


Teaching

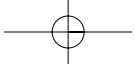
# READING to ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS,

Grades 6–12

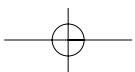
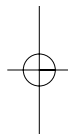


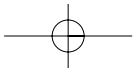
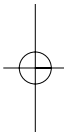
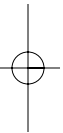
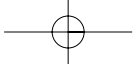
A Framework  
for Improving  
Achievement in  
the Content Areas

MARGARITA  
CALDERÓN




Teaching  
**READING** to  
**ENGLISH**  
**LANGUAGE LEARNERS,**  
Grades 6–12





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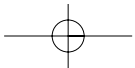
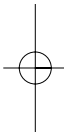
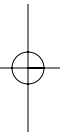
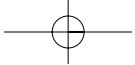
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# Preface

Secondary ELL students are more likely to have experienced such challenges as interrupted schooling and zero-English proficiency, which require substantial educational growth in a short amount of time. Secondary-school-age children present educators with unique and specific challenges for instruction and language acquisition.

This book attempts to address some of these challenges by combining research and practice as it emerges from a set of longitudinal studies in various parts of the United States and other English-speaking territories/countries. The Carnegie Corporation of New York, the U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences, and the U.S. Department of Education's Native Americans Projects have funded these studies. Standardized language and reading and subject-matter measures, as well as formative assessments, are being used to collect information on what strategies are successful in closing the achievement gap for English learners from different language backgrounds, learning in a variety of English immersion, sheltered English, and dual language programs.

Developing literacy skills for secondary school students is not easy. Secondary school literacy skills are more complex and more embedded in subject matters than in primary schools (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004). In their recent publication on adolescent literacy entitled *Reading Next*, these two authors assert that subject matter literacy

- Includes reading, writing, and oral discourse for school
- Varies from subject to subject
- Requires knowledge of multiple genres of text, purposes for text use, and text media
- Is influenced by students' literacies in contexts outside of school
- Is influenced by students' personal, social, and cultural experiences

For English language learners and struggling older readers, reading becomes an insurmountable task without explicit instruction on reading each of the subject matter texts. Fortunately, through ongoing studies specifically designed for adolescent ELL literacy, educators now have a powerful array of tools at their disposal. We even know from the data that these tools work well for non-ELL struggling readers. We have spent 3 years “components testing” to find the best instructional and professional development combinations for addressing students’ and teachers’ needs. The combination of components, strategies, and performance assessment tools has been arranged in a framework that we call Expediting Comprehension for English Language Learners (ExC-ELL).

## **Recommendations for Instructional Components**

We have identified 12 components for this framework. Some components are aimed at helping teachers improve student achievement. Others are for helping teachers be successful themselves. These are the recommendations derived from the multiple ongoing studies thus far:

1. Teachers need assistance and models for developing lessons that integrate subject matter content, language, reading, and writing skills. The first five components help teachers integrate these features into a cohesive lesson plan.
2. Teaching subject matter to ELLs requires direct, explicit instruction in the strategies students need to build vocabulary and comprehend grade-level texts.
3. Students need to learn how to read a variety of texts that progress to grade-level texts quickly. In order to master content and meet standards, teachers learn how to parse texts and select most important content. Teachers select the district’s content standards, objective, indicators (“I can” statements), purposes, outcomes, and targets, and scan the text once more for eliminating unnecessary information and highlighting information that addresses the standard.
4. Explicitly teaching depth and breadth of words before, during, and after reading is a primary role of all content teachers.
5. Collaborative-text-based reading engages students with text and rich discussions where the new words are used again and again.

6. Explicitly teaching reading and writing skills is just as important in secondary as it is in elementary schools, notwithstanding adaptations in delivery:
  - Teachers select comprehension strategy (e.g., main idea, cause and effect, inferences, comparing/contrasting, self-correction, rereading a sentence, decoding a word, summarizing, questioning the author, questioning the information in the text, questioning ourselves).
  - Teachers conduct read-alouds to model fluency and comprehension strategies.
  - Students conduct partner reading to practice comprehension strategies and comprehend content.
  - Teachers debrief with whole class about the content and the skills (linguistic, metalinguistic, comprehension, social, and cooperative learning) that they learned.
7. Explicitly teaching the different writing genre required by each content area, including the various formats for technology.
8. Consolidation of content and skills. Teachers use strategies throughout the lesson to anchor knowledge, check for understanding, and assess individual student learning.
9. Student assessments include a variety of formats to gauge progress on literacy and content.
10. The quality of implementation is assessed with specific observation protocols supported by technology in order to have instant reports for teachers and administrators. Coaches and administrators need to be trained to observe this type of instruction.
11. Systematic and comprehensive professional development throughout the year is necessary to sustain any program, approach, or instructional change.
12. Teachers Learning Communities for collegial work help teachers with implementation hurdles and to learn from one another.

## Overall Organization of the Book

Since using only 3 or 4 of these components is unlikely to yield positive results for students or teachers, the chapters include lesson designs that consolidate all components.

**Chapter 1.** The introductory chapter details the background of the ExC-ELL study. It also states several “myths” that have been around for many years, such as “it takes 7 years to learn a language,” which often hold back students and keep teachers from delivering challenging, rigorous, yet sensitive instruction to ELLs. Each myth is followed by a “good news” section that dispels that myth and offers empirically tested recommendations instead.

**Chapter 2.** This chapter gives a detailed background of the research for each of the ExC-ELL components. Each component was carefully selected based on the amount of reliable scientific research available. Each of the 10 lesson components was empirically tested across a variety of classrooms and with different language groups to gauge applicability and appropriateness. Refinements were made during the first two years of the study.

**Chapter 3.** This chapter goes further in depth about vocabulary. The theoretical framework for selecting and teaching vocabulary to ELLs was presented at the Pacific Regional Educational Laboratory conference on Vocabulary: Research and Practice, where researchers such as Isabel Beck, Diane August, Freddie Hiebert, Michael Kamil, Steve Stahl, and others were kind enough to give me feedback. Once refined, we tested a few instructional strategies and then let the teachers run free with their own creative ways of teaching. In the ExC-ELL lesson delivery sequence, the teacher begins with vocabulary instruction so students can comprehend and interact during background building of concepts, reading, processing and mastering information, and writing activities. The strategies shared in Chapter 3 are some that teachers felt were most successful.

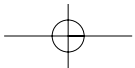
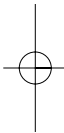
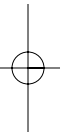
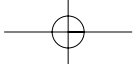
**Chapter 4.** This chapter deals with the heart of the program—reading comprehension. While it presents comprehension strategies that work with ELLs, it also emphasizes all the other instructional features that need to be in place for comprehension to work. It presents ideas for consolidating student knowledge after they have read a text. The consolidation of knowledge can take several forms, from instructional conversations with the teacher to graphic organizers in teams to writing activities, and finally debriefing with students what they have learned. There needs to be a different approach to teaching reading in secondary schools. Therefore, a set of guiding questions is used to help teachers integrate reading into their existing lessons and content standards.

**Chapter 5.** This chapter provides the rationale for teaching math vocabulary in the way proposed. It also lays out a lesson design for integrating vocabulary and reading skills development. Student-centered activities through Cooperative Learning are suggested for further practice of concepts and language.

**Chapters 6, 7, and 8.** These chapters are similar to the math chapter, but Chapter 6 uses science, and Chapter 7 uses language arts to provide examples of integrated lessons. Since each content area is approached differently through textbooks or its particular textual genre, the lessons vary in some aspects.

**Chapter 9.** This chapter steers away from curriculum and lesson design to a critical topic: professional development and continuous learning communities in schools. After a summer institute on programs such as ExC-ELL, school administrators want to know what is the best follow-up and systematic support they can give to their teachers so all new learnings are implemented with quality and as much comfort as possible for the teacher. This chapter offers ideas on sustaining the innovation through various support mechanisms.

**Chapter 10.** This chapter provides tools for literacy coaches, content coaches, and supervisors on how to observe, reflect, and coach teachers implementing ExC-ELL using the ExC-ELL Observation Protocol. The Protocol can also be used by the teachers to observe their students, to plan their lessons, and to reflect on their practice.



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I would like to begin by thanking Dr. Liliana Minaya-Rowe for her collaboration on the ExC-ELL project from its inception, and acknowledge her contributions to this manual with the social studies lesson ethnography, graphic organizers and references.

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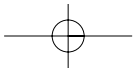
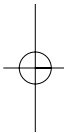
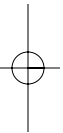
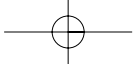
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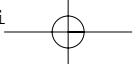
**Margarita Calderón**, a native of Juárez, Mexico, is a senior research scientist and professor at Johns Hopkins University's School of Professional Studies in Business and Education.

She is serving on several national panels: the National Research Council's Committee on Teacher Preparation; the U. S. Department of Education Institute for Education Sciences' National Literacy Panel for Language Minority Children and Youth; the Carnegie Adolescent English Language Learners Literacy Panel; and the California Pre-School Biliteracy Panel.

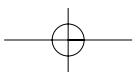
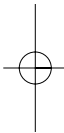
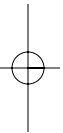
She is principal investigator in three five-year studies on *Expediting Reading Comprehension for English Language Learners (ExCELL) Programs*, one that focuses on professional development of science, social studies, and language arts teachers in New York City's middle and high schools, funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York; and two other studies funded by the U. S. Department of Education in the Pacific Islands for fourth- and fifth-grade teachers and students, and in middle and high schools in Alaska.

She is coprincipal investigator with Robert Slavin on the five-year national randomized evaluation of English immersion, transitional, and two-way bilingual programs, funded by the Institute for Education Sciences

She has published over 100 articles, chapters, books, and teacher training manuals.



*To my brilliant Luis Mauricio.  
To my marvelous associates Lupe, María, Liliana,  
Argelia, Lili, Daniel, Rubén, and Rebecca.*



---

# 1

## Introduction

### The ExC-ELL Model—Literacy and English Language Learners

*“How can my ELLs ever catch up?”*

—tenth-grade government teacher

**M**any middle and high school teachers and principals are asking us what to do about the large numbers of English language learners (ELLs) coming to their schools. The way they have been teaching English as a Second Language is not working. Trying to address all the newcomers and the variety of proficiency levels of ELLs across the grade levels overwhelms the lone ranger ESL teacher. Teachers can't find enough sheltered materials that cover the important facts and concepts, much less the district's standards. The seventh- and tenth-grade ELLs are not passing the high-stakes tests. Teachers and principals are being held accountable for poor test scores, and both fear their jobs are on the line.

Organizations such as the Alliance for Excellent Education ([www.a114ed.org](http://www.a114ed.org)), National Association of Secondary School Principals ([www.nassp.org](http://www.nassp.org)), and the Carnegie Corporation of New York ([www.carnegie.org](http://www.carnegie.org)) have also been preoccupied with this issue. The Carnegie Corporation approached us in 2002 to develop a professional development program that could begin to address the needs of ELLs and teachers in secondary schools.

Thus, the Project *Expediting Comprehension for English Language Learners (ExC-ELL®)* was funded in 2003 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York to develop and study the effects of a professional development model for *middle and high school teachers of English, science, mathematics, and social studies who work with ELLs*.

The purpose of this book is to share the professional development and instructional components developed and tested in sixth- to twelfth-grade classrooms. The information and strategies outlined in subsequent chapters were tested from Connecticut to Hawaii in classrooms with multiple language student backgrounds.

## Why the Program Worked

Since most ELLs are in heterogeneous classrooms that include English-only students (in the five pilot schools, the number ranged from 10% to 90% ELLs in each classroom), the staff development program was designed to help teachers provide effective instruction *for ELLs and all other students in their classrooms, particularly those reading below grade level and needing extensive vocabulary development*. Student data indicated significant results not just for ELLs but also for all students in the participating classrooms. Teachers reported these same strategies were particularly helpful with African American and Hawaiian students who needed additional work with vocabulary and reading skills. The professional development and instructional components are described in chapters throughout this book.

In addition to the teacher training program, professional development sessions were designed for *literacy coaches, content curriculum specialists, principals, and central office administrators* on how to observe and coach teachers as they deliver their lessons integrating reading, writing, and vocabulary development along with their content. The ExC-ELL Observation Protocol (EOP) was developed and tested for validity and reliability by teams consisting of a principal, associate superintendent, coach, university professor, and teacher.

The ExC-ELL Observation Protocol® was used as a classroom tool for

- Planning content lessons
- Coaching by literacy coaches not familiar with ELL instruction
- Supervision by administrators
- Teacher self-reflection
- Peer coaching
- Conducting classroom research

After the exciting results from the first study, the Carnegie Corporation provided funding for a second phase of ExC-ELL to test the feasibility of the observation protocol with handheld technology. This is being done in conjunction with Wireless Generation, which developed the software and worked closely with Johns Hopkins to design a computer-based version of the protocol. The project is being implemented in New York City schools and studied for the next two years.

A second five-year study will be training teachers of different Alaskan Native American students. All these ongoing studies will help to fine tune ExC-ELL and share results continuously.

## **Benefits for Schools, Principals, Teachers, and Students**

No Child Left Behind calls for reform and accountability for all English language learners (ELLs) and all students reading below grade level. In particular, secondary schools need to improve and need help toward that goal. If schools want to improve student performance it means they must begin by improving the performance of all teachers, particularly teachers in middle and high schools who have *ELLs and other adolescents reading below grade level*.

The limited English language skills and low academic performance of Hispanic and other language-minority students pose a major problem in the middle and high school settings. Middle school and high school language-minority students must be ready to participate in a rigorous academic program, and the time for this preparation is limited, which often allows ELLs only superficial learning of vocabulary and concepts. Thus, they are never up to par with the literacy levels and academics demanded by secondary school curricula.

Consequently, most middle and high school language-minority students fail to develop to their fullest potential. As a result, they become disaffected, drop out of school, have to settle for low-paying jobs or no job at all because they have little or no access to either high school or a college education (RAND, 2001; Slavin & Calderón, 2001).

Most teachers do not receive preparation to teach the language-minority students before entering the workforce and have limited opportunities to update their knowledge and skills in an ongoing basis throughout their careers (Calderón & Minaya-Rowe, 2003). The teachers' lack of preparedness is a serious problem because the opportunities for at-risk students to succeed academically depend on teachers' knowledge and application of effective teaching in the classroom (National Education Association, 2003). According to the U.S. Department of Education, 42% of public school teachers have at least one ELL in the classroom, only 27% of teachers of ELLs feel highly qualified to teach them, and only 30% of teachers of ELLs have received professional development in teaching these students (Leos, 2005). The Learning First Alliance (2000) reports teachers in general may be educated, licensed, and employed without knowledge of the most important tools for fighting illiteracy.

To equip all teachers to work successfully with a growing at-risk population requires continuing renewal and extension of the skills, knowledge, and awareness needed to remain effective in a multicultural dynamic environment (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999). NCLB calls for professional qualifications of teachers and profound knowledge of, among other topics,

- Student academic achievement disaggregated by subgroups;
- Comparison of students at basic, proficient, and advanced levels of language and literacy development;
- Assessment processes, interpretation of data, implications for instructional improvement;
- An ample instructional repertoire that reaches all students.

Teachers cannot possibly be fully prepared without quality preservice and quality ongoing professional development. Results-driven education and quality teaching require teacher-focused quality professional development.

New and experienced teachers need the type of professional development that allows them to explore their beliefs about their students and increase their repertoire of linguistic and culturally relevant pedagogy (Calderón,

2000). This also places teachers' needs within a larger context that includes institutional mission and goals, student performance data, and teacher support mechanisms. An institution's program (school district or university) must include measures for student performance and for measuring changes in educators' on-the-job performance. But it must also apply those same measures to the institution preparing the teachers.

One area that needs dire attention and quality comprehensive professional development programs is *reading*. Although everyone in the nation is preoccupied with developing reading skills for all students, including ELLs, scarce attention is given to effective designs of professional programs to develop the teachers' skills for *teaching reading within the context of rigorous content instruction*.

## Myths From the Past That Still Haunt Us!—But There's Good News!

Although there is quite an emerging interest in ELLs at secondary schools (*Reading Next* Report; Department of Education's focus on adolescent literacy), there have been prevalent beliefs, practices, and policies that have prevented the implementation of quality instructional programs for ELLs. Some misconceptions have been:

- The belief that it takes 5 to 7 years to become proficient in English.
- The misconception that ESL or sheltered instruction teachers can meet all the needs of each ELL student by themselves, and main-stream content teachers do not have to and cannot teach ELLs.
- The focus of instruction in English as a second language (ESL) classrooms should be oral language development.
- Special classes need to be set up where content and English are simplified to the point that they are watered down in order to make them comprehensible for ELLs.
- All ELLs need the same type of ESL program, same phonics-based interventions, and to be placed in the same classroom together.

YES, *it used to* take five to seven years. It may still take that long when ELLs are placed in elementary schools where the transition from primary language into English instruction is delayed until the fourth, fifth, or sixth grades. By then, it is too late for students to catch up and be fully prepared

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**MYTH:** It takes five to seven years to become proficient in English.

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for middle school. It may also take five to seven years when the pacing of instruction is too relaxed and not challenging enough. After spending five to seven years learning only or mainly in their primary language, students become accustomed and do not feel the need to learn English, since they've gotten along without it for so long. As they go up the grade levels, the difficulty of the dense textbooks they encounter also goes up. This becomes a greater and greater challenge when students are not used to rigorous (but relevant and sensitive) instruction in English.

At the other extreme, instruction in the early grades might have been paced so fast students could never catch up! This fast-track pacing leaves huge gaps in the normal development of basic skills such as grammar, spelling, composition, and most important, reading comprehension. If these students are then transitioned into all-English instruction in the first or second grade, they may never catch up.

In secondary schools, Newcomers, Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE), or even lifelong ELLs are clustered together. Either they are immersed in content classes immediately into difficult content courses with pull-out or push-in ESL support (which has no evidence of being effective), or they take ESL and sheltered content classes that may not be rigorous enough to catch up to standards. The extreme practices in schools imply the *balancing act between rigor, relevancy, and sensitivity* is what we want all teachers of ELLs to achieve in their active teaching repertoires.

**Good News:** Through several randomized scientific studies, we are seeing how instruction can be carefully crafted to accelerate the learning rate of literacy in English at whatever grade level ELLs enter. These studies also show instruction can facilitate the learning of two languages simultaneously. For instance, students can learn to speak,

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**MYTH:** ESL or sheltered instruction teachers can meet all the needs of each ELL student by themselves and mainstream content teachers do not have to and cannot teach ELLs.

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read, and write in English and Spanish in two-way bilingual programs (TWB). In two-way/dual-language bilingual programs, mainstream and language minority students become bilingual and biliterate when instructed in both languages from prekindergarten on—just as many people in other countries have

done for centuries. Well-designed dual-language programs for middle and high schools are now functioning effectively in sites such as El Paso, Texas and New York City.

The NCLB testing requirements for secondary schools are having detrimental effects on ELLs. The Hispanic dropout rate is at its highest in history. English language learners are not meeting AYP. Those students who make it to universities face a 75% chance they will fail and drop out the first year. If school administrators want their ELLs to show annual yearly progress, to pass state assessments, and to succeed in life, then they must hire well-prepared teachers or prepare them through comprehensive inservice programs, with the latter being the most viable option.

Every state in the nation will attest to the fact that there is a critical shortage of bilingual and ESL credentialed teachers, particularly secondary teachers. However, this does not preclude offering professional development for teachers in the field who are working with a handful or majority numbers of ELLs in their classrooms. In fact, providing professional development should be a requirement. As a result, NCLB calls for highly qualified teachers in core subjects, and that should include Language Arts or English as a second language. Some states require all educators (teachers and administrators) to have some coursework on working with ELL populations, but teachers report it is rarely sufficient to address their students' needs, particularly when it comes to ELL reading difficulties.

**Good News:** Some schools, districts, and state departments of education have already taken steps toward and beyond NCLB requirements by offering comprehensive professional development programs for *all* their teachers. State departments of education, such as the one in Washington state, began training all educators on ELL issues in 2005. New York City schools began retraining hundreds of teachers on current research-based literacy in Spanish and updated methods for ESL. They went as far as offering schools \$20,000 to begin planning ways of restructuring their programs to better address the needs of ELLs and to establish more two-way bilingual schools. The island of Kauai began setting the pace for other islands in the state of Hawaii. They accomplished this by establishing, at the district level, learning communities where the superintendent and his education specialists worked collaboratively to learn and create ways of supporting learning for all educators in the district with a strong focus on ELL literacy.

In most secondary schools, there appears to be a chasm between the ESL and the content classrooms. The ESL teacher is supposed to

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**MYTH:** The focus of instruction in the English as a second language (ESL) classroom should be oral language development.

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concentrate on “getting those kids to speak English” and the content teachers to impart content. For decades, ESL meant learning basic words in English, enough to help students express themselves and understand basic instructions from teachers in mainstream classrooms. This very basic vocabulary is what we call Tier 1 words. They are important for building Tier 2 and 3 word knowledge germane to conceptual understanding of the sciences, social studies, and math coursework (for a broader definition and examples of Tier 1–3 words, please see Chapter 3). However, a whole semester or more is definitely too long in a student’s scholastic life to spend on Tier 1 words. For example, we recently observed a high school ESL teacher who spent 50 minutes teaching 10 words about professions (e.g., carpenter, engineer, teacher). The teacher used props, pictures, and gestures to present each word. After providing information on each, he asked his eight students to work in pairs to match the words with a definition he provided in an envelope. He walked around and helped the students who needed help. The students mostly worked silently, moving the pieces around, until the teacher gave them a thumbs up. Before the period ended, we decided to give the students a test on the 10 words. The most they remembered were five words. In other words, 50 minutes were spent “teaching” but not “reaching.” This instructional event reinforces how ESL teachers may be doing a lot of work, well intended, but not in the most efficient and effective manner.

**Good News:** In the past two years, research that focuses on vocabulary development for mainstream and ELLs has shown promising practices for accelerating the learning of vocabulary in both ESL and mainstream classrooms. Although it is important to teach oral language, it does not have to be separate from reading and writing development. In fact, exposure to the written word and basic reading skills helps students develop a larger vocabulary. Student mastery of a word means they can decode, pronounce, spell, define it, write a

meaningful sentence with it, and recognize it in a different context. Ways of expediting mastery of words are described in the vocabulary chapter.

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**MYTH:** Special classes need to be set up where content and English are sheltered in order to make them comprehensible for ELLs.

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The term *sheltered classes* or *ESL content classes* are sometimes misconstrued as places where subject matter is adapted and/or watered down to very simplistic oral phrases and superficial concepts. Sheltered instruction calls for the teacher to use “appropriate

speech” (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2004), which at times turns out to be taught in a way that limits the growth of vocabulary. We observed a teacher who was so careful to select words her students would understand that she limited her vocabulary all semester long as well as the students’ breadth and depth of word knowledge.

Students’ linguistic and academic development is enormously hindered when they have to submit to semesters of this type of limited instruction. In cases like this, sheltered instruction focuses too much on making content comprehensible to an extreme. When it takes too much time for the teacher to show pictures, realia, make gestures, it leaves little time for students to interact with the new words and take ownership. Although sheltered classes are intended to make rigorous content comprehensible, ESL/sheltered content teachers need to monitor the extent of sheltering and the benefits students are deriving.

**Good News:** Academic language proficiency is the ability to make complex meanings explicit using appropriate language for that specific content area. It’s not communicating through paralinguistic cues or choppy phrases. Academic language proficiency is the ability to read, discuss, and write about complex topics learned in school. All teachers—ESL, sheltered instruction, mainstream—can now be well equipped with ways to help students attain academic language proficiency.

English language learners come to secondary schools with a wide range of linguistic, academic, and life skills. Typically, schools offer only one type of ESL course per grade level, where the whole range of students are placed. This makes it very difficult for the ESL teacher to address the array of needs. This teacher will most likely try to teach to the middle, limiting quality attention and instruction to the students in the higher and lower ends of the continuum.

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**MYTH:** All ELLs need the same type of ESL program, same phonics-based interventions, and to be placed in the same classroom together.

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The term “**differentiated instruction**” has come to mean a mainstream teacher can have a wide range of students in the same class and can use certain strategies to cope with this diversity. No matter how skilled a teacher is or how many inservices on differentiated instruction they have attended, they may not address literacy and oracy development.

In some cases many ELLs’ problems stem not from lack of oral language development but from a diversity of reading development

difficulties. They are able to express themselves in English quite well. These students may or may not be identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) but have great difficulty comprehending texts in English. They have been poorly schooled and will need some basic phonics, along with phonemic and phonological awareness activities through immediate interventions or in the context of reading. However, studies indicate after 20 or so lessons on phonics only, the effect diminished considerably (Kamil, 2006). Therefore, *semester-long phonics programs/instruction without focusing on other skills will not work for ELLs*.

In contrast, other ELLs are so well schooled and literate they would feel insulted attending such phonics/phonemic awareness interventions. The intervention they need is ample vocabulary development and acquaintance with the basic protocols of classroom norms, social norms, an understanding of their teachers' expectations, and the variety of concepts of print for all the textbooks they will be using.

**Good News:** When schools are sensitive to their students, they find ways of assessing each student to find out what type of intervention is necessary—decoding, contrastive linguistics, fluency in speaking, fluency in reading, reading comprehension, spelling, writing mechanics, composition, more vocabulary development, grammar, etc. The amount of time for the intervention also varies. Some students may need a whole semester of reading instruction while others only one-on-one tutoring for two or three weeks. Expediting reading comprehension entails providing the right type of instructional intervention as expeditiously as possible. This means the reading specialists must be well trained to have an extensive repertoire of reading strategies and techniques. They must also have appropriate materials to cover the range of necessary interventions. The interventions can take place after school, on Saturdays, or as electives. It is important to begin interventions as soon as possible at the beginning of the semester and to end the intervention when it is no longer necessary.

## Summary

- ✓ There are many prevalent myths about ELL instruction that keep teachers and students from reaching full potential.
- ✓ ELLs benefit from carefully crafted and challenging content instruction.

- ✓ Teaching reading comprehension in the content areas can be achieved by combining components that have been empirically tested in classrooms with ELLs.
- ✓ Successful teachers are supported by caring and knowledgeable coaches and administrators who also know how reading and content go together.

