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English As a Second Language: Issues and Strategies: Issues and Strategies: Issues and Strategies

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ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE: ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

by

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ABSTRACT

English as a Second Language Issues and Strategies

In this report, the author presents a review of currently used English as a Second Language (ESL) instructional strategies and presents the current research results on how well students who are taught with these strategies do compared to native English speakers. A presentation and pamphlet are provided that can be given to school district administration personnel to help educate them on current ESL integration strategies and issues. The author finds that, according to current research results, bilingual instruction is the single most effective ESL program. However, these bilingual instruction programs are difficult to staff and have been the target of a number of disinformation campaigns designed to make them look worse than they actually are.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

According to the 2005 United States Census data (as cited in Infoplease, 2006), Hispanic Americans make up 14.4% of the U.S. population. Many members of that demographic group speak Spanish as their native language. The census data show that, in 2000, 28.1 million people in the U.S. spoke Spanish as their primary language at home. This was 10.1% of the U.S. population at the time. Previously in the U.S., there have been large influxes of non-English speakers who immigrated to the U.S., and these times have always sparked debates about the loss of a unified culture vs. the advantages of bringing new people and ideas into the mix that is the U.S.. This current period is no exception.

Statement of the Problem

As the English as a Second Language (ESL) population increases, it becomes more important to develop successful strategies for the effective teaching of English Language Learners (ELL) in order to integrate them into the general student population. In this paper, the terms "ELL" and "ESL students" will be used interchangeably. When there are few ESL students, it seems possible to work successfully with the smaller groups in an ad hoc way without the development of an actual integration strategy. As the number of ELLs increases, this ad hoc strategy becomes ineffective, as faculty begin to realize that procedures do not work, especially when 20% of a school population

consists of ESL students. There is a need to summarize the strategies in the literature into a cohesive report that can be used as a starting point in the review and development of ESL integration strategies.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to conduct an analysis on ESL integration strategies. The author created a report that may be presented to school district administration personnel to quickly educate them on current ESL integration strategies. This analysis is based upon the ESL integration strategies that are present in the literature. This author focuses on the reported strengths and weaknesses that are associated with different integration strategies.

Chapter Summary

It is difficult to teach large populations of ESL students. Identification of strategies for successful integration of these students into the general school population is a concern in many school districts in the U.S. This author analyzed the current research and developed a report on integration strategies. The outcome is a summary report that can be read by district administrators to help them understand the various ESL integration strategies along with a presentation that can be given to reinforce these points. In Chapter 2, the Review of Literature, the author reviews the literature used for the analysis and report. In Chapter 3, Method, the procedures for the development of this project are presented.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is projected that, in 2050, the Hispanic American population of the United States will be over 100 million people, or over 24% of the U.S. population (Infoplease, 2006). The changing demographics in this country affect the make up of school populations, and this has resulted in a renewed interest in the best methods to integrate non-English speakers into the English language schools in the U.S. The purpose of this project was to conduct an analysis and develop a presentation and report on ESL integration strategies. Presented in this chapter is an analysis of the research used to create the report.

English as a Second Language

Approximately 4.4 million schoolchildren in Grades K-12 were designated as English Language Learners (ELLs) in the 1999-2000 school year (Lessow-Hurley, 2003). According to the U.S. Census data, (as cited in Infoplease, 2006) among people in the U.S. aged 5 years old and older, there are only two languages spoken at home by more than 1% of the population. These languages are English, at 82.0% of the population, and Spanish, at 10.1% of the population. Because of this, a large portion of ESL research is done with a focus on Hispanic populations and native Spanish speakers.

Hamann, Zuliani, and Hudak (2004) cited the National Center for Educational Statistics, who reported that, in 1995, those who had difficulty speaking English made up

5.3% of the total population of 16-24 year old youth, but constituted 44.3% of the student dropouts within the same age group. This represents a huge loss of human potential for the U.S. Salinas (2006) reported that 75% of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) children attend high poverty schools, and Garcia (2000) reported that the high poverty schools that these students attend offer limited or no early childhood and preschool programs, which further hinders their acquisition of English.

Stroustrup (2000), well known in the computer programming industry as a leader and the creator of the C++ programming language, wrote that "the connection between the language in which we think/program and the problems and solutions we can imagine is very close. For this reason restricting [programming] language features with the intent of eliminating programmer errors is at best dangerous" (p. 9). While this was a statement about programming language use and acquisition, it is interesting to extend it to the realm of human language learning and wonder if it is really effective to teach new material to a student with limited vocabulary and proficiency in the teaching language. In fact, Guerrero (2004) cited several researchers (August & Hakuta, 1997; Bialstock & Hakuta, 1994; Thomas & Collier, 1997) who reported that there are a number of powerful predictors for how a student will achieve academically in English. These include: (a) the number of years of formal schooling in the ELL's home language, (b) number of years of schooling in the home country, (c) the children's proficiency in their native language, and (d) the student's starting language. When the starting language is more similar to English, it is easier to acquire academic English.

Lessow-Hurley (2003) pointed out that proficiency in two languages provides students with academic advantages over monolingual students and cited Cummings (2000), who showed that highly proficient bilingual students have better academic problem solving skills, not only in language, but also in mathematics. Not surprisingly, students who have proficiency in two languages acquire a third with more ease than other students. Yet, Waters (2001) cited the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (Crawford, 1999b) and reported that only 3% of U.S. high school graduates and 5% of U.S. college graduates are proficient in a meaningful way in a second language; many of these students come from bilingual homes.

Academic vs. Non-Academic Language

There is a difference between academic language and conversational language. Lessow-Hurley (2003) and Ma (2002) reported that, generally, academic experiences and activities are more abstract and lacking in context than conversational, day-to-day communication. Lessow-Hurley reported that some proficiency tests do not assess a student's academic language proficiency. As a result, children who have conversational English proficiency are judged to be academically proficient when they are not. The failure to distinguish between these contexts unfairly sets these students up for failure. When students attend upper level classes with lectures about abstract ideas, often, the ideas in these lectures are very decontextualized and require a high level of proficiency and sophistication in academic language.

Proficiency

Other important topics in the English as a Second Language (ESL) education realm are how long it should take a student to become proficient in English and how to best assess ESL students. Garcia (2000) pointed out that, depending on home and schooling conditions, an individual ELL might attain English to native-like proficiency levels in 1-3 years while another student might take from 6-10 years to gain such proficiency. There is wide variability in the rate at which students can and do acquire academic English. In addition, Garcia (2000) pointed out that, often, teachers focus on basic skills and repetitive drills rather than language and comprehension skills that help students to build on what they know. Also, students who are highly proficient and educated in their native language are much more likely to acquire a foreign or second language with relative ease and in a shorter period of time.

Unfortunately, according to Garcia (2000), the evidence indicates that these important decisions about the length of time a student should receive language support services are rarely based on the progress that LEP students have made in the acquisition of English language skills and grade appropriate subject matter. In addition, it is difficult to assess LEP students' skills with the use of district assessment data. Waters (2001) pointed out that, in many districts, student outcome data are not disaggregated because of the commonly expressed philosophy that all children can learn. However, this makes it very difficult to determine which groups of students are learning well and which ones are not. Also, it is difficult or impossible to find the reasons behind the success of particular

groups of students without the administration of additional and sometimes redundant assessments.

These topics are important because they drive governmental policies. Hamann, Zuliani, and Hudak (2004) pointed out that the education of ELLs is treated as a separate and discrete task, apart from other school programs. Because of this, when school reform is discussed, often, it does not include ELL education at all, or the problem is over simplified.

Ambrosio (2004) conducted a case study on how assessment and proficiency can hurt students. For example, at one high school, there was a federal requirement that, by the Spring of 2004, 40% of the students must meet or exceed state standards in reading, and 39% must do so in mathematics. In the Spring of 2003, 28% of the students met the reading standard, while 32% reached the mathematics target. However, the district School Improvement Plan raised the bar much higher and required that 68% of all students meet the reading standards and 60% meet the mathematics standards. When these tough standards are not met, typically, the schools are reorganized, continuity is disrupted, and students are disadvantaged even more.

In the same school that Ambrosio (2004) studied, in the 2001-2002 school year, nearly 13% of the students were ELLs. Under federal law, No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2003, as cited in Ambrosio, 2004), these students must take the state tests in English after 3 years, despite general agreement among researchers that it takes 4-7 years to develop academic literacy.

Rossell (2003) reported on a Bengali bilingual program at an elementary school in New York City. Not only was it taught completely in English, but the sign on the teacher's room said, ESL Content Instruction, which would normally be considered part of an ESL program. However, the city, the principal, and the teacher all called the program a bilingual program because the teacher was bilingual in English and Bengali, and the students he taught were Bengali speakers. This kind of usage of the term, ESL, causes confusion in the literature and in public discourse because there are no clear definitions for the different types of ELL education. In fact, Rossell stated that there are three different instructional programs for ELLs in New York City: "1) native tongue instruction transitioning to English, 2) structured immersion --- all English instruction in a self-contained classroom, and 3) regular classroom instruction with English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction in a pullout setting" (p. 3). All of these programs are termed bilingual education programs.

Ma (2002) provided a very good definition of the various ELL education strategies.

1. *English as a Second Language* consists of programs in which students receive specific periods of instruction aimed at the development of English language skills, focusing on grammar, vocabulary, and communication rather than on academic subjects.
2. *Structured immersion* programs provide students instruction in English on English language skills (and in some programs on academic content) with primary language used mainly to clarify the instruction.
3. *Transitional bilingual education* programs allow students to receive some instruction in language skills and on academic subjects in their primary language. As the students progress in English, the programs decrease the amount of instruction in their primary language with the goal of

transitioning the students into general education classes as quickly as possible.

4. *Dual language or two way bilingual programs* combine native English speaking students and ELLs with the goal of developing proficiency in both languages for both groups of students. (p. 4)

Also, Ma reported that the amount of time to obtain proficiency in English "depends on multiple factors, including the child's age, level and quality of prior schooling of the child, parent's education level, type and quality of instruction provided, the child's exposure to English in his or her community, and quality of the teachers" (p. 5). Due to the wide variation in starting conditions, the attainment of proficiency in English may require as little as 2 years or as long as 8 years. Hamann et al. (2004) noted that, likely, the appropriate school response to a Mandarin Chinese literate son of a Taiwanese immigrant professor should differ from the response to a Creole speaking, little schooled immigrant Haitian teenager. They showed that, because of the way that ELLs tend to be grouped, school and district staff can almost always show some successes with their ELL students. These successes can disguise the fact that many of their other ELLs do not succeed and can improperly shift the blame for this failure onto the ELLs. Ma maintained that there is no single proven method to assure educational success for all ELLs, so policymakers should make more efforts to implement a variety of programs, in order to do the the best for each student, rather than try to develop a one-size-fits-all program.

ESL and Sheltered Classes

Typically, the goal for ESL programs is to help students acquire English quickly (Ma, 20002). However, they are not full immersion programs. They tend to be a class

that is more focused on English as a language than on academic subjects. Instead, academic subjects are taught either normally, in English, or by use of a sheltered approach. Lessow-Hurley (2003) described the sheltered approach as one where teachers change their instruction of academic subjects to make the content comprehensible to students as they learn their second language. Sheltering requires that teachers: (a) modify their language to facilitate understanding, (b) slow down their speech, (c) use repetition, and (d) avoid complicated grammatical structures. They use visual aids and more hands-on activities. Also, ESL classes are used as part of bilingual education programs where much of the instruction is done in the native language, but a separate ESL class is taught specifically for learning English.

Waters (2001) found that, when ELLs are placed in ESL and regular classes, they showed below average performances across all categories of measurement: (a) units of analysis, (b) ELL groups, (c) grade levels, and (d) time. Thomas and Collier (2002) reported that, in the highest quality ESL Content programs, about one-half of the total achievement gap between ELLs and non-ELLs can be closed. Also, they stated that students who have received at least 4-5 years of schooling in their home country before coming to the U.S. "typically reach the 23rd percentile by 11th grade when schooled all in English in the U.S. in an ESL Content program, and then the mainstream" (p. 248). When they arrive in the U.S., they are on grade level, but they must interrupt their schooling for the equivalent of the 1-2 years that it takes them to learn enough English to do academic work. Then, they must gain that lost time back in order to catch up with the English speakers at their grade level. Most of them do not make it.

In another report, in which the findings seem to contradict conventional wisdom, Lessow-Hurley (2003) pointed out that older students with a strong primary language education do better at learning English than do younger students. They cited a study conducted by Collier (1987) where ELLs who entered ESL programs between the ages of 8-11 learned English faster than ELLs who entered ESL programs between the ages of 5-7. Being able to transfer cognitive and linguistic knowledge from the primary language seems to give older students an advantage over younger ones.

Bilingual Education

The term, bilingual, refers to people who understand two languages. Lessow-Hurley (2003) made a further distinction between an additive bilingual person, or one who has learned a second language in addition to a native language, and a subtractive bilingual person, or one who has replaced a first language with a new one. Typically, the first language is undeveloped, or lost. Generally, in regard to education, bilingual programs are those in which at least some content instruction, including language arts, is done in the student's native language and where some instruction, often including ESL, is taught in English. Salinas (2006) reported that the U.S. has a long history of bilingual education and that it has had a notable influence on U.S. culture.

In the 1800s and early 1900s, in many schools across the Midwest, bilingual instruction was used as the primary method for teaching German American children (Crawford, 1999). The belief at the time was that the use of bilingual instruction provided these children with a greater opportunity to learn English while, at the same time, the language of their homes was preserved. In the early 20th C., with the rise of

Progressive education, bilingualism started to be perceived as unAmerican, and it became targeted for elimination. In fact, in classroom observations in New York City, Massachusetts, California, and Minnesota, Rossell (2003) found that

> an ELL will be taught to read and write in their native tongue only if a) their native tongue is a phonetic language with a Roman alphabet, b) their teacher is fluent in their dialect/language, c) all the students in the classroom speak the same dialect, d) there are published textbook materials in the native tongue written for the U.S. curriculum, and e) the dialect or language is the official language of one or more large countries. (p. 23)

Also, he found that, in the U.S. today, it is primarily Spanish speakers who receive bilingual education because, usually, they are the only ones that fulfill all the conditions to receive it. Ma (2002) pointed out that "the debates over bilingual education are contentious because they have turned into arguments over what type of society America should be, rather than simply over what is the best way to help children learn" (p. 3).

Allen and Franklin (2002) described two way immersion programs in which one-half of the day of instruction is provided in English, and one-half day is provided in another language. The English speakers learn a foreign language while ELLs keep their first language and strengthen their English skills. The goal is for all children to become bilingual. According to Thomas and Collier (2002), children enrolled in two way bilingual immersion programs maintained their primary language, added a second language, and achieved well above the 50th percentile in all subject areas on norm referenced tests in English. These bilingual students equaled or outperformed students in monolingual comparison groups on all measures. Guerrero (2004) pointed out that another large advantage to two way immersion programs is that they allow students to interact with peers who already know English.

There is little debate about whether being bilingual is valuable. However, this advantage is maintained only if bilingual individuals keep their primary language as they learn the new language (e.g., additive bilinguals; Lessow-Hurley, 2003). The irony is that, often, this occurs in excellent public schools or expensive private schools where bilingualism is valued as an essential component of a good education. In academic contexts, additive bilinguals seem to have an advantage over subtractive bilinguals and even monolinguals. However, subtractive bilinguals, students who lose their first language due to lack of formal schooling are at an academic disadvantage in comparison to even monolingual students. Rossell (2003) provided a good summary of the facilitation theory, developed by Cummings (1980a; 1980b; as cited in Rossell). This theory has two parts: (a) the threshold hypothesis, that is, a threshold level of linguistic competence in the first language that a bilingual child must attain in order to avoid cognitive disadvantages, and (b) the developmental interdependence hypothesis, that is, the development of skills in a second language is facilitated by skills already developed in the first language. Similarly, Lessow-Hurley cited Cummings (2000) who reported that, students with a high proficiency in two languages acquire a third more quickly than monolingual students and, also, these additive bilingual students show more highly developed: (a) metalinguistic, (b) problem solving, and (c) mathematical skills than monolingual students. Thomas and Collier (2002) and Waters (2001) reported that ELLs who had successfully exited out of bilingual classes demonstrated academic success in all subject areas and exceeded even their native English speaking peers in regular education.

When an ELL is taught to become bilingual, several researchers (Allen & Franklin, 2002; Guerrero, 2004; Waters, 2001) found that the number of years of schooling in the students' primary language was the most powerful predictor for academic success in general and academic achievement in English specifically. In fact, Waters found that ELLs who had successfully exited from bilingual classes stayed within or above the average range of performance for all students. Wright (2005) cited August and Hakuta (1997) and Hakuta, Butler, and Witt (1999) who reported that children who do not have opportunities to develop initial literacy in their home language face greater obstacles in the acquisition of literacy in a second language, especially when they have to compete with native speakers. Lessow-Hurley (2003) reported that ELLs who are successfully instructed in their primary language not only acquire a substantial knowledge of the world, but also have knowledge about the grammatical and syntactic structures of language. While it may seem counter intuitive, the development of a child's experience, skills, and knowledge of the world in their first language actually strengthens their ability to engage and become proficient in the new language.

Lessow-Hurley (2003) pointed out that the speed of acquisition of the new language is faster in older students and that this is a key factor in school success. In another study, Thomas and Collier (2002) reported that the number of years of first language education, either in the home country or in bilingual classes, had more influence than socioeconomic status, but only when the length of first language schooling was 4 or more years. In comparison, Thomas and Collier reported that ELLs immersed in the English mainstream because their parents refused bilingual/ESL services showed large

decreases in reading and mathematics achievement by Grade 5 in comparison to students who received bilingual/ESL services.

Rossell (2003) cited New York State law, Sect. 3204 of the Education law, in effect in 2003, in which it is reported that bilingual education should consist of: (a) instruction in native language arts, (b) content instruction in the native language, and (c) instruction in ESL. However, for Lessow-Hurley (2003), this means that bilingual teachers need a high level of proficiency in the non-English language they teach, and the common expectation is that bilingual teachers are able to use English as well as the target language for all social and professional purposes. Ideally, bilingual teachers are able to understand, speak, read and write two languages with equal proficiency. However, the shortage of bilingual and biliterate speakers of Spanish in the U.S. has had an effect on the availability of qualified teachers to staff bilingual classrooms (Fern, 1998). Even in states where, effectively, bilingual education has been made illegal, Strittkus and Garcia (2005) reported that most parents prefer to have ELLs in classrooms where both English and the students' native language are spoken.

Immersion and English Only

English only, or immersion, programs are based on the premise that "[y]oung immigrant children can easily acquire full fluency in a new language, such as English, if they are heavily exposed to that language in the classroom at an early age" (Arizona Secretary of State, 2000, p. 1). This quote is taken directly from the text of Arizona Proposition 203, which according to Wright (2005) was passed by 63% of voters in Arizona on November 7, 2000. Also, according to this proposition, children in Arizona

public schools shall learn English by being taught only in English, and all children shall be placed in English language classrooms. Guerrero (2004) maintained that Proposition 227 in California, Proposition 203 in Arizona, and Question 2 in Massachusetts are all based on the premise that, normally, ELLs need only 1 year to master enough academic English to compete on an equal basis with native English speaking children.

Strittkus and Garcia (2005) cited the U.S. Census (2000) which reported that nearly one-third of Arizona students speak a first language other than English, and 1.2 million of the 4.7 million Arizona residents are native speakers of languages other than English. However, 39% of Arizona parents do not know the requirements of Proposition 203, and 20% of parents incorrectly believe that instruction for ELLs is to be conducted in both English and Spanish. Strittkus and Garcia pointed out that the passage of Proposition 227 marked a notable event in the educational history of California, one in which the voting public was asked to vote on a specific educational strategy. These propositions affect how U.S. society should deal with immigration and effectively force immigrant students to receive inferior educations, thereby providing support for anti-immigration policies. Some of these laws have effectively banned bilingual and even ESL/sheltered programs from the public schools. Garcia (2000) reported that, in California, sheltered English classes for ELLs are limited to 1 year and, thereafter, ELLs must be mainstreamed into all English classrooms. While waivers are available upon parental request, parents must know how and when to request a waiver, and few of them understand this policy.

According to Allen and Franklin (2002), while a lack of resources or a shortage of bilingual teachers can make effective instruction difficult, many educators agree that students need instruction in their first language to gain a foothold in literacy and basic commerce with the wider world. With the English only movement, English language learners are placed in programs of submersion as they founder in incomprehension. This hurts immigrants and relegates them to a second class status in U.S. society.

It is difficult to find any research that validates the English only movement. Guerrero (2004) noted that the English only proponents believe that the overwhelming majority of ELLs will be 5 or 6 year old students, but data from the California Department of Education (2006) showed that ELLs are represented in sizable numbers at each grade level. Five and 6 year old students represent only 23% of the total number of ELLs in California. Guerrero stated that "[i]t appears that the merit of these English only propositions rests strictly on their appeal to an uninformed voting public that had little means for judging their merit" (p. 196). In one study, Orellana, Elk, and Hernandez (1999, as cited in Salinas, 2006) found that, since the passage of Proposition 227 in California, statewide academic scores of the 1.4 million California ELLs have shown huge gains on English standardized tests while those school children who remained in bilingual programs performed the worst. However, these statewide tests were conducted in English and so may have been more of an indicator of memorized English vocabulary and not of actual content knowledge. Ma (2002) stated that

> at the time Proposition 227 was implemented in California, close to 30% of ELLs were in a bilingual education program, and many ELLs were already in structured immersion programs. At the end of the 1997-1998 school year, 7% of ELLs had been re-designated as English proficient and had been placed in general

> education. After the first year of implementation [the 1998-1999 school year] only 7.6% of ELLs were re-designated as English proficient; the most recent data indicate that the rate of re-designation had reached only 9%. (p. 7)

Only in circumstances where school aged learners are highly proficient in their first or native language (e.g,, English or Spanish) are they able or likely to acquire a foreign or second language with relative ease and in a short period of time (Garcia, 2000). Also, Thomas and Collier (2002) reported that the highest achievement in a second language occurs only after there has a been a very high level of schooling in the primary language.

When, initially, ELLs attend segregated, remedial programs, these students do not close the achievement gap after reclassification and placement in the English mainstream (Thomas & Collier, 2002). Instead, that gap is maintained or widened in later years. Thomas and Collier found that, when immigrants were taught only in English, students who immigrated after 4-5 years of primary school, and arrived in the U.S. between the ages of 10-12, scored higher in English reading in eleventh grade than those who immigrated after 1-3 years of primary school and arrived in the U.S. between the ages of 7-9.

In schools that have switched to English only programs, Combs, Evans, Fletcher, Parra, and Jiménez (2005) reported that parents were shaken by the effect of the experience on their children. Some children, who had happily attended a bilingual education classroom the previous year, now pleaded for their parents to let them stay home. According to Strittkus and Garcia (2005), even with the new laws, most parents prefer to have their ELL children in classrooms where English and the students' native

language are spoken. Ma (2002) cited Gandara et al. (2000) who reported what one teacher said about the transition to an English immersion program.

> Well, I started out the year very uncomfortable. . . I guess at first I was totally paranoid about it and then, you know, I was told that as long as I didn't talk more than 30% of the time in Spanish and as long as I didn't talk to the whole group in Spanish, if I talked to a little group, or to a couple. . . So little by little, I've just kind of weeded out most of the Spanish. . . Back to School Night, I was told you didn't have, should not have anything that was in Spanish. I spoke to them. When the Superintendent came, I spoke in English. I mean it's just crazy, you know. I'm worried, I guess. . . the whole thing seems totally pointless. (p. 9)

Thomas and Collier (2002) reported that, when ELLs were immersed in the English mainstream because their parents refused bilingual/ESL services, they showed large decreases in reading and mathematics achievement by fifth grade, and that the largest number of dropouts came from this group.

Other Strategies

Other ESL integration strategies include family literacy and attempts to better integrate school reform with ESL education policies. According to Allen and Franklin (2002), family literacy is a program where entire families, parents, and children work together to learn English and practice together. They found that this approach was useful in Parklawn Elementary School in Alexandria, VA. The students in the school had low test scores, and over 50% of the students qualified for free lunches. The school administrators rented a local apartment and began to use it as a classroom to teach English to parents and children in the evenings. In this program, the family is brought back into the picture, and it has met with some success. Allen and Franklin reported that, despite the value of these programs, many family literacy workers say that the biggest challenges they face come from the constant struggles to keep their programs alive.

Garcia (2000) pointed out that much more emphasis could be placed on classroom assistance, such as bilingual teacher assistants or tutoring, than is currently done in most schools. Also, Hamann et al. (2004) reported that two school reform models, the New American Schools model and the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration model, do not have any sections that address: (a) migrant education, (b) Title VII, or (c) any similar program developed specifically to serve ELLs. They maintained that there are strong examples of whole schools, which benefit from strategies that were specifically created to be ELL responsive, but that school, school district, and state education agency officials do not adequately address attempts to accommodate ELLs when they look at policies for comprehensive reform in the schools.

Accountability

It is difficult to quantify accountability in different ESL programs because it depends on what is being measured and how the measurement is done. For example, Thomas and Collier (2002) noted that, initially, when ELLs exit various ESL programs, those schooled in English only programs outperform those schooled in bilingual programs when the students are tested in English. However, the students from the bilingual programs catch up to the English only students by middle school and surpass both English only ESL students and English native speakers during high school. An assessment of an ESL program that is conducted the year after students are released from the program can and does show dramatic differences over time.

According to Garcia (2000), the decision about the length of time a student should receive language support services is rarely based on the progress the ELL has made in the

acquisition of English language skills and grade appropriate subject matter. In fact, in some states, it is required that assessments be given in English after 1, 2, or 3 years. Ambrosio (2004) cited Neill (2003) who reported that, according to the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation, state assessment program staff can use local assessments and minimize the role of standardized testing. The law supports the use of multiple forms of assessment, and a number of states have implemented assessments that are not limited to standardized tests. Unfortunately, this section of the law is not widely known or applied.

Thomas and Collier (2002) reported that students who received at least 5-6 years of dual language schooling in the U.S. reached the 50th percentile in English by fifth or sixth grade, and were able to maintain that level of performance, because they had not lost any years of schooling. In comparison to English only education, typically, students need at least 4 years of schooling in their primary language and then 4 more years of schooling in English to accomplish the same level of performance. This equates to a 2-3 year loss of education for students in English only programs. Also, Thomas and Collier reported accountability information, broken down by programs, and found that the students in two way bilingual programs outperformed all other students in other programs by the time they reach 11th grade. Those in one-way bilingual programs were next, followed by students in ESL and sheltered programs.

Another factor that affects accountability is overcrowding. It does not matter what program is being used if a teacher works with 160-200 students a day (Ambrosio, 2004). Ambrosio reported that lack of sufficient space and resistance to overcrowding in

some higher performing schools made it difficult to move students from lower performing, overcrowded schools and that this discrepancy in school overcrowding makes it difficult to implement, much less assess, any good ESL program across all schools. Ambrosio reported on Roosevelt High, in Portland, Oregon, where nearly 13% of students were ELLs during the 2001-2002 school year. Under the NCLB, these students were required to take the state tests in English after 3 years. In the Spring of 2003, 28% of the Roosevelt students met or exceeded state standards in reading, and 32% met or exceeded these standards in mathematics. Also, the NCLB required that the students in this school reach the 40% level in reading and 39% in mathematics by Spring, 2004. However, the district policies were even more stringent, and it was required that the students in this school reach the 68% level for reading and the 60% level for mathematics. It was Ambrosio's opinion that this type of hard set accountability looks good on paper, but it is not realistic and puts the school staff and students in a doomed to failure situation.

Ma (2002) cited Heubert and Hauser (1999) who reported that, for students who are not yet proficient in reading and writing in English but receive instruction in English, neither assessment in their native language nor assessment in English will yield reliable and valid results. Also, Ma noted that the use of norm referenced tests shows how well a student performs in relation to other children. However, because of this, ELLs must learn more than the average native English speaker in order to attain an average score. Only exceptionally bright ELLs are likely to able to catch up in a short period of time.

Cummings (2001) pointed out that, also, educators bear responsibility for the accountability and performance of their students. While many aspects of ESL instruction are being mandated by law, educators have a duty to be informed about relevant research and to implement educational practices that advance the students' language and academic needs. Cummings summarized this as follows:

> the more students learn, the more their academic self-concept grows, and the more academically engaged they become. However, students will be reluctant to invest their identities in the learning process if they feel their teachers do not like them, respect them, and appreciate their experiences and talents. (p. 126)

Policy and Law

English as a Second Language programs have become entangled with the U.S. cultural, societal, and political struggles with immigration. Lessow-Hurley (2003) indicated that the move to make English the official language of the U.S. shows how much the idea of language use and acquisition has become a political force among the general public. Often, there is an underlying assumption that having a single language will promote political unity or that legislation that makes English an official language will automatically result in everyone speaking English. However, there is no research data to support this assumption. In 1998, the voters in California passed Proposition 227 which ended bilingual education in the state. In this proposition it: (a) requires that all public school instruction to be conducted in English; (b) provides initial short term placement, not to exceed 1 year, in intensive sheltered English Immersion programs for school children not fluent in English; and (c) permits enforcement lawsuits by parents and guardians if the schools fail to comply with its requirements (Salinas, 2006).

Salinas (2006) pointed out that the Supreme Court Justices, in 1974, ruled that states could not deny a free public education to the foreign born children of illegal immigrants, and Ma (2002) reported that the courts have established a three part test to determine whether school district personnel have taken appropriate action to overcome language barriers. The test requires that the school district program: (a) is based on sound educational theories, (b) effectively implements the educational theories, and (c) produced results to show that language barriers are being overcome. However, Rossell (2003) noted that the case law does not explain how bilingual Asian reading or Hebrew writing students should be taught.

In the campaign for the English only propositions in California, Strittkus and Garcia (2005) reported that parental perspectives played a prominent part in the media campaigns of the English only initiative, even though very little research had been done to study parental perspectives. In fact, initial media reports cited Hispanic American support at nearly 65% for Proposition 277 in California. Later, exit polls confirmed that this was a gross overestimation of support. Also, Strittkus and Garcia (2005) reported that Arizona Hispanic American parents hold a generally favorable opinion of their local schools but hold unfavorable opinions about Arizona schools, in general. Nearly 72% of all parents in their study gave their oldest child's school a mark of A or B; however, only 28% of the respondents gave Arizona schools, as a whole, a grade of A or B. This attitude held true for other parents as well. These attitudes make it easy to promote the idea that the schools are broken and need to be fixed.

Strategies

Many researchers promote instructional considerations that range from the obvious, "the shortage of bilingual and biliterate speakers of Spanish in the United States has had an effect on the availability of qualified teachers to staff bilingual classrooms" (Lessow-Hurley, 2003, p. 7) to the sarcastic, "after years of being told that ELLs need five to seven years to acquire academic English, teachers and school administrators are filled with renewed hope that this second-language acquisition process can normally be achieved in only one school year" (Guerrero, 2004, p. 175). However, the key points and strategies that emerge over and over again are that children's proficiency in their native language is the best indicator of what their proficiency will be in English (Garcia, 2000; Guerrero, 2004; Rossell, 2003), and that bilingual education is by far the best for students with limited education in their primary language (Ma, 2002; Rossell, 2003; Waters, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2002). There are a number of other strategies that researchers describe that are less obvious. For example, Rossell reported that, often, fluent English speakers are assigned to bilingual programs simply because they score low on language assessments and that this further impedes their learning and negatively affects the results for bilingual program achievement. Also, Rossell noted that most ELLs in New York City receive instruction only in English even though the programs are often called bilingual programs. Proponents of English only propositions then use the low score data from these mislabeled English only programs to tarnish bilingual education in general.

Garcia (2000) maintained that, often, researchers try to give an apparently fixed time frame for learning English. However, this time frame is based on an average length of time for all students and masks the actual variability that is really present in regard to one student's: (a) ability, (b) motivation, (c) readiness, and (d) opportunity provided in the school. The student's starting language can make a large difference in the amount of time required to reach proficiency in a new language (Bialstock & Hakuta, 1994, as cited in Guerrero, 2004). Motivation is a factor as well (Lessow-Hurley, 2003). Lessow-Hurley cited Fillmore (1979) who reported that the desire to make friends is a notable motivator to children and that teachers should use strategies that encourage social interaction to motivate them. However, Garcia pointed out that the decision in regard to the length of time students are to receive special support services is often dictated by law and the lengths of time are fixed regardless of the needs of the individual students. Thomas and Collier (2002) were adamant that students with no proficiency in English must not be placed in short term programs of only 1-3 years. In their study, in which ELLs were followed long term, the minimum length of time to reach grade level performance in a second language is 4 years. Rossell (2003) maintained that bilingual education is a success only when measured with long term assessments. Short term assessments (e.g., after 1-2 years) show better results for English only strategies, but these results decline as the students progress to middle and high school. Thomas and Collier found that, in the most effective bilingual/ESL content programs they reviewed, ELLs could be equal to native English speakers in 5-6 years. When the most effective strategies that they studied were implemented for 2-3 years, students closed only half of

the gap that they were able to close when the programs were implemented for 5-6 years. They recommended that the use of short term, remedial programs be avoided.

Lessow-Hurley (2003) stated that

> few people would suggest that all English speakers or even all English speaking teachers have the ability to teach English. All too often, however, lay people and even some professionals assume that any English speaking teacher can teach English as a second language, and any teacher who speaks two languages is a bilingual teacher. (p. 50)

Also, Lessow-Hurley noted that bilingual and ESL education requires an understanding of both the nature of culture and of the student's actual native, home, school, and societal cultures and how these interact.

Chapter Summary

The different ESL integration strategies and how they are implemented in schools were outlined in this chapter. Questions about how academic language differs from non-academic language and how accountability, assessment, and policies and laws affect ESL education were also reviewed. In Chapter 3, the method used to develop a report summarizing ESL strategies and recommendations is described.

Chapter 3

METHOD

The purpose of this project was to create a research report summarizing a variety of English as a Second Language (ESL) integration strategies for anyone who needs to better understand the issue, but who does not have time to research and read entire books and lengthy papers on the subject. The report includes a PowerPoint presentation and a pamphlet that outline the current state of ESL research.

Target Audience

The target audience for this research project may be school board members, district administrative staff, members of the media, and the general public. This report is addressed to those who would like to be informed on key issues in ESL education and the best practices for the integration of English language learners (ELLs) into the school systems in the United States.

Organization of Project

For this project, the data which were collected in the literature review were used to develop a summary report on the different ESL strategies and their relative strengths and weaknesses. The report consists of two parts, an hour long PowerPoint presentation with slides and a summary in the form of a two page pamphlet. The pamphlet includes a brief synopsis of ESL terms, a summary of non-English demographics, an overview of

different ESL strategies, and the research results and assessments of these different strategies.

Goal of the Project

The goal of this project was to develop a document that summarizes the current research on various ESL strategies in a form that is straightforward, accurate, and complete. The ulterior motive is to challenge the public perception of ESL education strategies by provision of analyses of published research on various types of programs and the results when the programs are applied in a consistent manner.

Peer Assessment

Informal feedback was solicited from two teachers, one administrator and one non-teacher about the presentation and pamphlet in Chapter 4. Their feedback is discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter Summary

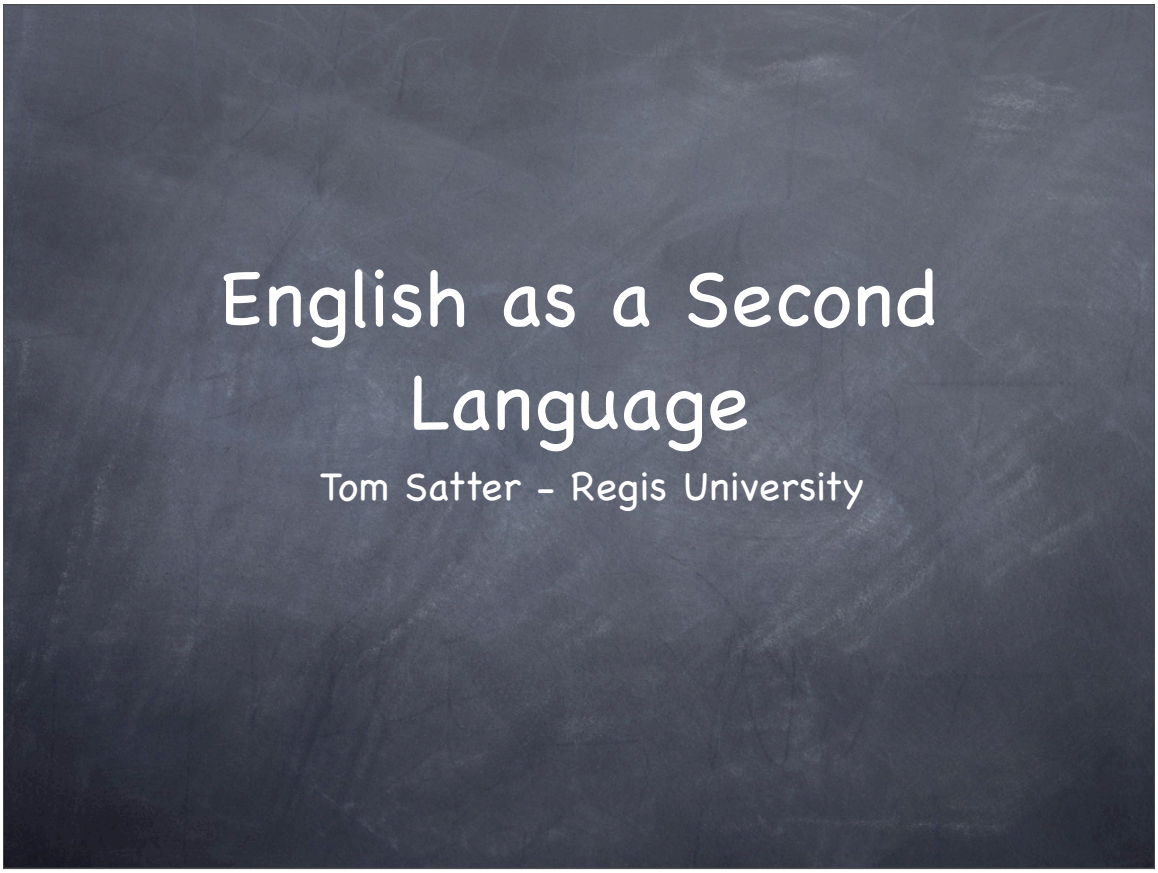
Described in this chapter were the target audience, procedure, and assessment procedure goals for this project. The report on ESL education issues and strategies is presented in Chapter 4.

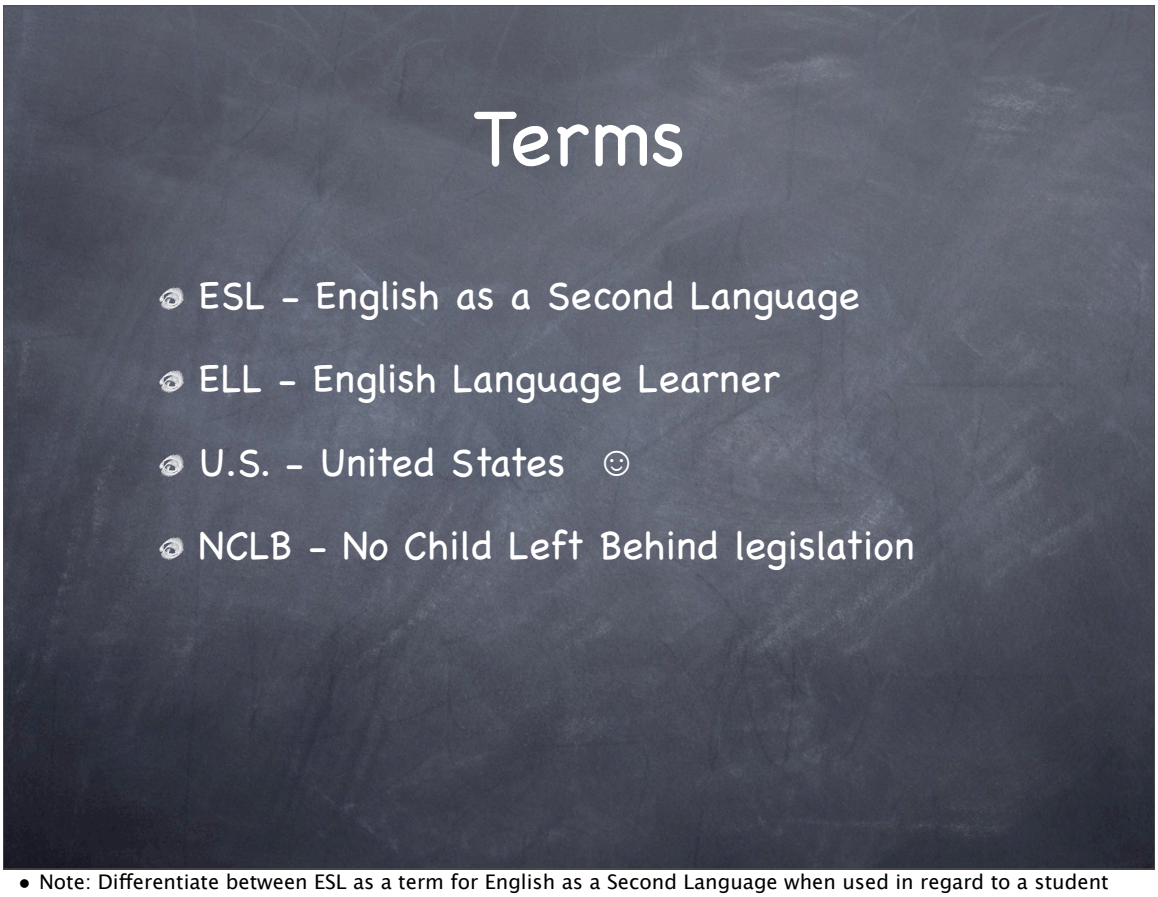
Chapter 4

RESULTS

Introduction

The majority of this chapter consists of a PowerPoint presentation that can be given to describe current strategies and issues in ESL education. A pamphlet that can be printed out and given to participants is also provided. The slides in the PowerPoint presentation present an overview of the demographics related to ESL education, a brief introduction to the most commonly used ESL education strategies, along with the results of research on these strategies. Finally, recommendations and conclusions are presented.


English as a Second Language
Tom Satter - Regis University



- Note: Differentiate between ESL as a term for English as a Second Language when used in regard to a student vs. when used as an educational strategy or a class.

Intended Audience

- This presentation is intended for people who would like:
  - an introduction to current issues in ESL education
  - to be informed about current best practices in ESL integration

Demographics - Present

- Hispanic population - currently (2005) 14.4% of the U.S. population
- According to the 2000 U.S. census:
  - 82.0% of the U.S. population spoke English at home
  - 10.1% of the U.S. population spoke Spanish at home
  - No other language was spoken at home by more than 1% of the population

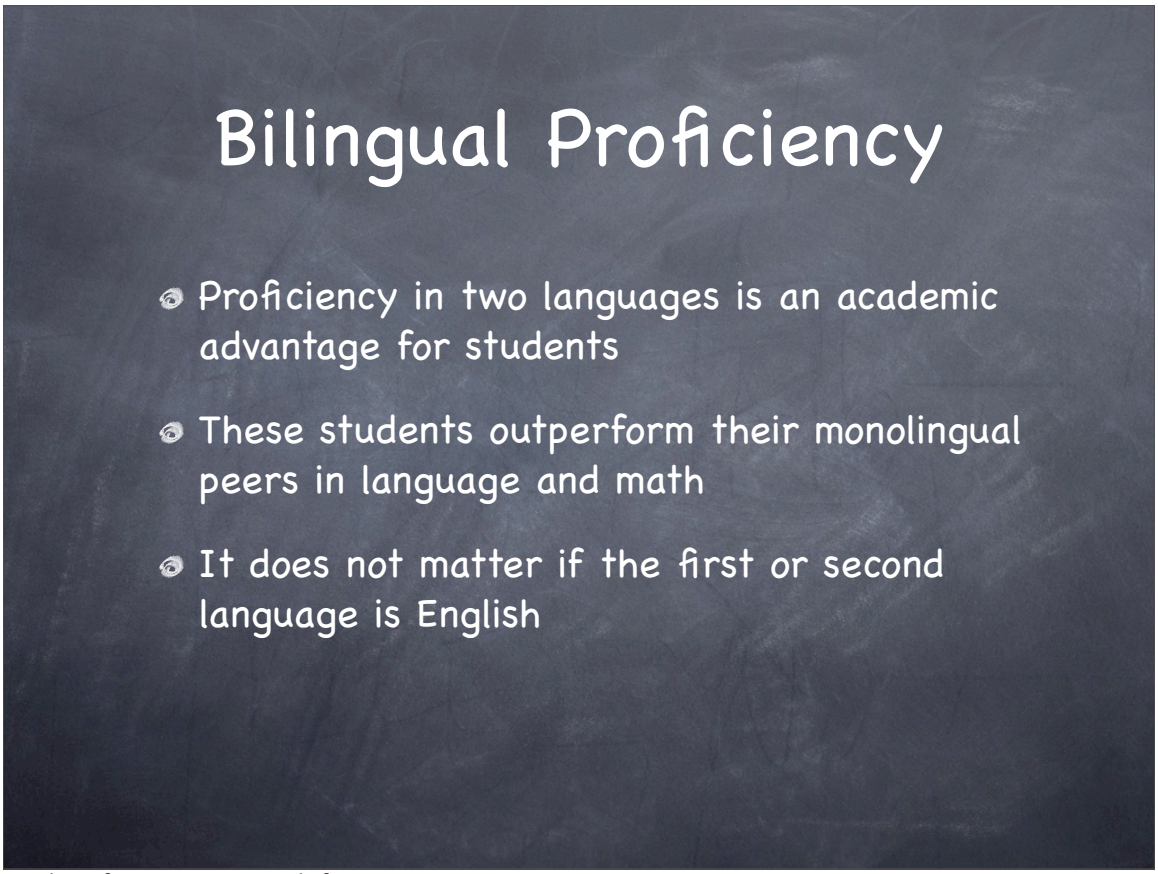
- As reported in the U.S. Census data as found on:

  * Infoplease On-line Almanac (2006). Census data. Retrieved September 15, 2006, from http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0762163.html

Demographics - Future

- Hispanic population projected to increase to 24% of the U.S. population by 2050
- Approximately 800,000 people will come to the U.S every year who do not speak English as their first language

- Both of these are from the U.S. census web site:
  * http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/ppl47.html

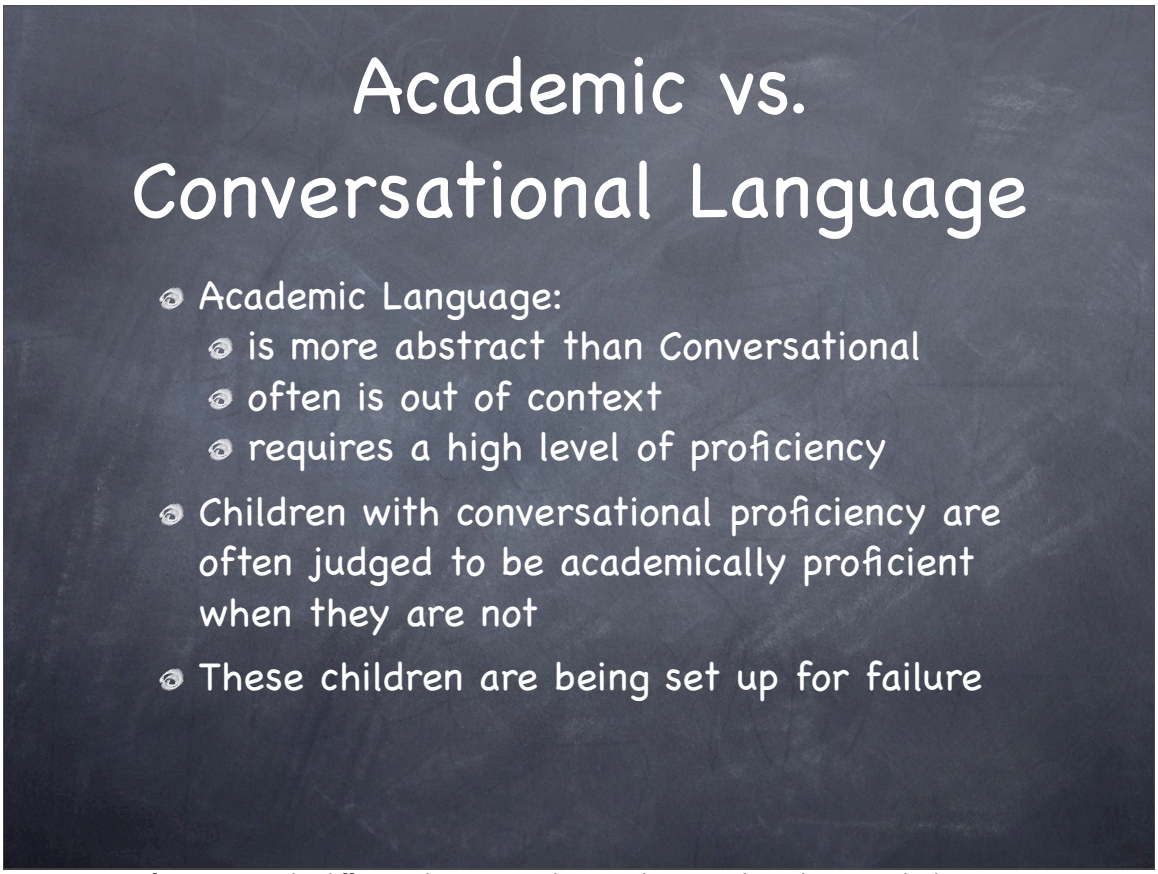


- This information is primarily from

Lessow-Hurley, J. (2003). Meeting the needs of second language learners: An educator's guide. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

and

Rossell, C. H. (2003). Policy matters in teaching English language learners: New York and California. Research report UDS-117. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu



- For more information on the difference between academic and non-academic language, look at

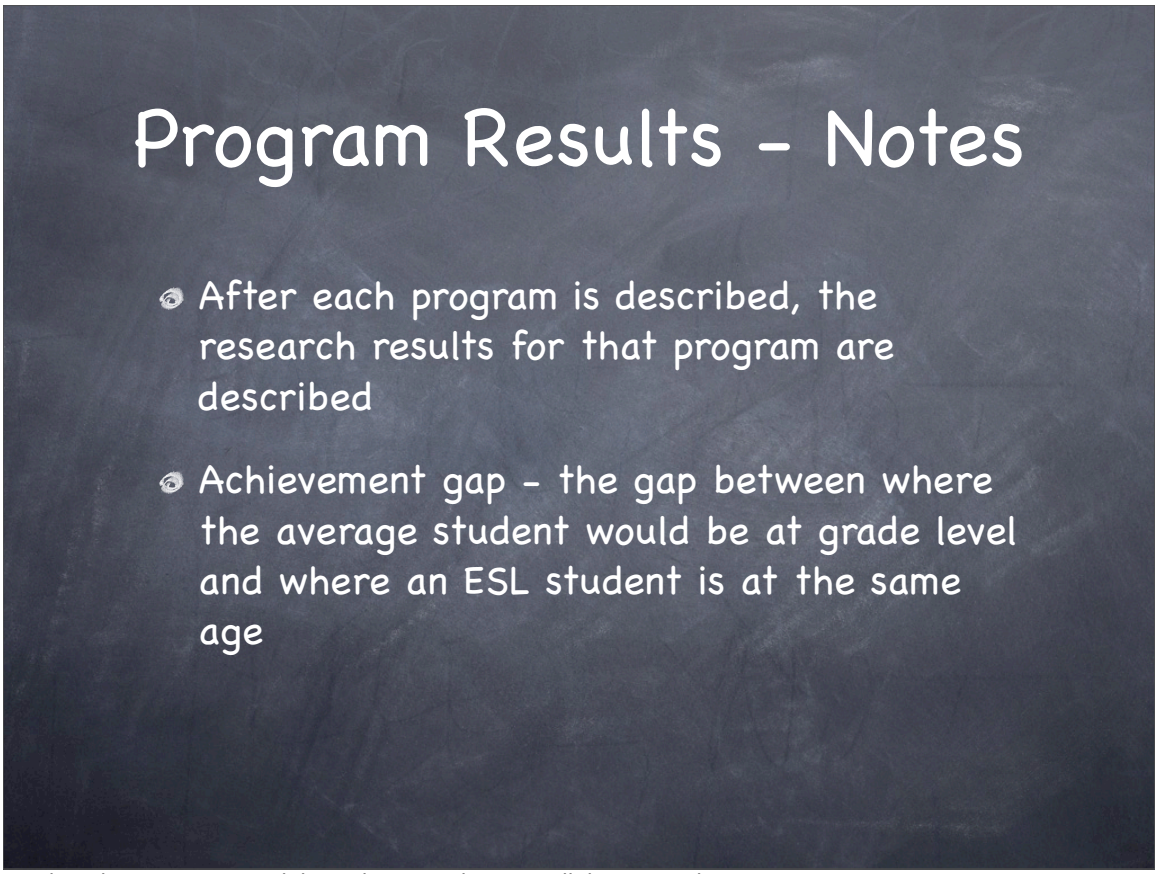
Lessow-Hurley, J. (2003). Meeting the needs of second language learners: An educator's guide. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

and

Ma, J. (2002). What works for the children? What we know and don't know about bilingual education. Harvard Civil Rights Project, Cambridge, MA. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from ERIC database.

ESL Teaching Strategies

- English Only and Immersion
- ESL Classes
- Sheltered Instruction
- Bilingual Instruction
- Family Literacy
- School Reform



- The achievement gap and data relevant to that are well documented in:

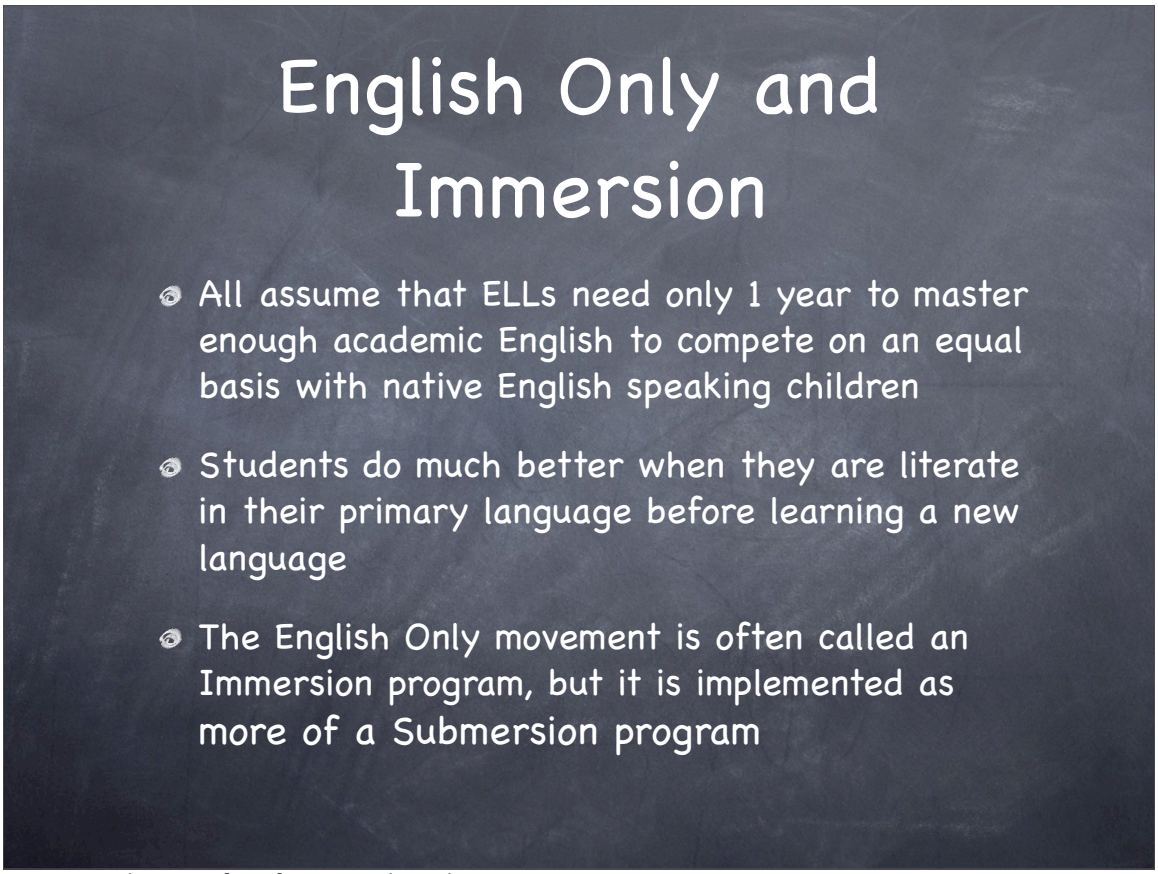
Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement. Santa Cruz, CA : Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from ERIC database.

English Only and Immersion

- Based on the premise that young children can easily acquire full fluency in a new language if they are immersed in it at an early age
- Proposition 227 in California, Proposition 203 in Arizona, and Question 2 in Massachusetts all proposed that all children shall be placed in English only classrooms

- The first bullet is a paraphrase of a quote directly from the Arizona Proposition 203 text which can be found here:

  Arizona Secretary of State. (2000). Proposition 203. Retrieved November 21, 2006, from http://www.azsos.gov/election/2000/info/PubPamphlet/english/prop203.htm

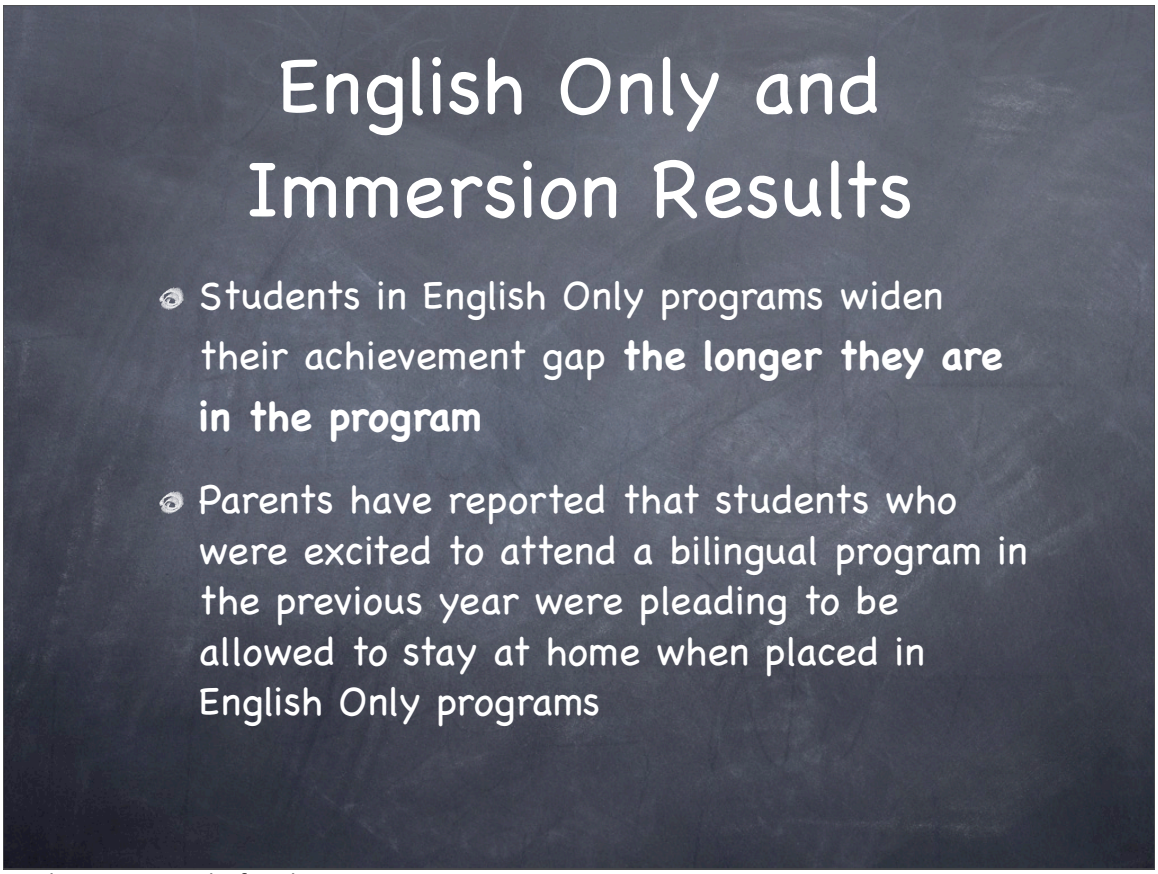


- Two good sources for information about this are:

Guerrero, M. D. (2004). Acquiring academic English in one year: An unlikely proposition for English language learners. Urban Education, 39(2), 172-199.

and

Allen, R., & Franklin, J. (2002, Fall). Acquiring English: Schools seek ways to strengthen language learning. Curriculum Update, 1-8. Retrieved July 26, 2006, from ERIC database.



- These points can be found in:

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement. Santa Cruz, CA : Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from ERIC database.

and

Combs, M. C., Evans, C., Fletcher, T., Parra, E., & Jiménez, A. (2005). Bilingualism for the children: Implementing a dual-language program in an English-only state. Educational Policy, 19(5), 701-728.

ESL Classes

- The goal is to help students acquire English quickly, but they are not full immersion programs
- The class focuses more on learning English as a language than on academic subjects
- Other academic subjects are taught either in the native language, in English only, or with a sheltered approach

• A good description of ESL classes in general can be found at:

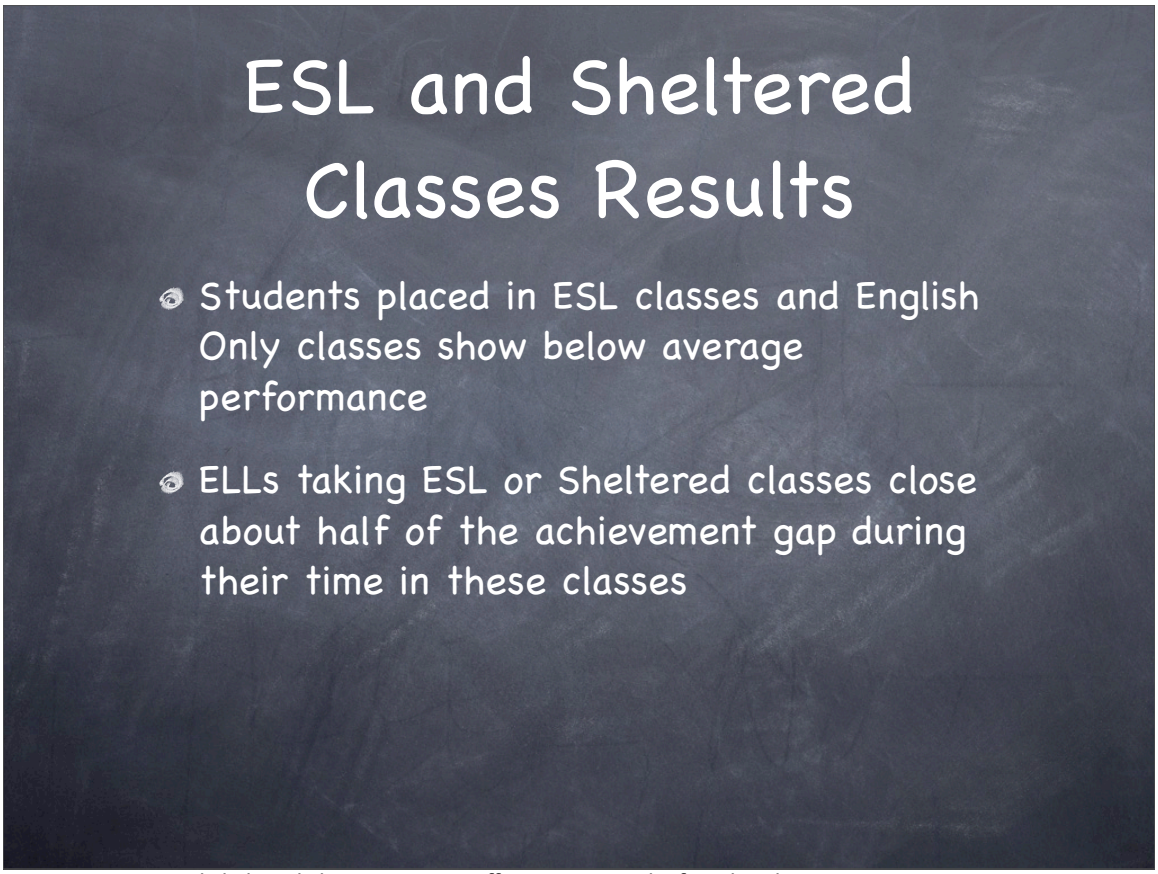
Ma, J. (2002). What works for the children? What we know and don't know about bilingual education. Harvard Civil Rights Project, Cambridge, MA. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from ERIC database.

Sheltered Instruction

- Sheltered Instruction is an approach where subjects are taught in English only, but teachers change their instruction to make content comprehensible to ELLs
- Sheltering methods that are commonly used:
  - modify language to facilitate understanding
  - slow down speech
  - use repetition
  - avoid complicated grammatical structures
  - use visual aids and more hands-on activities

• A good description of the sheltered instruction approach can be found in:

Lessow-Hurley, J. (2003). Meeting the needs of second language learners: An educator's guide. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

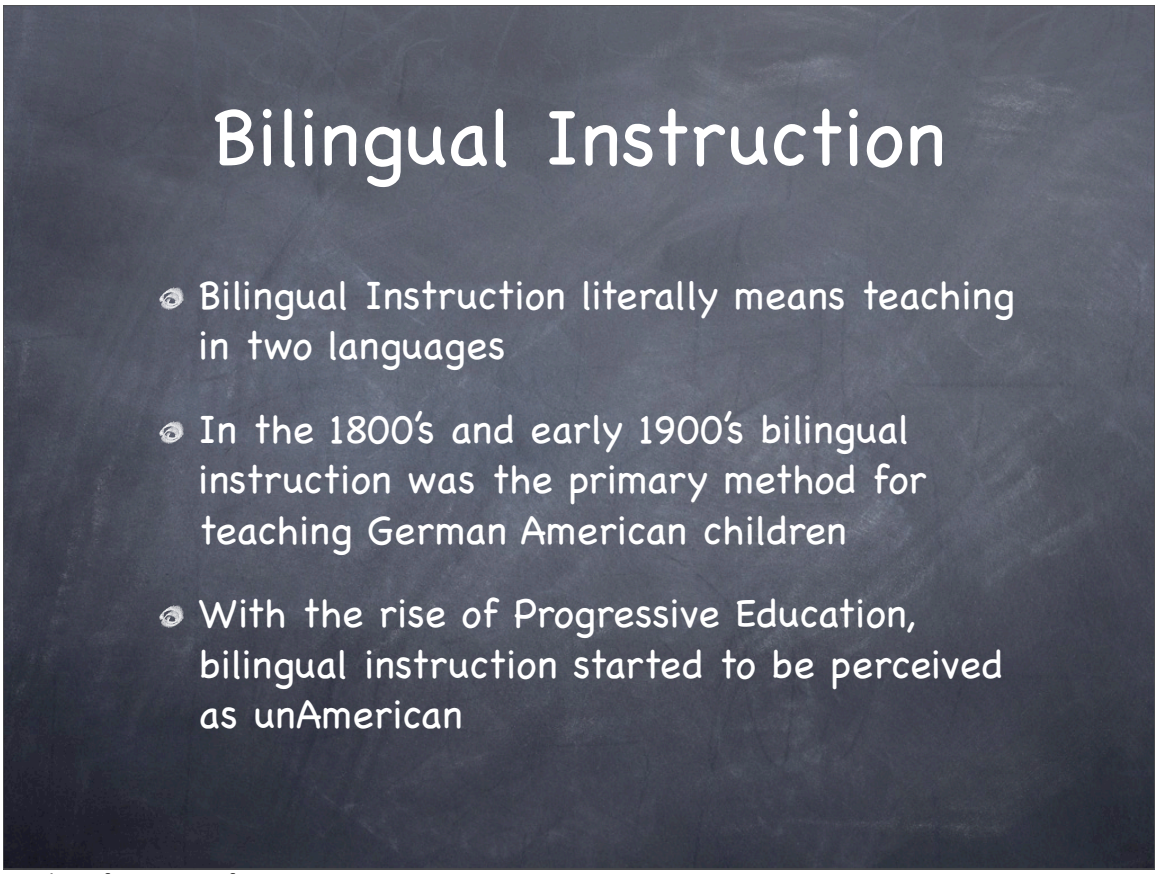


- Notes on ESL and sheltered class instruction effectiveness can be found at these sources:

Waters, G. A. (2001). ESL policy and practice: A linguistic human rights perspective. ESL Policy and Practice, 74 (6), 296-300. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from ERIC database.

and

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement. Santa Cruz, CA : Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from ERIC database.



- This information is from:

Salinas, R. A. (2006). All children can learn. . . To speak English. National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal, 23(2), 20-24.

and

Crawford, J. (1999). Bilingual education: History, politics, theory, and practice (4th, rev. ed.). Trenton, NJ: Crane.

Bilingual Instruction

- General bilingual attributes:
  - Students are taught in both their native language and in English
- There are two main Bilingual Instruction methodologies:
  - One-way Bilingual
  - Two-way Bilingual

- A good description of one-way vs. two-way bilingual programs can be found in

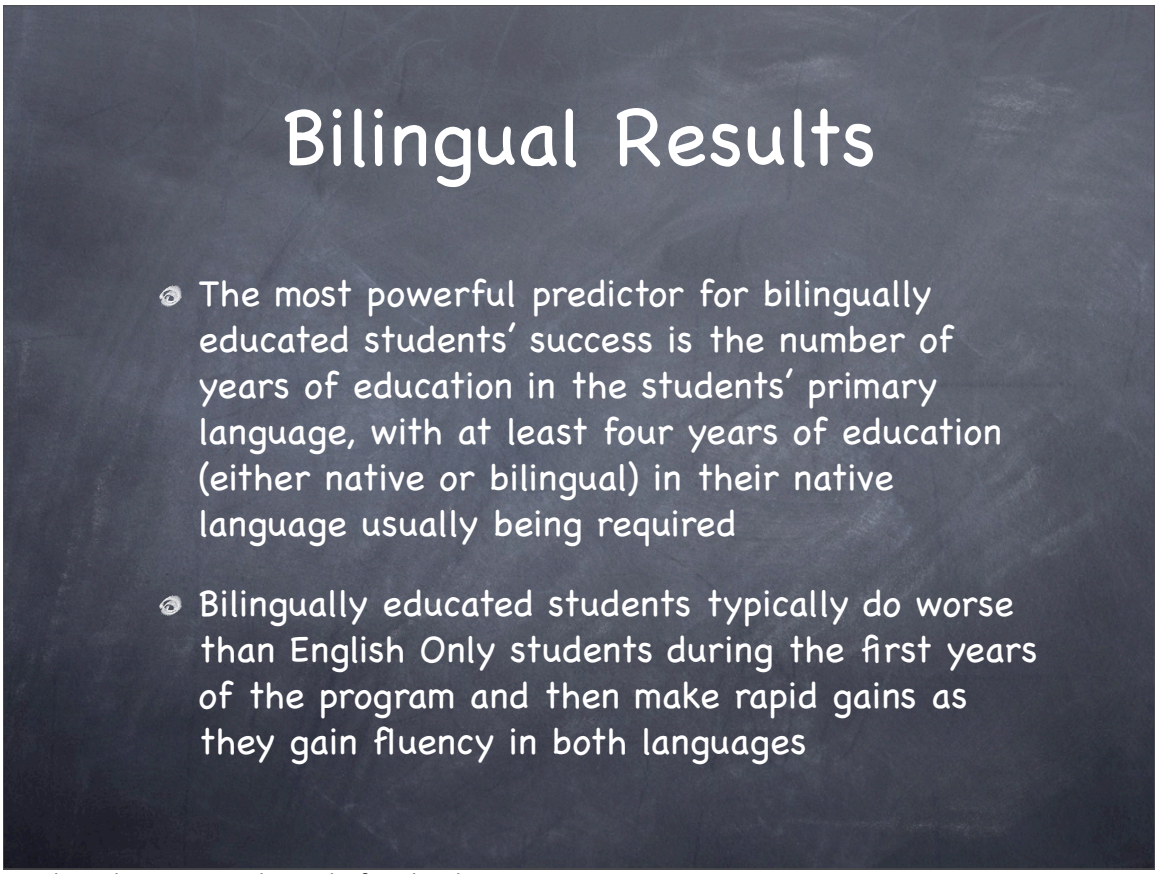
Allen, R., & Franklin, J. (2002, Fall). Acquiring English: Schools seek ways to strengthen language learning. Curriculum Update, 1-8. Retrieved July 26, 2006, from ERIC database.

Bilingual - One Way

- Typically for ELLs only
- Half of the instruction is taught in the ELLs' primary language
- Typically this half contains the Language Arts class
- Half of the instruction is taught in English
- Typically this half includes an ESL class

Bilingual - Two Way

- Includes both ELLs and native English speakers
- Language Arts are taught in both languages
- Other classes are taught in one language or the other
- All students are bilingual by the end of the program



- Bilingual program results can be found in these sources:

Waters, G. A. (2001). ESL policy and practice: A linguistic human rights perspective. ESL Policy and Practice, 74 (6), 296-300. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from ERIC database.

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement. Santa Cruz, CA : Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from ERIC database.

and

Strittkus, T., & Garcia, E. (2005). Revisiting the bilingual debate from the perspectives of parents: Policy, practice, and matches or mismatches. Educational Policy, 19(5), 729-744.

Bilingual Results

- Students who complete bilingual programs outperform monolingual comparison groups on all measures
- Excellent public schools and expensive private schools value bilingualism as an important part of a well-rounded education
- The shortage of fluent bilingual adults in the U.S. has had a negative effect on the availability of qualified teachers to staff bilingual classrooms

• There is a good discussion on the shortage of fluent bilingual teachers in:

Fern, V. (1998). What is the impact of biliteracy/bilingualism on the economy? Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.

Family Literacy

- Family Literacy is a program where a school literally opens up a classroom in a primarily non-English speaking community
- These classrooms are opened in an apartment and offer night classes to children and their parents
- This allows the entire family to practice and talk together

- A good description of a family literacy plan that was implemented and working can be found in:

Allen, R., & Franklin, J. (2002, Fall). Acquiring English: Schools seek ways to strengthen language learning. Curriculum Update, 1-8. Retrieved July 26, 2006, from ERIC database.

School Reform Models

- As school programs are updated and reformed, it should be possible to integrate ESL education strategies right into the school program
- State education agency personnel, school district administrators, and school officials often do not include large scale ESL education reform in their comprehensive school reform proposals

• For a description of school reform problems, see:

Hamann, E. T., Zuliani, I., & Hudak, M. (2004). English language learners, comprehensive school reform, and state educational agencies: An overlooked opportunity to make comprehensive school reform comprehensive. Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 10(1), 53-83.

Accountability

- The trouble with ESL program accountability is that it depends in large part on when student groups are compared
- When students first exit an ESL program, the students who leave English Only programs outperform students from Bilingual and ESL Class programs
- This advantage probably comes about because most assessments are done using English language tests

- For more information on these points, refer to:

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement. Santa Cruz, CA : Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from ERIC database.

and

Garcia, G. N. (2000). Lessons from research: What is the length of time it takes limited English proficient students to acquire English and succeed in an all-English classroom? National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, 5, 1-16.

Accountability

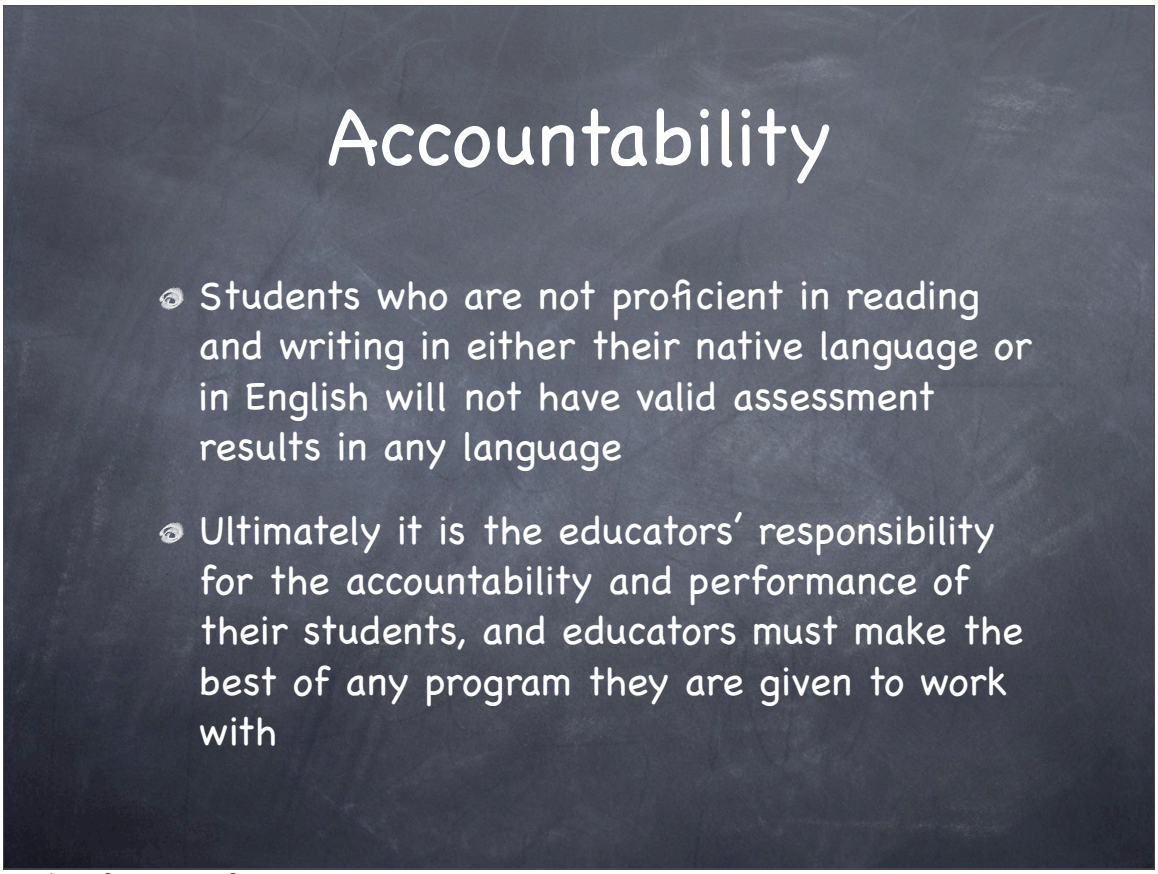
- For students that go through ESL programs in grade school, the students from English Only programs do better than those from Bilingual Instruction programs on tests given in grade school
- When assessments on these students are done at the late middle school and high school grade levels, students from Bilingual Instruction programs fare far better than those from English Only programs

Accountability

- Overcrowding is another factor that affects the evaluation of ESL programs
- If teachers work with 160-200 students every day, they will not be as effective in any program as teachers who work with less than 100 students a day

• For an excellent discussion on overcrowding and ESL education, see:

Ambrosio, J. (2004). No Child Left Behind: The case of Roosevelt High School. Phi Delta Kappan, 85(9), 709-712.



- This information is from:

Ma, J. (2002). What works for the children? What we know and don't know about bilingual education. Harvard Civil Rights Project, Cambridge, MA. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from ERIC database.

and

Cummings, J. (2001). Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: California Association for Bilingual Education.

Policy and Law

- A common assumption made by the general public is that having a single language will promote political unity
- Another common assumption is that legislation making English an official language will automatically result in everyone speaking English
- There is no data to support either assumption

- The political information was found in:

Lessow-Hurley, J. (2003). Meeting the needs of second language learners: An educator's guide. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Policy and Law

- The Supreme Court has created a three part test to determine if appropriate actions have been taken to overcome language barriers:
  - The program must be based on sound educational theories
  - The program must effectively implement those theories
  - The program must produce results to show that language barriers are being overcome

- The Supreme Court analysis was detailed in:

Salinas, R. A. (2006). All children can learn. . . To speak English. National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal, 23(2), 20-24.

and

Ma, J. (2002). What works for the children? What we know and don't know about bilingual education. Harvard Civil Rights Project, Cambridge, MA. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from ERIC database.

Policy and Law

- English Only propositions have relied on the fact that many parents hold favorable opinions on their local school, while simultaneously holding unfavorable opinions of other schools around them
- These attitudes make it easier to promote the idea that the school system as a whole is broken and needs to be fixed

• The parent opinions study is an interesting one and can be found at:

Strittkus, T., & Garcia, E. (2005). Revisiting the bilingual debate from the perspectives of parents: Policy, practice, and matches or mismatches. Educational Policy, 19(5), 729-744.

- These results can be found in:

  Garcia, G. N. (2000). Lessons from research: What is the length of time it takes limited English proficient students to acquire English and succeed in an all-English classroom? National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, 5, 1-16.

  Guerrero, M. D. (2004). Acquiring academic English in one year: An unlikely proposition for English language learners. Urban Education, 39(2), 172-199.

- In particular, the results showing that students get assigned to ESL programs incorrectly are in:

  Rossell, C. H. (2003). Policy matters in teaching English language learners: New York and California. Research report UDS-117. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu

- There is a good discussion of the variability issue with student learning in:

  Garcia, G. N. (2000). Lessons from research: What is the length of time it takes limited English proficient students to acquire English and succeed in an all-English classroom? National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, 5, 1-16.

- And the bilingual program labeling issue is discussed in:

  Rossell, C. H. (2003). Policy matters in teaching English language learners: New York and California. Research report UDS-117. Retrieved August 4, 2006, from http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu

ESL Strategies from Researchers

- Making friends is a huge motivator to learn a new language
- Bilingual education requires teachers who are good at understanding students' home, school, and societal cultures along with their language and the content that is to be taught

- These are discussed at length in:

Lessow-Hurley, J. (2003). Meeting the needs of second language learners: An educator's guide. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Recommendations

- If possible, implement a two way bilingual program for students coming into grade school and early middle school grades
- For students who come into high school with a full education in their primary language, immerse them in Sheltered or ESL Classes
- For students who come into high school with little education in their primary language, it is critical to educate them in their primary language for a number of years before moving to English

Conclusions

- Bilingual education is the best general solution for education of non-English speakers
- Bilingual education requires extremely qualified teachers, and there is a shortage of teachers who are qualified to teach these classes
- English Only proponents rely on opinions that are generally held by the public but that are not usually valid when looked at by researchers

ESL Pamphlet

The author created a pamphlet that may be distributed when the presentation is given. The pamphlet, a summary of the information provided in the presentation without the conclusions given at the end, appears on the following two pages.

Research Results

English Only/Immersion

Students in English Only programs widen their achievement gap the longer they are in the program.

Parents have reported that students who were excited to attend bilingual programs in the previous year were pleading to be allowed to stay at home when placed in English Only programs.

Students in the first year of immersion programs typically do better than those in any other program, **when tested using English-only tests**. However, this gain is not large and is quickly erased in following years.

ESL Classes and Sheltered

Students placed in ESL classes along with English Only classes close less than half of the achievement gap.

ELLs taking ESL or Sheltered classes close about half of the achievement gap during their time in these classes.

Bilingual Education

Students who successfully exit bilingual programs can completely close or exceed the achievement gap. In fact, the number of years that a student is taught in their native language appears to be the most powerful predictor for academic success in general and for academic achievement in English specifically. These students showed more highly developed metalinguistic, problem solving, and mathematical skills than monolingual students.

Problems

The key points and strategies that emerge over and over again in research papers basically come down to the fact that a child's proficiency in his native language is the best indicator of what that child's proficiency will be in English.

There are some strategies that work against ESL education:

- Often fluent English speakers are assigned to bilingual programs simply because they score low on language assessments. By being placed in bilingual programs rather than remedial programs, the child's education is slowed down and the bilingual program as a whole shows poorer performance than it otherwise would.
- There is tremendous variety in the ability, motivation, readiness, and opportunity that each student brings to school. Because of this, learning English as a Second Language can take from 2 to 10 years, depending on the student and the available programs. Trying to make a one-size-fits-all program does not help students.
- Schools that have large bilingual populations also are those at the greatest risk of being overpopulated.
- While bilingual education is perhaps the best strategy, the lack of highly qualified bilingual educators makes it very difficult to implement in practice.

ESL Education

Terms, Strategies, Research & Results

Terms

ESL	English as a Second Language
ELL	English Language Learner
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Laws
Achievement Gap	The gap between where the average student would be a grade level and where an ESL student is at the same age
Academic vs. Conversational	Academic language is more abstract than conversational language. It is often out of context and requires a high level of proficiency
Bilingual	In ESL education "bilingual" refers to a specific type of program where students are taught in multiple languages.

Demographics

In the 2000 U.S. census, Spanish was the second to English as the most spoken language in the U.S. with 10.1% of the U.S. population speaking Spanish at home. It is projected by the U.S. census bureau that in the year 2050 the Hispanic population of the U.S. will make up over 24% of the country's citizens. These changing demographics present school districts with a very challenging role to play over the next 40+ years.

ESL Teaching Strategies

English Only & Immersion

Proposition 203, which was passed by Arizona voters in 2000 contains this phrase: *"[y]oung immigrant children can easily acquire full fluency in a new language, such as English, if they are heavily exposed to that language in the classroom at an early age."*

English Only and Immersion programs require that al children shall learn English by being taught only in English and all children shall be placed in English language classrooms.

They are based on the idea that ELLs need only 1 year to master enough academic English to compete on an equal basis with native English speaking children.

Some English Only laws that have been passed in recent years that have effectively banned bilingual and even ESL/sheltered programs from public schools.

ESL Classes

The goal for ESL classes is to help students acquire English quickly. However, they are not full immersion programs. They are classes that are designed to help students learn academic English and to support students in their learning in other core areas. When taking an ESL class, an ELL usually has their other subjects being taught either directly in the native language, or in English using either a sheltered or non-modified approach. ESL classes are one of the most common approaches used for teaching ESL students.

Sheltered Instruction

Sheltered Instruction is an approach where subjects are taught only in English but teachers change their instruction to make content comprehensible to ELLs.

Methods that are commonly used in a sheltered instruction approach are:

- modify language to facilitate understanding
- slow down speech
- use repetition
- avoid complicated grammatical structures
- use visual aids and more hands-on activities

Family Literacy

A strategy where entire families, parents and children, work to learn English and practice together. Some school districts have implemented programs where they rent a local apartment and then teach English as a Second Language classes at night to entire families from this apartment. This strategy allows students and parents to practice their English skills together, at home.

School Reform

A number of comprehensive school reform plans for state education agencies and local school districts do not have any sections that address migrant education or the creation of any program developed specifically to serve ELLs. In many districts ELL education is being handled on a school by school basis leading to inconsistencies and schools having to learn the same lessons individually.

Bilingual Education

The term, bilingual, refers to people who understand two languages. In excellent public schools and in exclusive private schools, becoming fluent in a second language is valued as an essential component of a good education. Bilingual education takes this idea to its natural conclusion and emphasizes teaching ELLs the English language while teaching them some of most other core subjects in their native language.

One Way Bilingual

One way bilingual programs teach non-English speaking students English as a second language, but teach most other core subjects, including language arts, in the student's native language.

Two Way Bilingual

Two way bilingual programs teach both English and non-English speakers in immersion programs where half of the day is taught in the non-English language and the other half is taught in English. Students receive language arts instruction in both languages. Students have other students to converse with - both in their native and their non-native languages.

Created by Thomas O. Satter

Chapter Summary

The PowerPoint presentation and the pamphlet on different ESL integration strategies and issues were presented in this chapter. In Chapter 5, the discussion of the project is given, including the results of a peer assessment and recommendations for further study.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

Contribution of this Project

This project contributes to the field of education by summarizing a large amount of research data into a form that is easily understood and which can be easily presented. The findings sometimes differ from those that are the current common knowledge and practices, and this makes the report one that is even more relevant in the current educational climate.

Limitations

There is a wealth of information that could be summarized to create a report on ESL teaching issues and strategies. The author of this report focused on the main strategies that are being used in ESL education today. However, there are many books that have been written on this subject during previous generations as they dealt with immigration and language integration issues. These sources were not used in this report. Also, there are a number of experimental strategies that are being tried in the field of ESL education. This report only looked at two, family literacy and whole school district reform, but there is not a large amount of research data available on the effectiveness of these techniques yet.

Peer Assessment

The PowerPoint presentation and pamphlet developed for this project were reviewed by two teachers, one administrator, and one non-teacher for formal feedback. They suggested some minor changes and clarifications, not related to the content of the project. All of them agreed with the basic content and research and results. There was one person who pointed out that there are different definitions of "achievement gap". The U.S. Government web page about the NCLB legislation reports that one common definition of this term is that it is the difference between academic performance scores among African-American, Hispanic, and white students on standardized assessments. In this report and the corresponding research, "achievement gap" is used to compare the academic performance of ELL and non-ELL students. Another request was to explain the difference, if any, between the terms "ELL" and "ESL student." These terms are used interchangeably in this paper and that has now been explained when the terms are introduced.

Recommendations for Further Study

Strategies and research from much earlier in U.S. history would be a very interesting topic area to explore. It is likely that educators are "rediscovering the wheel" every 50 to 100 years. Another interesting study would be to look at the effects of World War I and World War II on bilingual education, especially with respect to German bilingual education in particular, becoming unAmerican with the rise of German power in the 20th century. It would be interesting to study how policies and cultural beliefs developed during that period carried over to Hispanic education in the US. and the

current political, economic and cultural factors that affect bilingual education. Another area that would be useful to study would be to look at the research results on how students from different immigrant cultures do in the various ESL instructional programs.

Project Summary

In this report, the author presented a review of ESL issues and strategies and presented current research results on how well students who are taught with these strategies do compared to native English speakers. A presentation and pamphlet were provided that can be given to state education agency personnel, school district personnel and school staff, and the general public to help them better understand current ESL issues and strategies. The author found that, in general, bilingual education is the most effective ESL strategy; however, there may be cultural, political, and logistical issues to be dealt with when choosing bilingual education as a school-wide or district-wide policy.

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