

Chapter 1

Why We Need a New Way of Schooling Language- Minority Children

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In every state of the United States and throughout Canada and Great Britain, school districts have or will soon have English learners. As language-minority student populations grow, either through high birth rates or the arrival of refugee children and other newcomers, all schools must be prepared to teach them. In the past, outcomes for ELs were the responsibility of the lonely ESL teacher or the bilingual school down the road. For ELs in special education, outcomes were the responsibility of special education teachers. However, with the onset of response to intervention, the Common Core State Standards, and special funding—such as the funding schools are receiving from Race to the Top—all mainstream teachers and site administrators are now responsible for all students.

One trend in many schools for providing ESL services has been the use of "push-in" and "pull-out" approaches. However, when ELs are pulled out of class to learn English, they miss out on learning content and opportunities for socialization with mainstream students. When ESL teachers push in, to keep ELs in regular classrooms, the ELs feel singled out and frequently withdraw from

meaningful learning. These programs create other problems as well—for example, when schools do not allow quality preparation time for mainstream, ESL, and bilingual teachers to meet and plan their co-teaching. As a result, team-teaching efforts can become disjointed and ineffective, as we see in the following two scenarios.

Sharon, an elementary ESL teacher, pushes into the classroom quietly, going from one EL to another. She translates for one student for about four minutes, then helps another to understand his seat assignment. After five minutes, she answers some questions on a worksheet for a third student. Then she returns to the first and starts her rotation all over again until the thirty minutes are up, at which point she goes to the next class and follows the same routine.

Jamil, a high school ESL teacher, pulls five ELs into a corner of the room and conducts an ESL lesson. This lesson is different from the core teacher's lesson and must be conducted quietly so as not to disturb the rest of the class. After a few explanations, the students begin their worksheet assignments or silent reading. As they read, they stop and quietly ask what a word means. Jamil asks them one or two questions, and one or two of the students answer softly.

The problem with both approaches is that they provide ELs with very little quality instructional time or English language development practice, and neither gives students very much opportunity for mastery of content. Oral production is key for ELs, yet these students have become a silent generation. Teachers tell us that their ELs are literally in their "silent period"—too shy, too embarrassed, to speak, and that in order to respect the students' silence, they do not hold them accountable for oral, reading, or writing production until the students are ready. By the time these students are in middle and high school, their teachers say, they are turned off to learning and don't want to respond to or ask questions.

When we interviewed students across the country, we discovered that they had never received explicit instruction in formulating questions or using sentence starters or discourse protocols for specific functions, such as math and science processes or historical events and their implications. Neither had they been exposed

to comprehension skills development or writing strategies for those processes that the Common Core State Standards are now requiring. They knew how to decode, and they read aloud fairly fluently, but they could not comprehend what they were reading. This silent generation has gone through elementary and secondary school sitting quietly in the back of the room, barely passing from grade to grade, and being largely ignored.

Breaking the Cycle

What is turning some schools around and getting them to pay attention to the silent majority?

For all students to learn, particularly language-minority students, educators and their professional learning must be held to high standards. Challenging standards and high expectations have a positive effect on educator practice and student achievement (August & Shanahan, 2006). Student outcomes, in fact, are contingent on professional learning standards. When schools and school districts commit to educator performance standards that delineate the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of highly effective educators of ELs, the whole school benefits. The standards that nest EL academic skills are professional growth and professional collaboration. That is why the whole school needs to do whatever it takes to break old habits and bring about professional development and collaboration (Dufour, Durour, Eaker, & Karhanek, 2010) as intrinsic to EL achievement.

The Learning Forward standards specify what teachers need to know and do to deliver an effective, equitable education for every student. They also specify the leadership skills that support teachers as they make the transition into effective, equitable teaching informed by skills, dispositions, knowledge of pedagogy and content, assessment, an understanding of how students learn, and the engagement of students from diverse cultures, language, socioeconomic conditions, and exceptionalities (Learning Forward, 2011).

Without appropriate implementation of even small programs, there will be small effects. Without appropriate implementation of larger programs-for a hundred or more ELs-there will be dismal

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effects. What is called for is not only intensification of the implementation of early English language development (ELD), ESL, and sheltered programs, but also greater buy-in and extensive preparation for all core content teachers. When the silent filling in of worksheets is replaced by interactive learning that integrates speaking, listening, reading, and writing, ELs learn throughout the day.

Rigorous Attention and Instruction for ELs

As the Carnegie panel on adolescent ELs found, English learners have double the work compared to mainstream students (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). They have to simultaneously learn both language and content concepts from math, science, social studies, and language arts. A school's efforts must become even more intensive for students with interrupted formal education (SIPE) and students who received no education at all in their native countries; these newcomers have *triple* the work (Calderon, 2007b; Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011). Along with learning English language and content concepts they have missed, they must also learn how to read and write. A well-prepared teacher should provide an intensive intervention for these students that integrates language, literacy, and content, and the students' other teachers must be prepared to engage them in meaningful learning within a sea of diverse learners in each classroom.

Why Are There So Many Long-Term ELs in Secondary Schools?

From teacher and student interviews, we found insufficient rigor in K-12 instruction to be one of the main reasons we have so many long-term ELs in the upper grades. English learners do not progress academically when:

- Teachers do most of the reading for them. IFELs rarely get to read during the early stages of language development, their exposure to academic language and subject matter concepts is delayed.

- ELs do mostly independent or silent reading of books that have been leveled using formulas for mainstream readers. This often results in "pretend reading" and trying to guess content from pictures. ELs need explicit instruction on reading-specific to their range of needs.
- Elementary schools are not teaching three thousand English words per year within the context of learning all subjects. There are too many silent classroom assignments and too few opportunities for interaction to practice vocabulary within oral discourse, reading, and writing.
- Schools that do teach vocabulary teach it in isolation, without connections to reading, writing, and content learning. These schools have forgotten that vocabulary is only a means to learning to read, write cohesively, and master content concepts.
- Writing consists of canned mini-workshops that water it down to meaningless guesswork. Writing needs to be developed in tandem with the vocabulary ELs are learning and the text they have been reading.
- Secondary teachers are not accustomed to teaching vocabulary and discourse, reading, and writing strategies within their content areas. They feel an urgency to "cover" their content. (Ways of integrating language, literacy and content are suggested throughout this anthology.)
- Bilingual programs keep students in the primary language throughout elementary grades without teaching sufficient English. Even in dual-language programs, there is insufficient rich language development in the home language (L_1) and the dominant language of the society (L_2). There are newer structures for organizing a balance of English and L_1 .
- Only one ESL teacher or a handful of bilingual teachers are held responsible for ELs. When all teachers and administrators participate in year-long learning focused on ELs, all students improve, not just ELs.

- Professional learning around EL instruction is reduced to a couple of teachers attending a workshop and then training other teachers in one- or two-hour sessions. Comprehensive training for all teachers, follow-up systematic coaching, and continuous learning about ELs in the school's professional learning communities should be the goal in every school.

The authors in this book describe strategies, plans, and resources for addressing these issues.

Who Are Your ELs?

Given the wide range of English learners and their backgrounds, it is important to identify specific needs before implementing a program or intervention. ELs come with a range of language and literacy skills and with varying degrees" of core subject knowledge.

Long-Term ELs

The majority of ELs in U.S. schools are long-term ELs (LT-ELs)-students who have been in our school systems for seven or more years, are usually below grade level in reading, writing, and math, and do poorly on standardized tests. These ELs have been in and out of various instructional programs without having benefited

<p>LT-ELs are often socially, psychologically, and educationally isolated from mainstream students and in urgent need of effective approaches that will help them catch up and compete.</p>	<p>from continuous and sustained instructional support programs. They were born and raised in the United States and attended U.S. schools from kindergarten on. They may have been reclassified or exited from ESL/bilingual programs but are still struggling academically. Some may have never been identified as English learners.</p>
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Most LT-ELs have conversational, social fluency in English but lack the grade-level academic language proficiency to succeed in mainstream English classrooms. They are often socially, psychologically, and educationally isolated from mainstream students and in urgent need of effective approaches, strategies, and curriculum that will help them catch up and compete. Their motivation may have been hampered, but it can be brought back as soon as they see they can be successful students.

Newcomers

LT-ELs comprise anywhere from 60 to 85 percent of ELs in U.S. schools. The remaining ELs are newcomers-refugees or recent immigrants. Some newcomers have had no or very little schooling and need special interventions that support them in adjusting to classroom, school, and community cultural norms. Others are highly schooled, with strong literacy skills in their native language, and can benefit from accelerated language proficiency skills. These well-educated newcomers sometimes know more math, science, world history, and geography than their English-speaking peers. They *expect* to be challenged through a rigorous curriculum.

Students With Interrupted Formal Education

Students with interrupted formal education (SIPE) are students who come into the upper elementary, middle, or high schools having low levels of literacy and content background knowledge in their home language. They might have attended school in their home countries for only one or two years or not at all. Their needs surpass the resources of regular ESL or bilingual programs. Older SIPE will need intensive interventions to catch up with basic skills, in order to build background for content lessons.

Some SIPE may have migrated from state to state with their parents, following agricultural harvesting schedules, but missing many school days. In many cases, they are brilliant students who have so much worldly knowledge that they learn quickly and become the recipients of scholarships to top universities. Their parents have a focused goal of helping them succeed, no matter the cost. In other cases, the struggles for day-to-day living are too overwhelming, and they may not have the privilege of systematic school attendance. A migrant student might become an LT-EL, or he or she could turn out to be the class valedictorian.

Special Education Students

Like their mainstream counterparts, some ELs may have exceptional education needs. Recognized disabilities include specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairment, mental

retardation, hearing impairment, serious emotional disturbance, multiple disabilities, visual impairment, deafness and blindness, and autism.

However, English learners continue to be overrepresented in special education, due not to learning disabilities but to lack of English proficiency. Issues of English language proficiency are entwined with perceptions of disability. Unlike physical conditions that are more objectively verifiable, many learning disabilities are still assessed through observation, subjective judgment, or ambiguous tests. Some ELs are therefore diverted from opportunities, while others fail to get the help they need.

Whole-School, Evidence-Based Instructional Interventions

Through our studies and work with schools, including our observation of many classrooms throughout the country for various studies, panels, and reports, we have found common instructional, professional development, and school effectiveness features that work across school settings, content areas, and grade levels (Calderon, 2007a; Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2003; Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011; Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011).

Whether gifted or learning English as a second or third language, every student needs explicit and varied instruction in vocabulary to build solid word power.

This section describes (1) what the research says about vocabulary instruction, reading, and writing instruction; (2) what is typically observed in classrooms with regard to these foundational components; and (3) how schools are addressing each of them and achieving-and maintaining-positive results.

Vocabulary Instruction

Reading specialists, second-language-acquisition experts, and linguists agree that explicit instruction in vocabulary is necessary in order for students to have robust vocabularies to use throughout their daily learning routines. Whether gifted or learning English as a second or third language, every student needs explicit and varied instruction to build solid word power.

What the Research Says

Research on vocabulary has found that:

- Teachers need to provide rich language experiences and direct instruction in vocabulary and word-learning strategies to ensure that students learn from three thousand to five thousand words a year (Biemiller, 2011; Calderon, 2011a, 2011b; Graves, August, & Carlo, 2011).
- Effective vocabulary instruction has to start early, in preschool, and continue throughout the school years (Calderon et al., 2005; Carlo, August, & Snow, 2005; Grabe, 2009; Graves, 2006; Nagy, 2005).
- Teaching vocabulary helps develop both phonological awareness (Nagy, 2005) and reading comprehension (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002; Hiebert & Kamil, 2005; Zweirs, 2008).
- Robust instruction offers rich information about words and their uses, provides frequent and varied opportunities for students to think about and use words, and enhances students' language comprehension and production (Beck et al., 2002; Carlo et al., 2005; Graves, 2006).
- To help students catch up with the words they are missing and build reading comprehension, vocabulary instruction needs to be explicitly taught before, during, and after reading (Calderon et al., 2005; Calderon, 2007a; Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2003).
- Vocabulary instruction should include phonology and morphology for pronunciation and spelling; syntax for word order and collocation; and formal and informal discourse through academic and social linguistic functions. It should stem from texts students are about to read, discuss, write about, and most importantly, learn the content of (Bailey, 2007; Calderon, 2011a; Calderon, 2011b; Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011).

What We Have Observed in Classrooms

Explicit vocabulary instruction is rare in most classrooms, in particular in secondary schools. Three approaches are most prevalent: (1) send the student to the dictionary with long lists of words; (2) spend fifteen to thirty minutes teaching one word by asking students to copy definitions and sentences and draw pictures, or by generating complicated word-webs that leave them more confused; and (3) offer no instruction in word knowledge before jumping into reading or writing, and instead offer only an after-reading activity using worksheets. The children do not practice using vocabulary orally with peers in any of these approaches. Students "help" each other by either copying or correcting, but not constructing, vocabulary.

Constructing vocabulary and oracy consists of students using the words that are key to comprehending the teacher's instruction and the text they will be reading, and the words they will be asked to use in their writing. Vocabulary instruction does not mean teaching only one word or learning word by word; more often, words come in clusters (for example, *stored energy, equivalent weight, over the course of, I agree with, after the fact, prime minister, direct proportion, commutative property*). It means knowing how to start a question or a sentence with those key words. Vocabulary is learned in the context of oracy-oral practice within the context of a sentence or text in which that word needs to be used.

When Vocabulary Instruction Comes Together in Schools

The sequence of steps for teaching vocabulary begins with preteaching key words, followed by reading those words in the context of content to be learned. ELs continue learning new words as they read and then finally use them in their writing. Preteaching entails explicit but brisk instruction for each word or cluster, during which students practice forming sentences orally with peers. Students use the new words as they partner read and summarize after each paragraph. Finally, they write brief summaries using five or six of the new words and recapitulating the content they have learned. Vocabulary is only the first step in developing oracy, literacy, and content learning. Chapter 6 describes this process in further detail.

Essentially, teaching vocabulary should be pervasive throughout each school. The more teachers are involved in systematic vocabulary instruction, the faster ELs, disadvantaged students, and special education students learn and succeed. In schools where all the teachers and administrators applied and sustained these principles, we have seen evidence of accelerated learning (Calderon & Mi.naya-Rowe, 2011).

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Reading Instruction

Teaching basic reading along with reading comprehension is one of the most complex instructional endeavors. Without reading comprehension, students cannot read or learn core subject matter.

What the Research Says

Educating the full range of ELs and low-achieving students in intellectually demanding programs will require education professionals to learn new ways of teaching, with a strong focus on reading in the content areas, not just second-language acquisition through simple oral drills (August et al., 2008; Calderon, 2009; Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007; Slavin, Madden, Calderon, Chamberlain, & Hennessey, 2009). Many ELs who sound like fluent readers because they have mastered the constrained skills of letter knowledge, concepts of print, and phonics do not understand what they are reading. These features of reading have been constrained because meaning has been left out of reading in most K-2 classrooms. By middle school, these children have developed superficial reading habits but no depth of comprehension (August & Hakuta, 2006; Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011).

When ELs are given the opportunity to apply a strategy in all their subject areas-math, science, social studies, as well as language arts-knowledge of that strategy is reinforced. When all content teachers use these reading comprehension strategies, ELs and other low-level readers improve in language, reading, and

content knowledge. One of those strategies is partner reading or reciprocal teaching, where students work in pairs to practice reading aloud. After reading each paragraph, reading partners should stop to verbally summarize what they read, so that they can retain the information, practice any new words and phrases, and work on any comprehension problems by rereading and questioning. Naturally, the teacher models how to go about doing all this beforehand.

What We Have Observed in Classrooms

We observed two prevalent reading approaches in most K-12 classrooms: silent independent reading and teacher reading. Silent reading does not work for ELs (Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011; Francis, Rivera, Moughamian, & L saux, 2008; Slavin & Calderon, 2001) or for students at risk (Denton et al., 2011). One can never tell if they are comprehending or just "pretend reading." In other classrooms we saw teachers read aloud to students and students answering low-level questions. Some middle school teachers read novels to their students. This kept the students quiet, with their heads on their desks, until the teacher asked a question. Some teachers asked students to take notes while being read to. This was followed by a handful of students sharing from their notes. In these classrooms, the students were also expected to write without having read good models of text to emulate. In all these cases, students were not reading, nor were they being taught to read.

Most language arts textbooks for both ELs and non-ELs currently in use recommend teaching them the following reading comprehension skills:

- Predict
 - Determine important information
 - Summarize
 - Make inferences
 - Use graphic and semantic organizers
 - Visualize
 - Ask and answer questions
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- Make connections and use schema
- Monitor comprehension

All of these skills are useful in helping ELs develop reading strategies. The ones we observed most frequently in classrooms were making predictions, using graphic organizers, and answering questions on worksheets. ELs cannot be expected to make predictions and inferences or to visualize if they don't know 85-90 percent of the words necessary to describe that prediction or inference or to describe what they visualize (August & Shanahan, 2006). We also observed that newcomers and SIPE had difficulty making connections to areas of prior knowledge that were not part of their culture or schooling experiences (Calderon, 2007b). This background knowledge needs to be explicitly taught along with vocabulary before they can participate in these discussions.

When Reading Comes Together in Schools

Essentially, it is easier for ELs to begin with this sequence of skills:

1. Ask and answer questions.
2. Determine important information.
3. Summarize.
4. Make connections and use schema.
5. Monitor comprehension.

These cognitive and verbal processes are best practiced during partner reading and discussions only after a teacher presents them with academic-discourse protocols, sentence starters, and subject-related common phrases. Chapter 3 of this book elaborates on background building; chapters 5 and 6 describe integrated approaches to language, literacy; and content.

Writing Instruction

Writing can be used as a means of personal expression, as a means to communicate knowledge, as evidence of comprehension, or as an audience-focused activity. Each of

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these purposes has different assessment criteria (Graham, Harris, & Hebert, 2011). Writing is also the most difficult domain for ELs and their high school teachers. A newcomer may have good writing skills in the primary language, while a student who has been in a North American school since kindergarten may have oral fluency yet no writing skills in either the first or second language.

What the Research Shows

Although the research of Steve Graham, Karen Harris, and Michael Hebert (2011) and Steve Graham and Dolores Perin (2007) on students' difficulty with writing did not focus on ELs, their findings have implications for them nevertheless. Writing workshops, they discovered, have the smallest effect sizes of all writing approaches they studied (Graham & Hebert, 2010; Graham & Perin, 2007). They also identified certain methods that some of our schools have adapted and applied. The ones teachers of ELs find most useful are collaborative writing, summarization, the study of models, and writing for content knowledge.

What We Have Observed in Classrooms

Middle and high school teachers and administrators report that their greatest concern is students' low writing skills. In part, this is because the kinds of writing demands and the nature of instruction in science, history, and math vary from those of ESL and language arts classes. In fact, the writing we observed consisted of either filling in worksheets that accompany textbooks or "doing writing workshops" that show no evidence of being effective with ELs. We rarely observed explicit writing instruction, with all its basic steps, or writing connected to what students had been reading. Explicit word and discourse instruction in preparation for writing was negligible. When we visited second-grade classrooms with large numbers of ELs, we looked at student writing posted around the walls and read examples such as, "I like my pet. I like the ears. I like the nose. I like the color brown." When we visited ninth-grade classrooms with ELs, we read examples such as, "I like photosynthesis. I like analyses. I like procedures." The posted writing samples in Spanish were lengthier but contained many grammatical, punctuation, and

spelling errors. The higher the grade, the larger the number of errors on student papers.

The lessons we observed on writing did little to generate quality writing from ELs. Teachers typically asked students to pick a topic from the board or gave them a topic to write on. Teachers then walked around trying to provide additional individual help to all students, but this approach became overwhelming when so many hands kept going up. There is precious little time allocated to writing, and that time is not being used in an efficient and effective way.

How Writing Comes Together In Schools

Writing comes together in schools when teachers model the type of writing they are requiring (for example, expository, procedural, persuasive, argumentative, essay, or research), explain how to edit for each type, and understand how the teacher will grade according to proficiency levels. An approach to writing we have adapted from previous research with good results for ELs (Graham & Hebert, 2010; Graham & Perin, 2007) follows a seven-step sequence (Calderon, 2011a; 2011b):

1. **Preteach the most important** vocabulary-Select key words that you want to see students use for writing assignments and grading.
2. **Develop background** knowledge-Students from different cultures approach writing differently and they also have different schooling experiences. Develop background knowledge or explanations of unfamiliar concepts, structures, and mechanics for writing by using the text they are reading.
3. **Describe** it-Discuss and present the strategy, its purpose, benefits, and goals, and the grading rules for finished products. Consider differentiated grading scales for ELs, depending on their level of English proficiency.
4. **Model** it-Model the writing you want them to emulate. Model each phase of the strategy. Show examples from the text they are reading.

5. Support it-Support or scaffold the student's use of the strategy until he or she can apply it with few or no supports. Model self-regulated learning and the use of mnemonic devices.
6. Make ample use of student interaction-Model and implement collaborative and cooperative writing strategies to plan, draft, revise, and edit compositions.
7. Use differentiated assessment-Assess the point of entry for writing (not just oral production), and continue measuring the learning progression of writing, since the oral, reading, and writing proficiencies for ELs vary dramatically.

Summary

Language and literacy development in K-3 has typically been relegated to how fast children can decode, with little attention given to depth of comprehension, with which children can interpret facts and integrate information from different sources. Very little time is given to science, civics, history, and current events. Everything seems centered on children's literature. When these children get to middle school, their marginal reading skills become the responsibility of the ESL or English/language arts teachers. No one actually teaches them to read math, science, and social studies, or schools them in the language structures they will need to discuss those subjects.

Reading, writing, and oral language proficiency are best developed simultaneously through rigorous but caring instruction. All students across the country need further development in reading, writing, and oracy-not just the English learners. Success leaps out when a whole school commits to this attainment.

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