactive research within a community of learners” (Rueda, 1998). Thus, quality professional development is long-term and takes the form of teacher networks and collaboratives (Little, 1993; Renyi, 1996), university-school partnerships (Darling-Hammond, 1994), action research groups (Check, 1997), or teacher study groups (Clair, 1995, 1998). Such initiatives should combine principles of adult learning, be embedded in the reality of how schools work and the nature of teachers’ work, and be aligned with effective teaching and learning (Clair & Adger, 1999). Participation of content, ESL, and bilingual teachers in the same professional development activities promotes an exchange of knowledge and perspectives that can benefit English language learners (Clair, 1998; González & Darling-Hammond, 1997).

The content of teacher professional development designed to improve academic outcomes for English language learners might include language and linguistics, second language acquisition and teaching, language and cultural diversity, or other topics related to students’ and teachers’ needs. Primarily, “professional development in culturally diverse schools must address specific knowledge and attitudes that are relevant to teaching English language learners” (Clair & Adger, 1999).

Regional Trends: The Southeast

Language Backgrounds

In the SERVE region, Spanish is the first language of the majority of ELLs. In five of the six SERVE states, 70% or more English

language learners speak Spanish. In the sixth state, slightly over 60% identify Spanish as their first language. Additionally, Vietnamese is one of the five most prevalent languages for English language learners in all six SERVE states (Kindler, 2002).

Most Common Native Languages of ELLs in the SERVE Region

	Most common	Second most common	Third most common	Fourth most common	Fifth most common
Alabama	Spanish	Vietnamese	Korean	Arabic	Lao
Florida	Spanish	Haitian Creole	Portuguese	French	Vietnamese
Georgia	Spanish	Vietnamese	African (unspecified)	European (unspecified)	Korean
Mississippi	Spanish	Vietnamese	Choctaw	Arabic	Sudanese
North Carolina	Spanish	Hmong	Vietnamese	Arabic	Chinese
South Carolina	Spanish	Russian	Vietnamese	Hmong	Korean

Source: Kindler, 2002

Enrollment Patterns

The fastest-growing segment of the population in the Southeast, both adult and school age, is Hispanic. Until the 1990s, the influx of Hispanics into the SERVE region was limited, with the notable exception of Florida. However, the Hispanic population in the SERVE region recently increased significantly. For the period 1991–1992 to 2001–2002, SERVE states hold four of the top six positions for percentage increases in ELL population. Georgia and North Carolina hold the top two positions with increases over 650% (NCELA, 2002a). On the other hand, Mississippi has experienced a drop in ELL enrollment, which can probably be attributed to changes in identification procedures and migration out of the state.

The following table presents data from each of the SERVE states—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Both raw numbers and percentages are presented to provide a picture of the magnitude of growth in ELL populations occurring in the SERVE region.

ELL Enrollment Trends in SERVE States

State	Total Enrollment of Students 2001–2002	LEP Enrollment 2001–2002	LEP Enrollment Increase 1991–1992 to 2001–2002
Alabama	726,367	7,817	367.8%
Florida	2,500,161	290,024	198.1%
Georgia	1,470,634	61,307	670.7%
Mississippi	491,686	2,904	-5.0%
North Carolina	1,303,928	52,835	652.0%
South Carolina	648,000	7,004	377.8%

Source: NCELA, 2002b

This table demonstrates that most states in the SERVE region are experiencing considerable growth in the ELL population. Most of the English language learners are the children of Hispanic immigrants from Mexico and Central America (Therrien & Ramirez, 2000). Generalizations about ethnic groups should be made with care, but several researchers have attempted to characterize new Hispanic immigrants. They state that, compared to the more economically and educationally advantaged Cuban population in Florida, new Hispanic immigrants tend to be poorer, more limited in English proficiency, less likely to have attended school regularly in their native countries, and have lower levels of educational attainment than other immigrant groups (Lockwood & Secada, 1999; Secada et al., 1998; Vernez, Krop, & Rydell, 1999). Thus, developing solid, research-based programs that can effectively teach these new immigrants is essential to meeting their diverse needs and closing the achievement gap between English language learners and their English-speaking peers (Borden, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002; Vernez, Krop, & Rydell, 1999).

Identification, Placement, and Evaluation of English Language Learners

Across the Southeast, ELLs are first identified by home language surveys. Based on the results of this survey, their English language proficiency is then assessed using one of the common language proficiency tests. These include the Language Assessment Scales (LAS), the IDEA Language Proficiency Tests (IPT), the Language Assessment Battery (LAB), the Stanford English Language Proficiency Test (ELP), and the Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey (Woodcock-Muñoz). Most southeastern states use one of these tests annually to assess the progress of ELLs. Florida, working under the guidelines of a 1990 consent decree, also employs an LEP committee to review student progress, discipline, and placement within academic programs. The committee consists of teachers, administrators, counselors, and other education professionals, plus the student's parents.

Instructional Models

School districts throughout the SERVE states have considerable freedom to choose the instructional models for their ELLs. Typically, each school district seeking state or federal funding submits an ELL education plan to its state department of education. The department then reviews the plan to ensure that it meets state or federal requirements. The majority of school districts choose ESL or ESOL pull-out programs. However, a wide variety of other models are in use in districts scattered throughout the Southeast. These models include sheltered instruction, dual-immersion, and newcomer programs.

Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

The typical ESL teacher in the Southeast holds a standard teaching degree. ESL certification is then acquired as an add-on endorsement gained from an approved program at a college or university. However, as more schools of higher education offer specialized training in ESL teaching, some states are coming to recognize stand-alone ELL certificates.

Professional development is the responsibility of the local school district in SERVE states. To help meet the needs of ESL and regular classroom teachers, some state departments of education

offer ELL-focused training through such means as state broadcast networks, online seminars, and summer conferences.

Policies and Practices in SERVE States

The rapid increase in the immigrant population in the Southeast has thrust the education of English language learners into central prominence. In an effort to determine how the needs of English language learners are being addressed in the Southeast, SERVE reviewed the policies and programs in each state. This review included an examination of public statements on the respective state department of education websites and, in most cases, a further telephone interview with a state representative. The review included questions focusing on each state's:

- ELL program goals
- ELL models in use
- ELL assessment, including both initial screening and state accountability tests
- Teacher certification
- Funding sources
- Outreach to parents

Some regional trends emerge. For example, in all SERVE states, individual school districts have the primary responsibility for educating ELLs. That is, they make most of the decisions regarding how ELLs will be educated. However, the states vary widely in terms of the guidance and support offered at the state level. Some states provide no funding for ELL education. In these cases, the state's districts rely almost solely on federal funding for ELL programs. Consequently, these programs are designed to meet federal requirements. In other states, such as Florida and Georgia, most of the funding comes from the state. As a result, the state plays a significant role in setting standards. These states tend to provide much more detailed guidance for their school districts regarding ELL education.

All SERVE states also use a home language survey to identify and assess the basic needs of their ELLs. This is usually followed up by a standard instrument, such as the IDEA Proficiency Test,

to determine the student's level of proficiency in English. Almost every state cites English proficiency as its primary goal, but they also add that this proficiency must lead to academic achievement. To attain this goal, most districts within the SERVE states use various types of pull-out programs.

Students in ESL pull-out programs are typically taught by a certified ESL teacher. Most SERVE states provide teacher training for both ESL teachers and regular classroom teachers. While professional development is primarily a local responsibility, some states provide professional development for ESL teachers through distance learning and regional workshops.

The next section describes ELL policies and programs currently in effect in the six SERVE states.

State Trends

Alabama

Alabama currently has no legislative mandates regarding the education of English language learners, but all programs strive to help ELLs attain English proficiency that leads to mastery of academic content. Most federal funding for Alabama's 12,000 LEP students comes through the Title III program. To ensure that districts are complying with Title III regulations, representatives from the state department of education monitor each school periodically. The state provides no funds earmarked for ELL education, but state statutes allocate separate funds for assistance programs of \$100 per student for programs designed for at-risk students who are performing below State Board of Education Standards. There are 7,200 ELLs eligible for at-risk funding.

The individual school districts choose the models used for ELL education. Most districts use pull-out programs. A few districts use sheltered instruction, a model that the state encourages. Alabama uses two instruments for language-proficiency screening, the IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT) and the Language Assessment Scales (LAS). The state belongs to a consortium of 18 other states working to develop the English-Language Development Assessment. Alabama will use that assessment in the future to move ELLs from level to level and exit them out from the program. All ELLs are mandated to take all state assess-

ments in the content areas. The state tests are given in English. The state provides a list of accommodations to students who are determined by the school districts not to be proficient in English.

To be an ESL teacher in Alabama, an individual must meet one of three standards:

1. An ELL certificate
2. An elementary education certificate (for high school language-acquisition teachers)
3. A certificate in an appropriate foreign language

Some districts recruit only teachers with ELL certification. Alabama issues the majority of certificates based on the completion of state-approved programs. ESL standards were developed for Class A (master's level) programs, but one institution has submitted an innovative baccalaureate program.

Outreach to the parents of English language learners is a local matter. However, the districts do have outreach requirements as mandated by Title III. Examples of outreach include parent/teacher meetings, parent organizations, and ELL advisory groups.

Florida

Florida seeks both English language proficiency and subject matter mastery for the state's 439,255 limited English proficient students (number as of 2003–2004). The state does not mandate which methodology or program model should be used for the instruction of LEP students. Schools that have even one LEP student are required to provide ESOL services. A school district may provide services utilizing a range of instructional delivery methods in a variety of combinations: self-contained ESOL instruction, English instruction through inclusion with ESOL instructional strategies, self-contained sheltered English instruction in the basic subjects, home language instruction in the basic subjects, instruction in the basic subjects through inclusion, and dual language programs, as well as other methods. Each district must submit a district LEP plan to the Florida Department of Education, which reviews the plan for compliance with *LULAC et al. v. State Board of Education* Consent Decree (1990). The goal is to ensure that all of Florida's LEP students have equal access to comprehensible instruction, provided by highly qualified personnel.

All LEP students are initially screened in oral English language proficiency. Students in grades 4 through 12 who demonstrate oral proficiency are then assessed on the reading and writing portion of the test. LEP students in ESOL basic subject area classrooms shall have access to an individual proficient in their languages in addition to a trained ESOL subject area teacher. Schools that enroll at least 15 LEP students who speak the same native language shall provide at least one aide or teacher proficient in the same language and trained to assist in ESOL basic subject area instruction. Statewide assessments are given in English, with accommodations for LEP students. These accommodations include flexible timing and setting, the distribution of heritage-to-English dictionaries, and the presence of a bilingual aide or ESOL teacher to administer the test.

To ensure students are offered the most appropriate opportunities while adapting to a new language and culture, an LEP committee reviews the education of each LEP student. The committee may consist of ESOL teachers, administrators or designees, counselors, and other education professionals, along with the students' parents. The committee reviews a variety of areas, including student progress and placement within academic programs.

ESOL teachers must meet specialization requirements established by Florida's Department of Education as well as provisions stipulated in the Consent Decree. These requirements include a bachelor's or higher degree, certification, in-service training, and continuing education in ESOL-approved courses. Certification and training requirements vary depending on subject matter.

Parent involvement is significant for student academic achievement. To encourage parents of LEP students to participate in the education of their children, districts offer leadership training, orientation to the district's LEP programs monitoring procedures, Parent Leadership Councils, and membership on advisory committees.

Georgia

Georgia law requires the State Board of Education to create a program for LEP students, subject to appropriation by the General Assembly. The purpose of this program is to assist such students in developing proficiency in the English language—including

listening, speaking, reading, and writing—sufficient to perform effectively at the currently assigned grade level. Local districts may choose whether or not to offer the program to their students.

Georgia provides state funds for English language learners on a weighted program and student-teacher ratio. In the past, school districts funded the program from local funds for the first year before being eligible to draw state funds when actual enrollment was documented. In 2000, legislation was passed to provide funding for students on the basis of their actual count, beginning with the first year that the students are enrolled, through a mid-year adjustment in funding.

As stated, the goal of Georgia’s state-funded LEP programs is English proficiency that leads to academic success. The state department of education allows districts that receive state funding to accomplish this goal through a variety of methods, including ESOL pull-out programs, cluster centers, and language resource centers and laboratories. Most districts pull LEP from regular classrooms for daily instruction by certified ESOL teachers.

Georgia has been administering the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) to screen students for placement in ESOL programs since the late 1980s. Under the No Child Left Behind Act, all limited English proficient students must be evaluated annually for proficiency in both social and academic English. To that end, the LAB will be replaced next year by the English Language Development Assessment (ELDA). ELDA is the product of an 18-state initiative led by the Council for Chief State School Officers and was to be field-tested in the spring of 2004.

A Language Assessment Conference reviews each student’s school records and test results to determine how the student’s needs can be best addressed. All statewide tests are administered in English, and LEP students must participate. The school’s LEP Testing Participation Committee makes testing decisions based on the needs of individual students. At a minimum, this committee consists of the ESOL teacher currently serving the student, a school-level administrator, a representative mainstream teacher currently serving the student, and, whenever possible and/or appropriate, the student’s parents or guardians. This committee determines whether or not accommodations should

be made for the student on statewide tests and, if necessary, which accommodations are appropriate. Georgia does not have a program for evaluating LEP programs. However, the state does require that each district applying for funds meet all state board of education rules that govern their ESOL program.

An individual with the ESOL endorsement is certified to teach ESOL in grades P–12. To add on an ESOL certificate, an individual must possess a professional certificate at the bachelor's or higher certification level in a teaching field and have completed an approved program in the field, or have an out-of-state certificate in the field. By the end of the 2005–2006 school year, any ESOL teacher providing high school English instruction for core credit will be required to hold certification in secondary school English.

School districts have the responsibility of notifying the parents of LEP students regarding educational programs and student progress. Recognizing the importance of parental involvement in education, the state suggests a variety of ways to encourage parents of LEP students to participate. Examples include creating a network of host families, using adult translators for direct communications, providing adult tutoring programs in language and culture, and encouraging parents to volunteer in classroom activities.

Mississippi

There are no state statutes or funding pertaining to ELL programs in Mississippi. The Mississippi Department of Education monitors schools and districts receiving Title III funds based upon federal regulations once the funds are received from the U.S. Department of Education. Title I and Title III funds are used by districts across the state. Title III funding for July 2003 through September 2005 includes \$821,494 for ELL and immigrant programs. Currently, approximately 3,500 students are served in Mississippi.

English language acquisition and mastery of academic content are the primary goals of the state's ELL programs. Districts across the state use ESL pull-out programs as their educational model. ESL teachers are on staff at the state's 20 federally funded Title III schools. Non-Title III districts and schools use a combination of regular classroom teachers and ESL teachers. The effectiveness of the state's ELL programs is determined by the local school districts.

Beginning in February 2004, an English language learner's level of English language proficiency must be initially assessed using the Stanford English Language Proficiency (ELP) Test. The test will be administered yearly to monitor the progress and proficiency of English language learners and to identify areas in need of improvement. All statewide assessments are given in English and must be administered to English language learners. However, based on their needs, English language learners may receive some accommodations, such as word-to-word language dictionaries and others permitted in the *Mississippi Statewide Assessment System Guidelines for Testing Special Populations* (2004).

Mississippi does not have a special license for ELL teachers. Teachers can receive a supplemental endorsement in ESL in addition to a standard license. For ESL teachers, the state requires an ESL endorsement. This endorsement is obtained through the completion of an approved program of study through an institution of higher learning. Additional professional development is offered through the Mississippi Department of Education to local school districts and teachers.

Parent outreach varies from district to district but may include information dissemination (in the native language of each family), parent/home visits, parent liaisons, providing translation services for parents, and regular parent meetings.

North Carolina

Legislation passed in 1998 requires the North Carolina State Board of Education to develop guidelines for identifying and providing services to students with limited English proficiency. A program for English language learners must be provided; it may be ESL, bilingual education, or another program that meets the needs of students. The majority of ELL programs in North Carolina are a combination of ESL pull-outs plus modifications in the regular classroom. A number of school districts are now putting students in newcomer programs.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has developed the English Language Development Standard Course of Study to guide local school districts in the education of English language learners. Its goal is English language proficiency, both everyday communicative proficiency and the necessary academic

language proficiency required to participate fully in the school curriculum. This course of study will be implemented in the 2004–2005 school year.

Each eligible school system receives funding using a formula of 50% based on a three-year average of LEP students in the district and 50% based on the percentage of those students in the total enrollment of the district. North Carolina school districts received \$8 million from Title III in 2003. Funds are allocated based on the number of LEP students plus the number of immigrant students who are also LEP in a given year. The amount of state funds to support LEP students has increased each fiscal year. For the 2003–2004 school year, the amount was \$33,000,000. There were 70,937 LEP students enrolled in North Carolina public schools for this same school year.

With the advent of No Child Left Behind, each district receiving Title III funds has to complete a performance report every two years. In addition, they now have annual measurable achievement objectives, both in content area testing and in English language proficiency. Many districts also perform their own program evaluations.

Students are screened using the IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT), which is mandated by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. State policy requires that students identified as LEP as measured by the IPT remain in ESL services until they reach superior levels in oral, reading, and writing skills on the test. Local districts determine how these students may best be served.

A state-developed English Language Development Standard Course of Study for K–12 has been developed and will be implemented during the 2004–2005 academic year. From then, Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) will be in place through 2014 to measure the English language proficiency of ESL students across the state. As a result of guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, LEP students who are in their first year of school in the United States may be excluded from the reading competency assessments. ELLs, otherwise, may not be exempt from annual testing. Students who are below certain levels of proficiency in reading and writing within their first two years are eligible for an alternative assessment called the N.C. Alternate

Academic Assessment Inventory, a combination of a checklist and a portfolio.

In 2003, the state board of education passed new certification standards for ESL teachers. Until then, teachers had add-on ESL certification, meaning that they had to be certified in some other area first before adding on ESL certification. As of 2003, the state allows a stand-alone ESL certificate for teachers who do not hold a teaching license in any other area. The stand-alone certificate allows individuals, including undergraduates, to work toward ESL licensure without having to hold a license in another teaching area.

Regular classroom teachers often receive extra training, as determined by their school districts. The state board of education has also initiated a summer training program for ESL literacy facilitators. After completing the summer training, these facilitators return to their districts with the responsibility for training regular classroom teachers in reading instruction for LEP students.

Outreach to parents is performed at the local level. Local districts have the primary responsibility for parent notification regarding the type of instruction their children will receive and their educational progress.

South Carolina

South Carolina has no statutes or funding regarding the education of English language learners. Primarily, Title III funds are used for ESOL programs; however, many districts have opted to use Title I, Title II, and Title V programs to supplement language development activities or ESOL-related professional development. ESOL programs will be judged effective based on their compliance with regulatory mandates and their ability to support students' success at reaching annual measurable achievement objectives in language proficiency and adequate yearly progress in content area achievement.

ESOL is the model in use throughout the state. The vast majority of students are in pull-out ESOL services, though a very small number of districts offer center schools in which LEP students take ESOL courses. LEP students are placed by a variety of district-selected language proficiency assessments. Across the

state, the Language Assessment Scale (LAS), IDEA Language Proficiency Test (IPT), and Woodcock-Muñoz are used for this purpose, with the LAS being the most prevalent. These tests are administered in English. According to No Child Left Behind, all LEP students must be included in the state accountability tests, and all districts are aware of and familiar with this requirement.

In South Carolina, ESOL students are taught by certified personnel who either possess or are working toward the ESOL add-on certificate. In some instances, these personnel are assisted by instructional assistants, who may be bilingual. Regular classroom teachers are typically trained to work with LEP students in professional development sessions led by either the district ESOL coordinator, ESOL consultants, or the educational television network that carries trainings led by the state ESOL consultant.

Parental outreach is provided on a district-by-district basis and may include such activities as parent literacy workshops, multilingual websites, home visits, translation services, standards in other languages, ESOL family mini-field trips, ESOL luncheons, and ESOL parent advocates.

Summary

The demographic changes affecting the nation are being keenly felt in several states in the Southeast where the numbers of English language learners have increased dramatically within recent years. At both the national and state levels, the overwhelming numbers of these students speak Spanish as their first language, though several Asian languages are represented as well. Across the nation, school districts tend to follow similar patterns in areas such as assessing language proficiency. However, the nation and the region are more accurately characterized by the wide variety of ways in which schools address the needs of English language learners. For example, most state education agencies allow school districts to choose their own instructional models, within certain guidelines. Some states provide very detailed guidelines that limit choices. Other states provide few guidelines at the state level, relying instead on federal guidelines. The result is a marked lack of uniformity in educational practices for ELLs across the Southeast and diversity

among approaches within most states. However, lack of uniformity does not mean lack of concern. Several states are enacting new standards in areas such as assessment and teacher certification as they respond positively to the growing numbers of English language learners.

Chapter Five Examples of English Language Learner Programs in the Southeast



Introduction

The rapid increase in the non-English-speaking student population brings a heightened challenge to schools in the SERVE states. Given a lack of resources, such as teachers who are certified in ESL or bilingual education, funding, and research specific to the region, programs and services for English language learners at the school level often represent a mixture of elements. Educators have learned to be creative and innovative as they make use of available resources; consequently, many of the programs serving English language learners in the SERVE region embody a blend of instructional approaches.

English Language Learner Programs in the Southeast

The following descriptions were provided by programs that were selected on the basis of recommendations made by the ELL representative in each state department of education in the SERVE region. In terms of impact, the programs listed do not provide information on student performance or other effectiveness measures. The programs represent a wide variety of models that are in place throughout the SERVE region, and most programs combine two or more instructional models. Included are examples of two-way immersion, sheltered instruction, newcomer, and ESL pull-out programs. Each program description provides information regarding program history, student demographics, funding, assessments, instruction, teacher professional development, and parental involvement. Contact information is also provided.

Albertville City Schools, Albertville, Alabama

P.O. Box 1487

107 West Main Street

Albertville, AL 35950

Telephone 256-891-1183

Fax 256-891-6303

Dr. John Slivka, Administrator in Charge of Federal Programs

Albertville City Schools' ESL program was implemented in the early 1990s to address the needs of a growing number of Hispanic students, many of whose parents were moving into the

area to work in the poultry industry. Presently, 16% of the student population in Albertville City Schools participates in the ESL program. The total student population is 1% African American, 18% Hispanic, and 81% Caucasian.

The IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT) is administered to students to determine language needs, and English language learners participate in state assessments to monitor growth and progress. Exit from ELL service is based upon criteria gathered from assessments, academic performance, teacher recommendations, and parent input.

The ELL program design is based on student need and state-approved standards. Services are provided through pull-out resources, inclusion, and newcomers/sheltered instruction. The type of ELL instruction is determined by the needs of the student. There is an after-school program with a focus on homework help for ESL students. An early childhood program for preschoolers provides an instructional focus on school readiness skills. Along with the preschool program, parenting classes are offered to teach parents how to enhance academic success at an early age. There is also an adult education program for ESL parents.

Staff development is ongoing and vital to the success of the ELL instruction. ELL teaching strategies, curriculum alignment, and modifications are essential in addressing the needs of English language learners. Both certified faculty and support staff participate in training sessions. Progress monitoring and data analysis are important aspects of the ELL in-service program.

Morgan County Schools, Decatur, Alabama

1325 Point Mallard Parkway, SE

Decatur, AL 35601

Telephone 256-309-2145

Fax 256-309-2188

Dr. Mary Horton, Director of Federal Programs

Ana Rosales, ESL Resource/Migrant Teacher

Morgan County Schools has implemented a structured immersion program to serve the needs of ELLs. Students are identified by means of a home language survey and language proficiency

testing. Those who qualify are placed in regular content area classes where teachers make accommodations based on the student's level of English proficiency. There is no time limit on a student's participation in this program.

The ESL resource teacher assesses students and monitors their progress. This teacher serves as an advocate for the students and provides resource materials to support regular classroom teachers in their daily instruction.

Parental involvement is a key factor in the Morgan County English language learner program. The ESL resource teacher makes home visits to keep parents informed of their child's progress in school. The teacher also facilitates parent teacher conferences and works with the parents to help them support their children's educational objectives. Families are instructed on how to use resources available to them such as the public library, Head Start programs, and adult education classes.

Hillcrest Elementary School, Orange County Schools, Orlando, Florida

1010 East Concord Street

Orlando, FL 32803

Telephone 407-245-1770

Fax 407-245-1779

Aliette Scharr, Principal

Hillcrest Elementary School, The Foreign Language Academy, serving K-5 children, was started seven years ago to enable English language learners to make an easier transition to school, to enable native English-speaking children to learn another language, and to improve the literacy rate for all children. Before opening the school, educators and parents of Hillcrest instituted a year-long study on brain development, second language learning, and best practices in literacy. They also visited other sites and contacted coordinators of existing programs.

The school population is currently 17% African American, 34% Caucasian, 25% Hispanic, and 25% Vietnamese. The school uses a two-way immersion approach so that children are instructed in two languages each day. The languages offered include English, French, Vietnamese, and Spanish. Students are taught in

a language of their choice for 100 minutes each day, with the remainder of the day devoted to instruction in English. When entering the program and during his or her third year in the program, each ELL child is assessed using the Language Assessment Scale (LAS). The students also participate in the state testing program and informal classroom assessments. English language learners are able to remain at the school until they complete the fifth grade.

Teachers at the school receive 300 hours of ESL training throughout the school year. They also receive staff development in the Literacy Collaborative Model that complements the school's focus.

The school has received money from a Title VII grant and several state and local grants. Test scores continue to move upward each year, and the interaction and understanding children gain from a multicultural, multilingual environment are very beneficial.

DeKalb County Schools, Chamblee, Georgia

DeKalb County International Center

3075 Alton Road

Chamblee, GA 30341

Telephone 678-676-6602

Fax 678-676-6608

Dr. Joanne H. Lottie, Principal

The International Center in DeKalb County began in 1985 and was designed to meet the needs of students whose first language was not English. The main population that is currently being served by the International Center is Hispanic. Many of the students' families were attracted to the area due to job opportunities. The International Center provides intensive English instruction for students with no English language skills, thereby teaching these students survival English to ease the transition into their regular school. The Center also registers all international children and assists them with immunizations, guardianship, and legal residence verification.

Students are assessed using the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) in listening, reading, writing, and speaking, as well as the Wide Range Achievement Test in Math and English (WRAT I

and II). Exit assessment procedures are based on audio-lingual testing at each grade level.

Two DeKalb County high schools—Clarkston and Cross Keys—contain the ESOL Lab program. This is a self-contained program for teenagers who are 14 years or older and have fewer than seven years of formal schooling in their native countries. It is a program designed to serve the needs of teenage refugees and immigrants who have limited formal education as well as a lack of English. It currently serves 250 students. It is designed to help students catch up to the appropriate grade level within three years. In this three-year program, listening, speaking, reading, and writing English are emphasized in every class, along with critical thinking skills and the basic concepts and vocabulary of each content area, including math, science, social studies, reading, health, and language arts. Practical applications, computer skills, and career awareness are emphasized. Hands-on activities, cooperative learning, and audio-visuals, including computers, videos, and the arts, are incorporated into class instruction.

Ten DeKalb County schools have added Saturday school tutorials for parents and students. Students and parents are bused to school for these tutorial sessions. Beginner ESOL students are provided with language arts, while more advanced ESOL students attend a technology course. The parents of the ESOL students attend citizenship classes, orientation, and career awareness sessions.

Training to become an ESOL instructor consists of three university courses for an add-on licensure to a primary teaching certificate. Teachers also receive in-service training and staff development throughout the year as well as the opportunity to attend professional organizations and conferences. The program costs approximately 3.5 million dollars and is provided through grants and local, state, and federal funds.

Biloxi Public Schools, Biloxi, Mississippi

P.O. Box 168

Biloxi, MS 39533

Telephone 228-435-6331

Fax 228-435-6327

Justine Barnett, English Language Learner Coordinator

The program began in 1980 due to a large influx of Vietnamese refugees who were attracted to the Biloxi area's shrimp and fishing industry. As educators developed the ELL program, they researched ELL methodologies and second language acquisition. Today, there are 18 languages represented in the district. Of the approximately 300 English language learners in the district, 70% is Vietnamese, 25% Hispanic, and the remaining 5% Korean, Japanese, Russian, Chinese, or Thai. As the ELL population has evolved over the past few years, the program has changed to meet the needs of all English language learners.

Each school in Biloxi has an assessment coordinator to test new students and make recommendations for placement. Students entering the ESL program are assessed using the Stanford English Language Proficiency Test (Stanford ELP).

The district ELL program is currently directed by an ELL coordinator, three full-time certified teachers, and one full-time tutor. LEP students are served through a pull-out instructional program as well as by regular classroom teachers who are supported and provided with materials for classroom use. Beginning in 2003 and continuing in 2004, the program has been funded largely by Title III funds and also district funds.

Chapel Hill–Carrboro City Schools,

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

750 South Merritt Mill Road

Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Telephone 919-967-8211

Fax 919-933-4560

Jo Harris, Director of Special Programs/ESL Supervisor

As Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) developed its ESOL program, a task force consisting of 31 members was created to examine ESOL research, review existing models, visit existing ESOL sites, and contact the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. In 1987, the first ESOL teacher was hired to work with approximately 60–70 students. At present, CHCCS has 27 full-time ESOL teachers. The program was initiated to comply with federal and state regulations and to reach the growing number of international families attracted to the area because of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and

the Research Triangle Park. The largest student population of new English language learners is Asian, but the fastest-growing population is Hispanic. Total annual funding for the program is approximately \$750,000 and comes from state and local monies.

Students entering the program are assessed using the IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT). Exiting the program is based on IPT scores, teacher observations, student performance, parent comments, and teacher assessments. At the elementary level (K–5), two different methods are utilized: the pullout/traditional method, where students are taken out of their regular classrooms for 20 minutes to one hour per day to work with the ESOL teacher, and the push-in model, where the ESOL teacher goes into the regular classrooms to work with English language learners. At the middle school level, ESOL students attend ESOL content classes in both reading and math. At the high school level, ESOL students continue to attend ESOL classes designed for beginning, intermediate, and advanced proficiency levels, as well as two sheltered classes in Latin American History and English 101. The push-in model is used within different content courses. There are one or two ESOL teachers per school, and every school has an ELL resource center with materials and handouts for teachers, students, and parents.

In addition to the ESOL program services, in the fall of 2002, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools launched two dual-language programs. Carrboro Elementary School and Glenwood Elementary School each have a kindergarten class and a first-grade class, with one grade added each year, in which students are instructed in two languages. At Carrboro Elementary, students are instructed in both Spanish and English, while at Glenwood Elementary, students are instructed in both Chinese and English. Forty-four LEP students are served in the dual immersion programs.

All ESOL teachers are certified and are provided with ongoing opportunities for regional and state staff development. They meet once a month to discuss methods and activities. New teachers are provided with an ESOL curriculum guide and have a full-day training session in ELL strategies to understand and become familiar with the districts ESOL program. Teachers are encouraged to attend summer institutes for further training.

Eight-week language survival classes are offered for all staff, faculty, and teachers in Spanish, Korean, Japanese, and Chinese. These classes enable instructional personnel to learn key words, greetings, and phrases in order to communicate with non-English-speaking children and their families. The Chapel Hill-Carrboro school system collaborates with the Department of International Studies at UNC-Chapel Hill, which provides translators for languages such as Korean, Japanese, and Chinese.

Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools has a six-session parent orientation that parents and students attend. During these sessions, the school handbook is reviewed, as well as basic survival skills needed with the schools and community. Other parent activities are offered at least four times per year and include activities such as a potluck dinner. The family involvement portion of the program enables parents to feel at ease about their child's education and about the school enrollment process.

**Collinswood Language Academy,
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools,
Charlotte, North Carolina**
4000 Applegate Road
Charlotte, NC 28209
Telephone 980-343-5820
Fax 980-343-5850
Maria Petrea, Principal

Collinswood Language Academy is a K–5 magnet school that uses a two-way immersion program model, with roughly 50% of the students native Spanish-speakers and the remaining 50% native English-speakers. Both language groups learn the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and develop fluency in one another's language. At Collinswood, students are taught math, Spanish literacy, and social studies in Spanish and are taught science, English literacy, and writing in English. These core subjects are taught exclusively in the designated language, without translation. As a result, students learn abstract concepts, develop an extended vocabulary, acquire strong problem-solving skills, hone critical thinking skills, and gain an increased sense of cultural awareness.

Collinswood's ELLs are taught by ESL teachers who work with the students in an inclusion model and a pull-out model. Students are grouped together based on proficiency levels, as indicated by assessments. Groups containing the majority of ELLs work with an ESL teacher, a literacy teacher, and a teacher assistant. These teachers plan cooperatively to deliver instruction that focuses on building background knowledge of a story or topic and to introduce and teach vocabulary related to the topic. ESL teachers work in several different classroom-literacy groups each day. In addition, students at a beginning level of English are pulled out in the afternoon to work on oral fluency. Comparatively, beginning Spanish-speaking students are also pulled out in a program entitled "Spanish as a Second Language."

All ESL teachers are required to receive in-services in quality literacy practices, and, in order to help teachers work in unison, ESL teachers receive the same literacy in-services as classroom teachers.

Lee County Schools, Sanford, North Carolina

106 Gordon Street

Sanford, NC 27331-1010

Telephone 919-774-6226

Fax 919-776-0443

Pam Patterson, Director of Special Programs

The ESL program in Lee County, North Carolina began in 1988 by serving 26 migrant families. Lee County educators began developing their ESL program by examining the research in the field of second language acquisition, contacting the Center for Applied Linguistics, visiting existing ESL programs at other school sites, writing grant proposals, and making contacts out in the field. Today, there are approximately 1,000 students representing 20 languages in Lee County Schools. The majority of the students are Hispanic. Many of these students' parents come to the area to work in poultry processing plants, construction, or farming. These English language learners represent approximately 11% of the student population. Funding for the program comes from a number of sources, including Title III, local funds, Migrant Education Program funds, and North Carolina Limited English Proficiency funds.

A student's English language proficiency is initially and then annually assessed with the IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT). LEP students continue to receive ESL services until they reach superior levels in oral, reading, and writing skills on the IPT.

For ESL students at all levels, support may include pull-out services, inclusion, extended day, Saturday classes, Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) at the high school, summer programs, and differentiated instruction within regular classrooms. ESL classes are small, ranging from 8 to 10 students, and every attempt is made to group students by proficiency levels. Newcomer students are instructed one-on-one or in small groups as they enter ESL classes so that they may catch up with their peers in acquiring the survival language they need to function in school. Most ESL teachers speak both Spanish and English, and each school also has a bilingual ESL instructional assistant who assists with academic reinforcement activities alongside ESL teachers by interpreting and translating, tutoring, and serving as a liaison between parents and the school.

The SDAIE or sheltered instruction approach used at the high school is the result of a three-year Title VII grant, which enabled a group of high school classroom teachers to learn and train with the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (see Guarino, Echevarria, Short, Schick, Forbes, & Rueda, 2001; Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2004). As a result of this project, sheltered classes are currently offered in reading-competency-English, world history, and math. Additionally, the grant provided the funds necessary to employ a bilingual advisor who serves the growing number of Spanish-speaking students at the high school.

In the month of June, the Lee County School District provides summer school instruction for ESL and migrant students in pre-K through eighth grade, during which students are involved in enrichment activities that enhance their literacy and mathematical skills as well as their social and artistic development. Last year, approximately 600 students enrolled in summer school.

In an effort to reduce teen pregnancy and high school dropout rates among Latino youth in the district, the ESL departments at the two middle schools and one high school involve ESL and migrant student in the Action, Inspiration, Motivation (AIM)

club and the Teen Outreach Program (TOP). The AIM club is funded by Lee County Schools and the North Carolina Migrant Education Program, and TOP is co-sponsored by The Coalition to Improve the Quality of Life in Lee County and the school district. Both programs are run as after-school activities and inform students about career choices, resiliency, engaging in school, goal-setting, healthy relationships, problem solving, community service learning, and abstinence. Approximately 100 students take part in these activities, with ESL teachers acting as club advisors and facilitators.

Throughout the school district, there is a strong parental involvement component at each school, including training for parents and activities for the entire family. A district-level parent advisory council for migrants is in place, and other leadership initiatives for Spanish-speaking parents have occurred with the help of the Southeastern Equity Center. We also end the school year with a celebration of cultures that brings together Latino families and other members of the community. Together, participants exhibit and share their respective customs and traditions, as well as display and celebrate ESL and migrant students' academic accomplishments.

**Richland School District One,
Columbia, South Carolina**

A.C. Flora High School

1 Falcon Drive

Columbia, SC 29204

Telephone 803-738-7300

Fax 803-738-7307

Renee Quick, ESL Teacher

The Richland School District One ESOL program began nearly 25 years ago due to a large influx of Vietnamese refugees. The ESOL program currently serves large populations of Latin American, Indian, African, European, and Asian students. These diverse populations are attracted to the Columbia area because of the University of South Carolina and other colleges, Fort Jackson, and both construction and restaurant jobs. Funding was originally provided through federal grant money, but the program has continued through funding provided by Richland School District One.

Students are initially assessed using interviews, writing samples, reading placement tests, and the IDEA Proficiency Test. Exiting the program is based on standardized test scores, the English Language Development Assessment (ELDA), and monitoring. Students are monitored after they have exited the program.

At A.C. Flora High School, students are offered one-to-three periods of ESL daily and receive one elective credit per period. The ESOL program follows a district curriculum and emphasizes instruction in United States culture, reading, writing, speaking, listening, and vocabulary. A foundations class is available for beginners. Sheltered instruction is offered for English literature. The individualized program is a college-prep-oriented program that prepares students for college entry.

The school offers extracurricular activities, such as an international students' club, International Month, a children's fair where ESOL students teach classes about their own cultures to fourth-graders, and an International Day fair for the high school students.

The ESOL program at A.C. Flora High School has two full-time teachers and a full-time teaching assistant. The South Carolina Department of Education and Richland School District One bring in speakers from other ESL programs and offer in-service training. ESOL teachers attend ESL conferences in both North Carolina and South Carolina. Funding was originally provided through federal grant money, but the program has continued through funding provided by Richland School District One.

Summary

The rapid increase in the ELL population in the Southeast combined with a paucity of resources, such as certified ESL and bilingual teachers, funding, and research, require educators to make tough decisions. The nine programs profiled in this section, selected on the basis of recommendations made by the ELL representative in each state department of education in the SERVE region, speak to educators' creativity and innovation in an effort to meet students' needs. Most of these nine districts have adopted several instructional models and

adapted them for local use. These snapshots, together with the contact information provided, should help educators in the Southeast learn about and from one another.

Chapter Six Conclusions



The United States has a rich history of linguistic diversity and, correspondingly, schooling options for speakers of languages other than English. In the first half of the twentieth century, however, few resources were targeted for these students, who often learned just enough English to “get by” (Hacsi, 2002, p. 68). Since the 1960s, the education of English language learners has been shaped by a variety of legislative acts, guidelines, and interpretations thereof at the federal, state, and district levels. For example, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1968, and *Castañeda v. Pickard* have made clear that districts are responsible for establishing programs for ELLs that increase their proficiency in English and mastery of academic content and are based on sound educational theory, well implemented, and regularly evaluated and revised (OCR, 2004).

Despite these recommendations, educating English language learners has sometimes been viewed with ambivalence, due to a host of factors (Borden, 2001). More likely to be tracked into low academic groupings, English language learners then suffer from a widening achievement gap between them and their English-speaking peers (Borden, 2001; Grissmer, Flanagan, Kawata, & Williamson, 2000; NCES, 2001a, 2001b) and too often drop out of school altogether (August & Hakuta, 1998). These trends need to be reversed. Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 not only requires states and districts to implement programs for English language learners that “have demonstrated that they are effective in increasing English proficiency and student achievement” (USED, 2002, p. 93) but also holds them accountable for meeting all annual measurable achievement objectives and making adequate yearly progress for LEP students (USED, 2002). Thus, under No Child Left Behind, such trends are not only unfortunate but also unacceptable.

Though requirements for ELL programs are clear, how best to reach these goals is not. States enjoy flexibility regarding the design and funding of programs to meet the needs of diverse groups of English language learners. However, the ambiguity between various ELL instructional models and desired student achievement outcomes, coupled with practical challenges regarding implementation, leave policymakers struggling with how best

to educate this growing segment of the American public school population. Though the available research on instructional models for ELLs indicates that the use of a student's native language results in outcomes that are statistically significant and educationally meaningful (Greene, 1997; Willig, 1985), adequately staffing and fully implementing such programs may not be possible in all cases. As a result, educators must choose instructional programs based on available research, students' characteristics, and local available resources. Fortunately, regardless of the instructional programs in place, schools and districts can do much to ensure that ELLs benefit from high-quality instructional programs and schoolwide support, particularly when such programs are regularly evaluated and revised.

In the Southeast, with the exception of Florida, the absolute number of English language learners is still relatively small. Despite the small number of ELLs, however, the Southeast is experiencing a high rate of growth of ELLs, oftentimes in school districts that previously had not enrolled significant numbers of English language learners. Because these ELLs represent various ages and languages, a plethora of programs are in place. Just as SERVE states are not uniform in their instructional approaches, they also differ in their statutory approaches to English language learners and funding for ELL programs. It may be that as the immigration of English language learners into the region continues to increase, a more regional response to English language learners' needs will emerge.

The data presented here provide a starting point for policy-makers to build upon when considering how to best serve the English language learners enrolled in their districts. By working together, educators in the Southeast can ensure that English language learners do far more than "get by." Indeed, by drawing upon the linguistic and cultural assets that these students bring to our classrooms and communities, we will all prosper.

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Clearinghouses/Comprehensive

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www.aaal.org

Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL)

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Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence University of California, Santa Cruz

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The George Washington University

2121 K Street NW, Suite 260
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www.ncela.gwu.edu

National Literacy Panel

Institute of Educational Sciences

U.S. Department of Education
Dr. Diane August, Principal Investigator,
Center for Applied Linguistics
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ies/ncer/literacy.html

Office for Civil Rights

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Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA)
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National Center on Educational Outcomes

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Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities

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Pittsburgh, PA 15234-1349
412-341-1515
www.ldanatl.org

National Center for Learning Disabilities

381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1401
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**Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
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State Information (SERVE states)

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50 North Ripley Street
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The SERVE Center for Continuous Improvement is an education organization with the mission to promote and support excellence in educational opportunities for all learners in the Southeast. The organization's commitment to continuous improvement is manifest in an applied research-to-practice model that drives its work. Building on existing research and craft knowledge, SERVE staff develops tools and processes designed to assist practitioners and policymakers with their work, in support of improved student achievement in the region. Evaluation of the impact of these activities combined with input from affected stakeholders expands SERVE's knowledge base and informs future research.

An experienced staff strategically located throughout the region supports this vigorous and practical approach to research and development. This staff is highly skilled in providing needs-assessment services, conducting applied research in schools, and developing processes, products, and programs in response to identified needs. In the last four years, in addition to its R&D work with over 170 southeastern schools, SERVE staff has provided technical assistance and training to more than 18,000 teachers and administrators across the region.

At the core of SERVE's work is the operation of the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL). Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences, the REL at SERVE is one of ten regional organizations providing research-based information and services to all 50 states and territories. These Laboratories form a nationwide knowledge network, building a bank of information and resources shared nationally and disseminated regionally. Each of the ten Laboratories was assigned a different National Leadership Area. SERVE's National Leadership Area focuses on Expanded Learning Opportunities (pre-K and extended-day programs).

In addition to the Lab, SERVE is involved in a broad spectrum of programs and activities that strengthen the usefulness of its work with schools, districts, and states. SERVE operates the Southeast Eisenhower Regional Consortium for Mathematics and Science Education at SERVE (SERC), the Southeast Initiatives Regional Technology in Education Consortium (SEIR♦TEC), and administers a subcontract for the Region IV Comprehensive Center. Additional funding from the U.S. Department of Education allows SERVE to provide services in migrant education and to operate the National Center for Homeless Education.

Disseminating Research

A key role for SERVE is to provide timely, useful, and relevant research to southeastern K–12 practitioners, policymakers, and state

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department of education officials. The dissemination of research occurs through SERVE's *The Vision* magazine, Policy Briefs, and Special Reports, which summarize research and practice on emerging issues, technical assistance, professional development, and training and are primary vehicles for disseminating research to practitioners across the region and nationally. Products and services are scaled up by SERVE, Inc., a commercial, not-for-profit outreach arm to UNCG (SERVE, Inc. is a 509(a)3 support corporation to UNCG). Annual SERVE conferences on school improvement and expanded learning opportunities and networking events for various role-alike groups such as rural school district superintendents and state education policy staff have also been implemented successfully by SERVE. In addition, SERVE conducts research and evaluation studies in collaboration with state school superintendents as part of an annual Memorandum of Understanding developed with each superintendent.

SERVE works alone and with partners in describing and documenting the implementation of new initiatives such as class size reduction efforts, Comprehensive School Reform (CSR), state programs to assist low-performing schools, state efforts to develop Early Learning Standards, high-quality professional development as described in the No Child Left Behind Act, data use at the school level, and high school reform. Another important contribution of SERVE is conducting annual research syntheses to draw conclusions from analyses of recent studies on the impacts of particular kinds of expanded learning opportunities interventions, such as after-school, school readiness, and tutoring programs.

Conducting Research and Development (R&D)

A key aspect of the R&D process is the use of data to inform continued improvements to the product or service and to answer questions about the product or intervention's impact. Different kinds of evaluation questions and data are needed at various points in the development cycle. SERVE is committed to Evidence-Based Education, as demonstrated by our R&D methodology (and R&D quality assurance process), which lays out discrete stages of product development (concept paper, development, pilot, field test, scale up). R&D projects have always been a central focus of SERVE's work. SERVE identifies regional needs and responds by developing, evaluating, refining, and disseminating new products and services that respond to the needs. SERVE also responds to specific requests for product development (such as the development of a training manual for classroom assessment) through contracting arrangements with states, districts, and schools.

In 2004, SERVE is collecting data on implementation or impact on a variety of R&D products as listed below:

Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment

- Senior Project
- Competent Assessment of Reading Professional Development Program

Educator Quality

- SERVE Teacher Growth and Assessment System for Career and Beginning Teachers
- Training and On-Line Facilitation of Professional Learning Teams

Reading Instruction

- Advancing Reading Achievement Through Study Groups

Providing Professional Development

SERVE is committed to providing high-quality professional development to educators. If student achievement is to improve, it will be through a focus on supporting those closest to students in reflecting on and improving the effectiveness of their instructional strategies. SERVE's approach to professional development reflects the current thinking articulated in NCLB and the National Staff Development Council's revised Standards for Staff Development. SERVE's award-winning publication, *Achieving Your Vision of Professional Development* (1998) previewed the current focus on job-embedded professional development strategies. Another publication developed by the Eisenhower Consortium, *Designing Professional Development for Teachers of Science and Mathematics* (2003), also offers key considerations for designing and implementing high-quality professional development. SERVE also worked on a collaborative effort with other Regional Laboratories to identify schools with exemplary professional development programs.

The Eisenhower Consortium and SEIR♦TEC have successfully implemented regional academies to support the professional development of state and district level leaders. SERVE provides outstanding technical assistance to the states in its region of coverage as directed through funding sources and under contracts with schools, districts, and states.

- One approach to this technical assistance is direct on-site assistance. The REL at SERVE provides technical assistance to low-performing districts in the Mississippi Delta. Since 2000, SERVE has provided an onsite team to support the North Bolivar School District in its efforts to improve.

- The Eisenhower Consortium at SERVE participates with other Eisenhower programs nationally in a Middle School Mathematics Project to provide support to mathematics teachers at selected low-performing middle schools.
- SERVE has also provided technical assistance to several low-performing districts through its participation in a group called SERVE-Leads, which is a district consortium that meets several times a year to plan strategies for improving the quality of instruction.

Conducting Evaluations

The SERVE Evaluation staff has established a solid reputation in providing evaluation services and technical assistance to school districts, state education agencies, and community organizations. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches are used as appropriate.

SERVE, Inc.

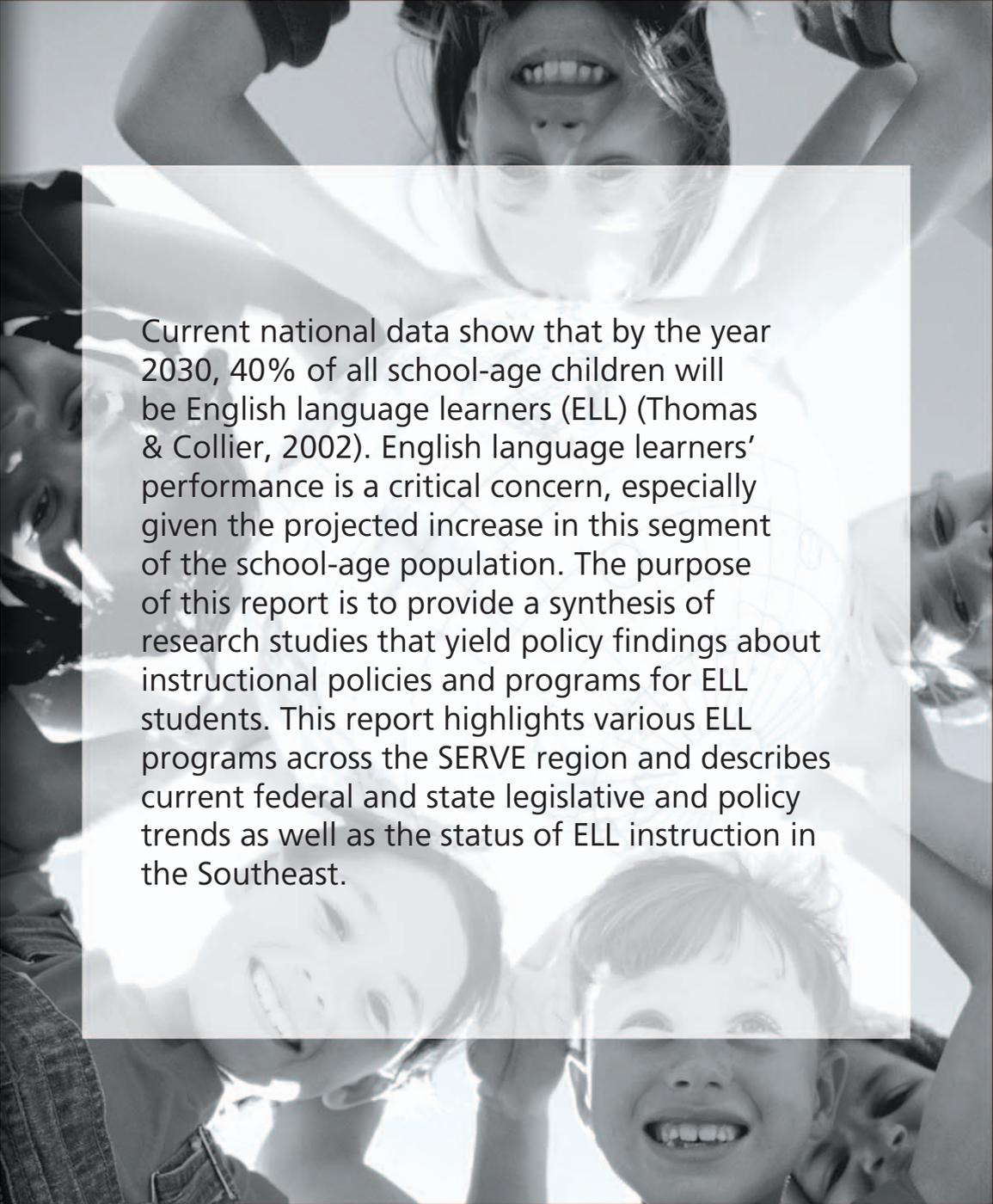
SERVE, Inc. is an outreach arm of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro created to disseminate tested and proven products and services into communities, districts, schools, and classrooms. It is a market-driven dissemination organization positioned to respond to needs highlighted by federal, state, and local school improvement initiatives like NCLB and Goals 2000. Revenues generated by SERVE, Inc. are recycled into new R&D products and services to continuously better serve the educational community.

The SERVE, Inc. mission is to provide proven, cost-effective, customized products and services to enhance the growth potential of individuals and groups by disseminating the highest-quality products and services developed through R&D work performed at the SERVE Center for Continuous Improvement at UNCG and other independent sources.

Many educational products and services have been developed through the conceptual stage into implementation at the regional level through the SERVE Center. All go through rigorous field-testing to determine their effectiveness in helping practitioners/teachers to help students. The Center sponsors programs throughout the Southeast. Through the UNCG Technology Transfer process, such innovations can be licensed for dissemination on a national basis, creating opportunities in technology transfer to commercialize proven educational products and services.

For educational products and services to be considered for dissemination by SERVE, Inc., each must have been documented as research-based. This means that credible studies have been performed, published,

and critiqued by objective researchers and practitioners in the field. A program then earns the SERVE Seal of Assurance. A higher-rated SERVE Seal of Assurance is awarded when programs have been further scrutinized in random clinical trials that test for effectiveness. Building on theory and craft knowledge, SERVE then develops tools and processes designed to assist practitioners and, ultimately, to raise the level of student achievement in the region. Evaluation of the impact of these activities, including input from stakeholders, expands SERVE's knowledge base and directs future research. This research-to-practice-to-evaluation cycle is critical to the rigorously applied SERVE Quality Assurance system.



Current national data show that by the year 2030, 40% of all school-age children will be English language learners (ELL) (Thomas & Collier, 2002). English language learners' performance is a critical concern, especially given the projected increase in this segment of the school-age population. The purpose of this report is to provide a synthesis of research studies that yield policy findings about instructional policies and programs for ELL students. This report highlights various ELL programs across the SERVE region and describes current federal and state legislative and policy trends as well as the status of ELL instruction in the Southeast.