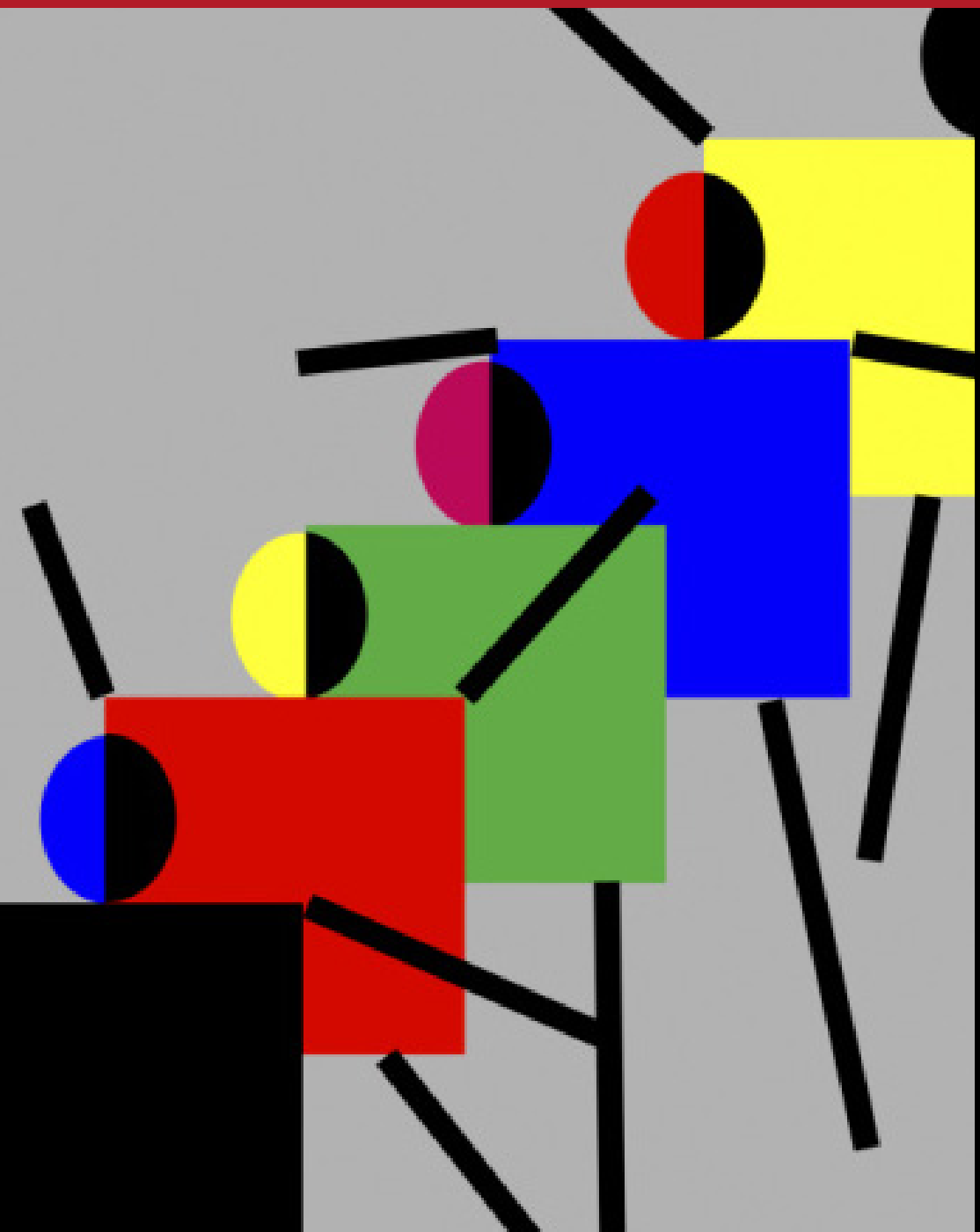
INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS AND STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS



CENTER ON INSTRUCTION

INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS AND STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Ani C. Moughamian
Mabel O. Rivera
David J. Francis
Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistics
University of Houston

CENTER ON INSTRUCTION

The authors acknowledge the valuable assistance given by reviewers Nonie Lesaux, Charlene Rivera, Marjorie Rosenberg, Maria Helena Malagon, and Robert Rueda, and by Angela Penfold and Elizabeth Goldman of the Center on Instruction.

This publication was created for the Center on Instruction by the Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistics at the University of Houston. The Center on Instruction is operated by RMC Research Corporation in partnership with the Florida Center for Reading Research at Florida State University; Instructional Research Group; the Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistics at the University of Houston; and The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk at The University of Texas at Austin.

Editorial, design, and production services provided by RMC Research Corporation.

Preferred citation:
Moughamian, A. C., Rivera, M. O., & Francis, D. J. (2009). *Instructional models and strategies for teaching English language learners*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.

To download a copy of this document, visit www.centeroninstruction.org.

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

2 Contextual factors

3 Definitions

3 Language vs. quality of instruction

4 Guiding questions

5 INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS AND PROGRAMS

6 English-only model

6 Structured immersion programs

6 Sheltered instruction programs

7 Bilingual model

7 Dual language programs

7 Transitional bilingual programs

9 RESEARCH ON LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

11 INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND STRATEGIES

12 The CALLA cycle of instruction

13 English-only strategies

13 Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)

14 Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE)

15 Dual language strategies

15 Bilingual Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (BCIRC)

16 Improving Literacy Transitional Instructional Program (ILTIP)

20 IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

23 REFERENCES

29 APPENDIX A: INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND STRATEGIES

32 APPENDIX B: BILINGUAL COOPERATIVE INTEGRATED READING AND COMPOSITION (BCIRC) ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION

Students identified as limited English proficient (LEP), also known in the literature and in educational settings as English language learners (ELLs), represent one of the fastest growing groups among the school-aged population in the U.S. Estimates place the ELL population at nearly 10 million students, increasing at a rate of more than 169% from 1979 to 2003 (NCES, 2004). Current projections place the proportion of English language learners at nearly 30% of the school population by 2015 (Capps et al., 2005). English language learners speak more than 400 different languages. Spanish, spoken by some 70 percent of ELLs, is the most common of these languages.

With growing numbers of English language learners, states and schools face pressure to ensure that instructional practices for English language learners are effective and that these students make significant academic progress each year. Students who have limited English proficiency receive school support under key provisions of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 (U.S. Department of Education, 2002), which holds state education agencies accountable for the progress of ELLs in two ways. ELLs must meet Adequate Yearly Progress expectations for reading and mathematics under Title I and Annual Measurable Year Objectives under Title III. English language learners must demonstrate satisfactory progress in learning English and in attaining English proficiency on standardized content and language assessment instruments.

While some states (Arizona, California, Florida, and Massachusetts) have passed laws detailing the types of educational programs available to English language learners, others have not. Teachers who have not been trained to work with ELLs must make decisions about the types of instructional programs and strategies they will offer these students. This publication seeks to offer educators and policy-makers guidance on strategies that have been effective in instructing English language learners.

We begin by outlining key contextual factors that decision-makers should take into account when making instructional choices for English language learners, then follow with a brief overview of bilingual and English-only instructional models. Finally, we consider the influence of the language of instruction on academic outcomes for English language learners. Regardless

of the model that school districts select, teachers must use the most effective strategies to accelerate student learning and maximize instructional time; this publication suggests research-based instructional strategies appropriate for a range of ELL instructional models.

Contextual factors

Many factors make it difficult to develop a "one size fits all" model of instruction for this diverse group of students. The characteristics and dynamics of the student population, classroom, school, and community all affect appropriate program selection. Available empirical evidence and how it relates to these variables should be considered when choosing and adjusting an instructional program (along with additional strategies, models, or instructional tools used in the classroom). Contextual factors that may affect these decisions fall within three main categories: (a) child and family characteristics; (b) instructional program features; and (c) socio-political and cultural considerations.

- *Child and family factors* include a student's language knowledge (his or her native language as well as English proficiency), socio-economic status (SES), acculturation into American society, the culture of American public school, age[1] of arrival, and immigration status (first or second generation). Some students have developed literacy in their native language when they begin instruction in English; others have not. Each factor affects academic outcomes independently and also interacts with the others in complex ways to affect academic performance.
- *Instructional program features* vary, as do the fidelity of program implementation and teacher quality. All influence the effectiveness of any program.
- *Socio-political and cultural considerations* color the debates about appropriate instruction. State and federal laws and beliefs about citizenship, immigration, and poverty complicate and influence instructional decision-making. In U.S.-affiliated Pacific states, for example, English may be a second or third language. At the same time, "English-only" states determine the types of instructional programs schools may implement for English language learners.

[1] Students who arrive in the U.S. with little or no previous schooling may be placed in newcomer programs. However, newcomer programs are not the focus of the current document. Rather, we focus here on the language of instruction and the use of instructional strategies in different program models of instruction.

Despite these factors, administrators and educators must seek to find and use the best types of instruction for English language learners in their communities, districts, schools, and classrooms. They must adjust the type of program (and other strategies, models, or instructional tools used in the classroom) to meet the specific needs of English language learners in their particular setting while taking into account the available empirical evidence and how it relates to their circumstances.

Definitions

Several terms are used, often interchangeably, in discussions about instructional models, programs, and strategies for ELLs. Terms used in research may vary from those used in practice; some terms are freighted with political connotations. Any discussion and decision-making about instructional methods for ELLs should define terms and labels (e.g., "dual language" program, "bilingual," "transitional," etc.) and ensure a common understanding and consistent use of terms.

Language vs. quality of instruction

The language of instruction—whether it is the student's first language (L1) or second language (L2)—remains a central issue in current debates. But the quality of instruction also matters a great deal. Regardless of the instructional model, educational practitioners need to examine the quality of instruction ELLs receive.

Guiding questions

The following decision points and criteria may aid practitioners and policy-makers in choosing instructional models, programs, and practices for English language learners in a district, school, or classroom.

- How long have students lived in the U.S. (e. g., are they recent immigrants, second-generation, etc.)?
- What kinds of language resources are available to the students at home or in their community?
- What print materials are available (both in school and out) and in what languages?
- What type of prior schooling have students received, and in what languages?
- What is the students' level of background knowledge in the content area of interest?
- What assessments are available, and in what languages?
- What instructional resources (e.g., bilingual teachers, bilingual aids, English as a Second Language pull-out programs, etc.) are available in the school?
- What are the experience levels of teachers? How much experience do the teachers have working with ELL students?
- What are the school and community attitudes regarding bilingualism? Is this instructional program, method, or strategy research-based[2]? Has more than one study demonstrated its effectiveness? Was research conducted on the particular population of ELLs in our school?

[2] By research-based, we mean that there is a sufficient body of empirical research done using rigorous research methodology which provides ample evidence for the success of a particular instructional method, program, or strategy. More importantly, included within that body of work should be evidence of effectiveness for the particular student population which will be receiving the instruction.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS AND PROGRAMS

Instructional programs for English language learners occupy a continuum with the bilingual model at one end and English-only at the other. In between are many gradations, depending on the needs of the population. Table 1 illustrates the range of programs within the continuum of instructional models for English language learners. Each model is explained in detail below the table.

Table 1. Characteristics of common programs for English language learners (adapted from NCELA, 2007).

Model and goal	Program (typical names)	Language(s) of instruction
English-only: Developing literacy in English	English language development (ELD)	English
	English as a second language (ESL) pull-out	English; students are served in mainstream classrooms with ESL instructional support provided in the classroom by a specialist
	Sheltered English instruction	English adapted to students' proficiency level, supplemented by gestures, visual aids, manipulatives, etc. L1 support may be provided separately.
	Structured English immersion (SEI)	All instruction in English, adapted to students' proficiency levels. L1 support may be provided separately.
Bilingual: Developing literacy in two languages simultaneously	Bilingual immersion	Both English & students' native language (L1), usually throughout elementary school
	Dual language immersion	
	Two-way immersion	
	Developmental bilingual education	
	Late-exit	Both English & students' native language (L1).
	Maintenance education	
	Heritage language	
	Indigenous language program	
Bilingual with transitional support: English acquisition; transfer to English-only classrooms	Early-exit	Both English & students' native language (L1). After transition, no further instruction in L1.
	Transitional bilingual education	

English-only model

This model features programs that offer instruction to English learners in English. Students' native language plays a small or no role in English-only programs, although classroom teachers and bilingual aides may offer some support, such as giving directions in the students' native language to help newcomer English learners or students with few or no English language skills. School districts often offer these programs when English language learners come from many different language backgrounds (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006). Programs in this model are also referred to as English as a second language (ESL) or English language development (ELD) programs.

- ***Structured immersion programs***

A common English-only approach is structured English immersion, in which English learners receive gradually decreasing native language supports as they develop sufficient English language skills. English immersion programs seek to increase students' English fluency rapidly by teaching content in English. In such programs, the core curriculum includes English language development and content-area instruction using strategies focused on the needs of second language learners.[3]

- ***Sheltered instruction programs***

Sheltered instruction programs facilitate student access to content concepts and promote the development of academic English. These programs use small amounts of native language strictly to supplement the English-only curriculum. Teachers modify their use of English by adjusting the language demands of instruction. For example, they modify their speech rate and tone; simplify vocabulary and grammar; repeat key words, phrases, or concepts; use context clues and models extensively; relate instruction to students' background knowledge and experience; and use methods of language instruction such as demonstrations, visuals, graphic organizers, or cooperative work.

[3] Before 1974, ELLs did not receive systematic assistance for their language needs. The approach known as "sink-or-swim" was outlawed by the U.S. Supreme Court as a violation of minority children's civil rights in Lau v. Nichols 414 U.S. 563 (1974) and will not be discussed in this document. Current federal law requires that all English learners be provided with an educational program that ensures their access to the core curriculum and opportunities for English language development; however, state laws govern program requirements. Consequently, state and local offices of education decide what programs to offer depending on the needs of a specific population (Crawford, 2004).

Bilingual model

The bilingual model in the United States offers instruction in English and another language. These programs vary in intensity and the length of time in which students participate. Two main variations of the bilingual model are practiced in schools nationwide.

- ***Dual language programs***

Dual language programs develop students' skills in two languages. They serve both English learners and monolingual English-speakers, typically in equal proportions, and aim to reinforce students' native language and foster the development of a second language. Such programs create an "additive" bilingual environment in which all students are expected to develop bilingual proficiency. (Teachers present much of the academic content in English so that students develop the proficiency in academic English they will need to succeed in school.) Dual language programs exist for many languages (e.g., Spanish, Korean, French, Chinese), and may serve to maintain native language and cultural backgrounds for English language learners while simultaneously developing their academic and language proficiency in English.

Dual language programs go by many names in the United States. Depending on the state and district, they are known as bilingual immersion, two-way bilingual, two-way immersion, and dual immersion programs. They are designed so that students benefit from learning two languages and hearing good models of both. While schools with large ELL populations currently use the dual language model, the original intent of these programs was to teach English-speaking students a second language through immersion in the minority language in kindergarten and first grade. The programs were especially popular in Canada to help English-speaking students build proficiency in French (Francis, Lesaux, & August, 2006).

- ***Transitional bilingual programs***

Transitional bilingual programs build students' English skills and use native language instruction in the service of learning English. Typically, instruction in the native language tapers off as ELLs' English language skills increase and students can access English language instruction more easily. The transition model appears more often than other models in programs that serve English language learners in the United States (Genesee, 1999).

How easily students transition from bilingual instruction to mainstream English classrooms depends on their skill levels in both English and their native languages. ELLs often show decreased academic outcomes during the transition year (De La Rosa & Maw, 1990; Gersten & Woodward, 1995; Natriello, McDill, & Pallas, 1990). Without the supports they received during transition, English language learners may need continued assistance in their native languages and further support in English language development from their mainstream classes.

For example, students may have sufficient English oral language skills, but not adequate academic English to complete content-related tasks without support. Secondary school students may find the transition to English instruction especially difficult because middle and high school academic content becomes progressively more difficult. Students need sufficient literacy and academic language knowledge in English to make meaning from their textbooks and classroom experiences.

In transitional programs, students may receive native language instruction for as few as two ("early-exit") or as many as six ("late-exit") years alongside instruction in English. The proportion of language use can vary from 50–50 (students get 50% of their instruction in English and 50% in their native language), to 60–40 or 70–30, depending on school, district, or state bilingual instructional policies. Early-exit programs differ from late-exit ones in focusing more on moving English learners to English-only instruction quickly and less on maintaining students' native language proficiency.

One type of late-exit transitional model is developmental bilingual education (DBE), also known as "late-exit bilingual" or "maintenance bilingual" programs. DBE provides instruction in both English and students' native languages but the goal is to teach English to language minority students, rather than foster dual language proficiency, as the bilingual model does. Nevertheless, DBE models promote English language learners' facility in both their first and second languages.

Some educators express concern that, because of student mobility, students may start a transitional program late in their education, or leave the program too early, perhaps before they are ready. A lack of continuity between grades and schools can also create problems as students progress through grade levels, or transfer to other schools. Some researcher-developed programs for students transitioning to English-only instruction have managed to smooth that transition, compared with the instruction students typically receive during transitions (e.g., Saunders, 1999; Saunders & Goldenberg, 2001).

RESEARCH ON LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

Mirroring the debate over the use of students' original languages in ELL instruction, researchers reviewing the literature over the last 20 years have found a range of differences in ELLs' academic outcomes based on the language of instruction. Some (Baker & de Kanter, 1981; Rossell & Baker, 1996) found that instruction delivered with some degree of native language use (e.g., transitional bilingual education, dual language immersion) was no more successful at improving ELL student outcomes than English-only instructional programs. Other reviewers (e.g., Willig, 1985; Greene, 1997) reached a different conclusion, showing positive outcomes for students in bilingual education programs. A more recent review (Slavin & Cheung, 2005) showed mixed results, finding nine studies that favored bilingual programs and four that showed no differences in outcomes for students either English-only or dual language programs.

The National Literacy Panel (August & Shanahan, 2006) addressed this issue. Using meta-analysis, the authors revisited previous reviews and examined additional studies (Francis et al., 2006), and wrote narrative descriptions of the studies and their effect sizes. Their review sought to compare English-only and bilingual instructional approaches by examining students' outcomes in English reading. The review included 20 studies (16 studies on ELLs in either bilingual or English-only instruction, one heritage language program, and three French-language immersion program studies), but for the purposes of this publication, we examine only the results of the analysis of the bilingual and English-only programs.

The findings reveal a range in effect sizes, with mixed results for the efficacy of the instructional programs. Overall, however, the results seemed to favor bilingual education instructional programs The researchers report that "it seems reasonably safe to conclude that bilingual education has a positive effect on English reading outcomes that are small to moderate in size" (Francis et al., 2006, p. 392). However, it remains difficult to distinguish which nuances of bilingual instruction (e.g., amount of native language instruction, transition time to English) may be more effective than others.

Similar reviews have focused on the relationship between language skills that promote English language and literacy development among monolingual

English speakers and the transfer of skills from L1 to L2. For example, Restrepo and Gray (2007) discussed phonemic awareness, vocabulary knowledge, alphabet knowledge, and reading comprehension, and how these skills transfer between L1 and English. The review concludes that skills do, in fact, transfer from L1 to L2 under specific circumstances. For example, phonemic awareness skills transfer more easily if the languages have similar alphabets, roots, orthography, and phonemes. Moreover, L1 reading comprehension skills tend to enhance L2 reading skills because students use comprehension strategies they already know from their native language.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND STRATEGIES

In this section we discuss instructional methodologies[4] that have demonstrated effectiveness in helping ELLs build L2 proficiency. They can be used with ELL students regardless of the model (bilingual or English only). Three of these strategies were developed primarily for use in English-only classes and two primarily for use in dual language and transitional classes; one stands alone.

Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA)

Designed to improve academic achievement for post-elementary level English language learners, the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) builds on cognitive learning theory and integrates academic content instruction with explicit instruction in language development and learning strategies. The CALLA model is based on the premise that English language learners need explicit instruction in the academic language necessary for academic success. CALLA has been informed by research on the needs of ELLs and on the positive impact of effective academic learning strategies for the general student population. CALLA aims to generate student reflection on their own learning processes and help them become more effective learners. It is grounded in social-interactive theory and requires that students have multiple opportunities to practice authentic language use through interactions with both adults and peers.

The CALLA method contains three elements: (a) important content topics, (b) development of academic language within content areas, and (c) explicit instruction in strategies that help students develop language and content knowledge (Chamot & O'Malley, 1996). CALLA builds students' academic content knowledge while simultaneously expanding their academic language skills, with the understanding that students absorb effective learning strategies best when they are learning authentic content. CALLA emphasizes the explicit teaching of metacognitive, cognitive, and social and affective strategies. For example, students may use metacognitive strategies such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating to reflect on their own thinking and learning processes. They may use cognitive strategies such as activating prior knowledge, drawing inferences, and using imagery and linguistic transfer.

[4] We use the term "methodologies" here to indicate that we will be discussing a variety of instructional techniques, models, and practices. These are distinguished from the "instructional programs" discussed earlier in this report, which we identified as either under the "bilingual" or "English only" models.

They may also use social and affective strategies such as questioning, working with peers, and positive self-talk in learning to communicate and learn. The CALLA method advocates learner-centered instruction. Teachers guide students to use their existing knowledge and make new and meaningful connections. They give students ample opportunities to develop language proficiency through interactions. Over time, teachers gradually offer less support to allow students to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning.

The CALLA cycle of instruction

The CALLA method has a five-stage cycle of instruction: preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation, and expansion. These five stages do not have to be used in sequence, and are in fact often used recursively such that the stages will be repeated according to student needs.

- *Preparation* helps students become aware of their existing knowledge and strategies they may already know. Simultaneously, students start to develop metacognitive awareness in preparation for the task ahead. The teacher's cultural awareness is central to the CALLA method; in the preparation stage, teachers should use culturally sensitive strategies to elicit students' prior knowledge and to ensure that students understand the new material.
- *Presentation* provides students with new information. CALLA suggests teacher modeling at this stage to help students develop new language and learning strategies.
- In the *practice* stage, teachers give students opportunities to practice their new language and learning strategies in preparation for using them actively in classroom activities.
- In the *evaluation* stage, students evaluate their progress and develop metacognitive awareness of their new learning strategies and the new material they have learned. Discussing their learning activities fosters students' self-evaluative and metacognitive skills.
- In the *expansion* stage, students make connections between new material, what they already know from school, and their experiences beyond school. Students choose the best strategies and learn how to apply them across environments and contexts.

English-only strategies

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)

The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), a research-based observation instrument, measures sheltered instruction and provides a model for lesson planning of academic English skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Developed by researchers at the Center for Applied Linguistics and California State University, Long Beach, the combination of the SIOP and sheltered instruction strategies and teaching techniques aligns with state standards and makes academic content more understandable for English language learners. This combination is frequently called the SIOP method or model.

The SIOP method offers teachers tools for working with ELLs regardless of the language of instruction. It incorporates teaching methods and reading strategies that have demonstrated effectiveness with native English speakers, such as cooperative learning, reading comprehension strategies, and differentiated instruction, and adds strategies that enhance academic outcomes for ELLs, including presenting language objectives in content lessons, using background knowledge, teaching content-related vocabulary, and focusing on academic literacy practice (Short & Echevarria, 2004).

The SIOP method draws on and builds upon traditional sheltered instructional strategies, which encourage teachers to speak more slowly, enunciate clearly, use visuals, scaffold instruction, target vocabulary words and development, connect concepts to students' experiences, promote peer interactions, and adapt materials and supplementary materials for ELLs. The SIOP model incorporates these practices into an explicit methodology for delivering lessons to ELLs.

The SIOP comprises 30 items, grouped into eight essential elements that help make academic content more comprehensible for ELLs:

- *Preparation:* incorporating language development and content into each lesson
- *Building background knowledge:* using students' knowledge and prior experience to connect to new content
- *Comprehensible input:* ensuring that ELLs understand classroom dialogue and texts (for example, adjusting speech, modeling tasks, or using visuals, manipulatives, and other methods to deliver academic content)

- *Strategies:* teaching strategies explicitly to help students learn how to access and remember information, scaffolding strategy use, and promoting higher order thinking skills
- *Interaction:* encouraging the use of elaborated speech and appropriate student grouping for language development
- *Practice and application:* using classroom activities that build on and extend language and content development
- *Lesson delivery*
- *Review and assessment:* evaluating whether the teacher reviewed key concepts, assessed student learning, and provided students with feedback (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006).

Teachers can use these elements as necessary to engage students in language development and encourage ELLs in learning English. The SIOP strategies scaffold learning and help teachers focus on the language skills students need for success on academic tasks. This type of sheltered English instruction can be used across grades and content areas. Although SIOP is an established method, teachers can use elements of sheltered instruction for ELLs without using the specific protocol.

Research with 346 middle school students demonstrated that SIOP can have significant positive outcomes for English language learners. The writing skills affected included language production, organization, and mechanics (Echevarria et al., 2006). While this study's findings are preliminary, the SIOP method appears to be a promising approach to helping ELLs develop academic language and literacy skills.

Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE)

Another strategy for English-only classrooms is the Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), which is akin to sheltered instruction. The SDAIE strategies give ELLs access to the core curriculum while promoting English language development. Growing out of work done by Krashen (1982), SDAIE comprises strategies that provide grade-appropriate academic content in English to ELLs with intermediate-level knowledge of English speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

The SDAIE methodology borrows from ESL strategies and emphasizes the use of realia, manipulatives, visuals, and graphic organizers, with plentiful

opportunities for peer interaction. Such multiple representations of information help ELLs understand academic content. One of the most important aspects emphasized in the SDAIE methodology is the use of collaborative and cooperative learning groups. Teachers are also asked to scaffold student learning through small-group instruction and the use of students' native language as appropriate; in this model, teachers are facilitators who guide students to learn academic content through the use of strategies.

Dual language strategies

Bilingual Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (BCIRC)

As noted, the transition into mainstream English classrooms from a classroom where an ELL's native language was used can be difficult. The Bilingual Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (BCIRC) program was designed to help students develop proficiency and literacy in their first language and then successfully transition into English. Adapted from the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) program designed for monolingual English speakers (Stevens & Durkin, 1992), BCIRC uses explicit instruction in reading comprehension, language and literacy activities, and integrated language arts and writing tasks (Calderon, Hertz-Lazarowitz, & Slavin, 1998). Designed for grades two through five, BCIRC focuses primarily on second and third grades, the years in which most transitional programs move students from native language to English instruction.

BCIRC integrates language arts instruction and writing into teacher instruction and encourages students to work together to share background knowledge and capitalize on their prior experiences (Calderon et. al., 1998). The student activities are culturally relevant and help build background knowledge and vocabulary prior to reading texts. Students have multiple opportunities to develop English in the classroom while their teachers use students' first-language knowledge of language development to scaffold their English language development. BCIRC gives students many opportunities for reading and language development, writing exercises, vocabulary activities, comprehension work, and narrative skill-building. Interactive student activities incorporate reading, writing, speaking, listening and thinking skills in students' native and second languages.

The main features of BCIRC

- *Grouping and teaming:* Students collaborate within and among reading groups, which allows students of varying reading abilities to learn from each other.
- *Basal-related activities:* Conducted before, during and after reading activities, a set of 13 activities helps students engage meaningfully with texts (see Appendix B for activity list).
- *Assessment:* Every third class period, on average, students take a comprehension assessment based on the story they read. The assessment includes writing meaningful sentences for vocabulary words and an oral reading component. The results gauge student performance and guide further instruction.
- *Homework:* Students must read a book at home and complete an in-class book report every two weeks. Parents are encouraged to discuss the books with their children.

A number of studies examining the effects of BCIRC on ELL outcomes in Spanish and English reading have shown that students who spend more years in the program tend to demonstrate higher English reading performance levels, and have a greater tendency to meet criteria for exit from bilingual education (Calderon et al., 1998). Second graders in the study who were taught primarily in Spanish tended to perform significantly better in Spanish writing than did comparison students. Additionally, studies of Success for All (Slavin & Madden, 2001), a program that uses BCIRC components, have also demonstrated positive results for ELLs; that is, positive effect sizes in favor of the ESL version of Success for All were found. This work suggests that BCIRC may help Spanish-speaking ELLs in transitional language programs move into English use successfully.

Improving Literacy Transitional Instructional Program (ILTIP)

Like BCIRC, this instructional method supports ELLs in transitional bilingual programs in developing the English language skills necessary for school success. The method is based on four theoretical principles:

- Provide students with academic challenges;
- Ensure continuity across grades and content;

- Make connections between students' background knowledge and new information; and
- Ensure that the program is comprehensive, multi-dimensional, and focused on all aspects of language development using multiple instructional techniques (Saunders, 1999; Saunders & Goldenberg, 2001).

ILTIP is a four-year transition program developed in response to research findings that the period of transition is crucial for ELLs' achievement and that research on effective transitional programs is lacking (Saunders, 1999). The transition program begins in second and third grades and extends through grade five. (The focus in kindergarten and grade one is on initial reading and writing proficiency in L1 and early production of oral English.) This multi-year program offers native language instruction as students progressively build English skills and ultimately transition to English-only instruction and re-designation as fluent.

Transition stages of ILTIP

- In the *Pre-transition* phase (optimally, grades 2 and 3) students receive grade-appropriate reading and writing instruction in L1 and instruction in oral English development with a goal of having students perform at grade level in Spanish and capable of conversational English by the end of third grade so that they can then qualify for transition.
- In *Transition I* (optimally, grade 4), students focus on initial reading and writing and academic oral language skills, with a goal of having students demonstrate proficiency in grade-appropriate reading and writing in L1, growth in English reading and writing, and proficiency in oral academic English language use. Students continue to receive L1 literacy support.
- The goal of *Transition II* (optimally, grade 5) is for students to decode and comprehend fifth-grade level material in English and prepare to join mainstream English classes, re-designated from Limited English Proficient (LEP) to Fluent English Proficient (FP). Students are encouraged to pursue L1 literacy, but explicit L1 instruction ceases and language arts instruction is conducted exclusively in English (Saunders, 1999).

The program incorporates L2 instructional components in three main areas—literature study, skill-building, and English language development—to address the needs of ELLs as they transition into full English instruction.

- *Literature study:* Students study literature during all program phases (pre-transition through transition II). The four elements of literature study are: (a) literature units which build students' relationship between their experiences and the texts; (b) literature logs for student writing activities; (c) instructional conversations that give students an opportunity for ongoing discussion and oral language practice; and (d) culminating writing projects that develop students' understanding of the literature unit and their knowledge of the writing process.
- *Skill-building* elements incorporate direct instruction and opportunities to engage with text: (a) comprehension strategies; (b) assigned independent reading; (c) dictation; (d) writing conventions; and (e) English language development through literature, a 45-minute period of daily oral English delivered in small-group instruction during the pre-transition phase.
- *English language development* is supported through (a) daily student reading, during which students can choose their own books, keep track of their reading, and complete activities such as summaries, presentations, etc.; (b) teacher read-alouds (20 minutes three times per week); and (c) interactive journals kept by students during the Transition I phase to encourage their initial attempts at writing in English.

Research on 61 schools which implemented this method generated promising results for its effectiveness in improving ELLs' achievement outcomes. Students in participating schools demonstrated both higher L1 and English literacy than did students in non-participating schools. In addition, larger numbers of students who received instruction through the ILTIP method demonstrated positive attitudes toward L1 literacy and literacy practices such as independent reading and library use. Perhaps the most promising finding was that participating schools doubled the percentage of students eligible for transition at the end of third grade, and tripled the reclassification rate at the end of fifth grade (Saunders, 1999). Other research on specific aspects of the program, including literature logs and instructional conversations, suggest that these practices positively affected students' understanding of story themes and their ability to interpret and write about the stories they read (Saunders &

Goldenberg, 1999). The ILTIP program has promise in helping ELLs in transitional bilingual classrooms develop the English language necessary for success in mainstream English classrooms and in providing transitional bilingual teachers with guidelines for effective instruction.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relationship between L1 and L2 and the implications of that relationship for ELLs' academic outcomes have been the topic of much discussion. State and district policies on the language of instruction have been fraught with debate. Indeed, as the research covered in this report suggests, the type of instructional program used for English language learners can positively influence their language development in English and, in some cases, their native language as well.

Acquiring literacy skills in a second language is similar to acquiring them in the first language. With exposure to appropriate and specialized instruction, ELLs who are literate in their first language can apply their literacy skills in the second language to acquire content knowledge. However, even a student who is proficient in his or her first language may face difficulties associated with the degree of overlap between the first and second languages and the acquisition of second language literacy skills. A host of factors influence whether students can apply L1 skills in the process of acquiring English language skills, among them:

- writing conventions (e.g., whether both languages are alphabetic),
- text directionality (whether text proceeds from left to right in both languages),
- common orthographic elements (whether L1 and L2 are based on the same script),
- orthographic conventions for representing similar and different sounds,
- commonalities in the sounds of the two languages, and
- similarities in semantic elements or cognates (i.e., words with shared origins in another language, such as similarities between English and Spanish words that share origins in Latin).

In recent years, a handful of scientific studies have examined differences in ELLs' academic achievement in the context of the instructional methods discussed here. Some studies have examined the influence of language instruction in the course of looking at student outcomes in the context of other socio-cultural factors. Results differ. For example, one study found that

students in programs that use Spanish language instruction scored higher on Spanish language outcomes, while students in English-only programs scored higher on English language outcomes (Reese, Goldenberg, & Saunders, 2006). Another study (Rolla et al., 2006) of the relationship between the language of instruction and outcomes in English showed that students who received instruction in Spanish could demonstrate the influence of their Spanish knowledge on their English phonological awareness skills. Rolla and colleagues also found that students with large vocabularies in either English or Spanish demonstrated higher outcomes on English phonemic segmentation. These results show a relationship between students' proficiency in L1 and outcomes in L2 and may be of assistance when making instructional decisions for ELLs.

Understanding the implications of using dual language, transitional, or English-only instructional programs and the differences in what they provide helps ensure that ELLs get the type of instruction they need to learn English and succeed academically. Given the current state of policies and the relative paucity of research on instruction for ELLs, reaching decisions about the best instructional programs for ELLs is increasingly difficult. We need further research to clarify which instructional program best promote ELLs' English language development, literacy, and academic achievement. Goldenberg (2008) summarized three points which seem to best characterize the literature on instructional models for ELLs to date:

- incorporating instruction in English language learners' first language appears to promote their literacy achievement in English;
- instructional strategies that have proven effective for monolingual English speakers also appear to be effective for ELLs; and
- instructional strategies may have to be modified for ELLs (e.g., in pacing, complexity of vocabulary, comprehension supports) given that they are still learning English.

These findings lead us to recommend that decision-makers:

- focus on the language and literacy needs of their ELL students,
- ensure that schools use the most effective instructional strategies and curricula, and take into account the specific language needs of ELLs regardless of the instructional model selected for implementation.

Finally, Appendix A shows that although instructional programs for teaching ELLs may focus alternately on native language and English-only use, effective strategies have much in common:

- a focus on oral language development, such as opportunities to practice English in the classroom, building on students' background knowledge,
- cooperative learning,
- explicit instruction in the elements of English literacy,
- differentiated instruction,
- the use of graphic organizers as a comprehension strategy, and
- a focus on academic language.

Decision-makers should look both at the language of instruction (i.e., bilingual or English-only), and at an instructional program's specific elements to ensure that ELLs receive the optimal instruction to facilitate their English language and literacy development as well as their academic success.

REFERENCES

August, D. (2002). *Transitional programs for English language learners: Contextual factors and effective programming* (Report No. 58). Baltimore, MD: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk.

August, D., & Hakuta, K. (1997). *Improving schooling for language-minority children: A research agenda.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

August, D. L., & Shanahan, T. (2006). *Developing literacy in a second language: Report of the National Literacy Panel.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Baker, K., & de Kanter, A. (1981). *Effectiveness of bilingual education: A review of the literature* (Final draft report). Washington, DC: Office of Technical and Analytic Systems, U.S. Department of Education.

Berman, P., Chambers, J., Gandara, P., McLaughlin, B., Minicucci, C., Nelson, B., et al. (1992). *Meeting the challenge of language diversity: An evaluation of programs for pupils with limited English proficiency* (Executive Summary, Vol. 1). Berkeley, CA: BW Associates.

Branum-Martin, L., Mehta, P. D., & Fletcher, J. M. (2006). Bilingual phonological awareness: Multilevel construct validation among Spanish-speaking kindergartners in transitional bilingual education classrooms. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 98*(1), 170–181.

Calderon, M., & Slavin, R. E. (2001). Success for All in a two-way immersion school. In D. Christian & F. Genesee (Eds.), *Bilingual education* (pp. 27–40). Alexandria, VA: TESOL.

Calderon, M., Hertz-Lazarowitz, R., & Slavin, R. (1998). Effects of bilingual cooperative integrated reading and composition on students making the transition from Spanish to English reading. *The Elementary School Journal, 99*(2), 153–165.

Campos, J. (1995). The Carpinteria Preschool Program: A long-term effects study. In E. Garcia & B. McLaughlin (Eds.), *Meeting the challenge of linguistic and cultural diversity in early childhood education* (pp. 34–48). New York: Teachers College Press.

Chamot, A. U., & O'Malley, J. M. (1996). The cognitive academic language learning approach: A model for linguistically diverse classrooms. *The Elementary School Journal, 96*(3), 259–273.

Capps, R., Fix, M., Murray, J., Ost, J., Passel, J., & Herwantoro, S. (2005). *The new demography of America's schools: Immigration and the No Child Left Behind Act.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

Cisero, C. A., & Royer, J. M. (1995). The development and cross-language transfer of phonological awareness. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 20*(3), 275–303.

Cobo-Lewis, A. B., Eilers, R. E., Pearson, B. Z., & Umbel, V. C. (2002). Interdependence of Spanish and English knowledge in language and literacy among bilingual children. In D. K. Oller & R. E. Eilers (Eds.), *Language and literacy in bilingual children* (pp. 118–134). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Crawford, J. (2004). *Educating English language learners: Language diversity in the classroom.* Los Angeles, CA: Bilingual Educational Services, Inc.

Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power, and pedagogy.* Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Cummins, J. (1998). Immersion education for the millennium: What we have learned from thirty years of research on second language immersion. In M. Childs & R. M. Bostwick (Eds.), *Learning through two languages: Research and practice* (pp 34–58). Numazu, Japan: Katoh Gakuen.

De La Rosa, D., & Maw, C. (1990). *Latino education: A statistical portrait.* Washington, DC: National Council of La Raza.

Durgunoglu, A. Y. (2002). Cross-linguistic transfer in literacy development and implications for language learners. *Annals of Dyslexia, 52,* 189–204.

Durgunoglu, A. Y., Nagy, W. E., & Hancin-Bhatt, B. J. (1993). Cross-language transfer of phonological awareness. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 85*(3), 453–465.

Echevarria, J., Short, D., & Powers, K. (2006). School reform and standards-based education: A model for English-language learners, *Journal of Educational Research, 99*(4), 195–210.

Fernandez, R. M., & Nielsen, F. (1986). Bilingualism and Hispanic scholastic achievement: Some baseline results. *Social Science Research, 15*(1), 43–70.

Francis, D. J., Lesaux, N., & August, D. (2006). Language of instruction. In D. August & T. Shanahan (Eds.), *Developing in Second-Language Learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Genesee, F. (1999). *Program alternatives for linguistically diverse students* (Educational Practice Report No. 1). Washington, DC: Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence.

Genesee, F., Lindholm-Leary, K., Saunders, W., & Christian, D. (2006). *Educating English language learners: A synthesis of research evidence.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Gersten, R. (1996). Literacy instruction for language-minority students: The transition years. *The Elementary School Journal, 96*(3), 227–244.

Gersten, R., & Woodward, J. (1995). A longitudinal study of transitional and immersion bilingual education program in one district. *Elementary School Journal, 95*(3), 223–239.

Goldenberg, C. (1996). The education of language-minority students: Where are we, and where do we need to go? *The Elementary School Journal, 96*(3), 353–361.

Goldenberg, C. (Summer, 2008). Teaching English language learners: What the research does—and does not—say. *American Educator, 33*(2), 8–44.

Greene, J. P. (1997). *A meta-analysis of the effectiveness of bilingual education.* Austin: University of Texas, The Tomas Rivera Policy Institute.

Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition.* New York: Prentice-Hall.

Lindholm-Leary, K. J. (2001). *Dual language education.* Avon, UK: Multi-lingual Matters.

Lindholm-Leary, K. J., & Aclan, Z. (1991). Bilingual proficiency as a bridge to academic achievement: Results from bilingual/immersion programs. *Journal of Education, 173,* 99–113.

Linquanti, R. (1999). *Fostering academic success for English language learners: What do we know?* Oakland, CA: West Ed.

Lau v. Nichols, 414 U.S.C. 563. (1974).

Natriello, G., McDill, E. L., & Pallas, A. M. (1990). *Schooling disadvantaged children: Racing against catastrophe.* New York: Teachers College Press.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2004). *Language minority learners and their labor market indicators—recent trends.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved 9/21/04 from http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2004/2004009.pdf

Pang, E. S., & Kamil, M. L. (2004). Second language issues in early literacy and instruction. In O. Saracho & B. Spodek (Eds.), *Contemporary perspectives on language policy and literacy instruction in early childhood education.* Charlotte, NC: Information Age.

Ramirez, J. D. (1991). *Longitudinal study of structured English immersion strategy, early-exit and late-exit transitional bilingual education programs for language-minority children.* Washington, DC: Department of Education.

Reese, L., Goldenberg, C., & Saunders, W. (2006). Variations in reading achievement among Spanish-speaking children in different language programs: Explanations and confounds. *The Elementary School Journal, 106*(4), 363–385.

Restrepo, M. A., & Gray, S. (2007). Optimizing literacy in English language learners. *Seminars in Speech and Language, 28*(1), 25–34.

Rolstad, K., Mahoney, K.,. & Glass, G. V. (2005). The big picture: A meta-analysis of program effectiveness research on English language learners. *Educational Policy, 19*(4), 572–594.

Rolla, A., Carlo, M., August, D., & Snow, C. E. (2006). The role of language of instruction and vocabulary in the English phonological awareness of Spanish-English bilingual children. *Applied Psycholinguistics, 27,* 229–246.

Rossell, C. (2005). Teaching English through English. *Educational Leadership, 62*(4), 32–36.

Rossell, C. H., & Baker, K. (1996). The educational effectiveness of bilingual education. *Research in the Teaching of English, 30*(1), 7–69.

Rumberger, R. W., & Larson, K. A. (1998). Toward explaining differences in educational achievement among Mexican American language-minority students. *Sociology of Education, 71*(1), 68–92.

Saunders, W. M. (1999). Improving literacy achievement for English learners in transitional bilingual programs. *Educational Research and Evaluation, 5*(4), 345–381.

Saunders, W. M., & Goldenberg, C. (1999). Effects of instructional conversation and literature logs on limited- and fluent-English proficient students' story comprehension and thematic understanding. *The Elementary School Journal, 99*(4), 277–301.

Saunders, W. M., & Goldenberg, C. (2001). Strengthening the transition in transitional bilingual education. In D. Christian & F. Genesee (Eds.), *Bilingual Education.* Alexandria, VA: TESOL.

Short, D. J., & Fitzsimmons, S. (2007). *Double the work: Challenges and solutions to acquiring language and academic literacy for adolescent English language learners—A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York.* Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.

Short, D. J., & Echevarria, J. (2004). Using multiple perspectives in observations of diverse classrooms: The sheltered instruction observation protocol (SIOP). In H. C. Waxman, R. G. Tharp, & R. S. Hilberg (Eds.), *Observational research in US classrooms: New approaches for understanding cultural and linguistic diversity* (pp. 21–47). New York: Cambridge.

Slavin, R. E., & Cheung, A. (2005). A synthesis of research on language of reading instruction for English language learners. *Review of Educational Research, 75*(2), 247–284.

Slavin, R. E., & Madden, N. (2001) Effects of bilingual and English-as-a-second-language adaptations of Success for All on the reading achievement of students acquiring English. In R. Slavin & M. Calderon (Eds.), *Effective programs for Latino students* (pp. 207–230). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Stevens, R. J., & Durkin S. (1992). *Using student team reading and student team writing in middle schools: Two evaluations* (Report no. 36). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Research on Effective Schooling for Disadvantaged Students.

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (1997). *School effectiveness for language minority students.* Washington, D.C. National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.

U.S. Department of Education. (2002). *Executive summary: The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.* Washington, DC: Author.

Valdes, G. (1997). Dual-language immersion programs: A cautionary note concerning the education of language-minority students. *Harvard Educational Review, 67*(3), 391–429.

Willig, A. (1985). A meta-analysis of selected studies on the effectiveness of bilingual education. *Review of Educational Research, 55*(3), 269–317.

APPENDIX A: INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND STRATEGIES

Method	Age group preference	English language knowledge required	Native language use	Purpose	Program elements	Instructional strategies
CALLA	Upper elementary, secondary		Limited: Focus is on developing students' use of English	Engage students in self-reflection on learning processes to become more effective learners	Important content topics; academic language developed within content areas; explicit instruction in learning strategies for language development and content knowledge Stages: 1. Preparation 2. Presentation 3. Practice 4. Evaluation 5. Expansion	Learner-centered instruction; teacher as facilitator: students build on existing knowledge and make new connections; opportunities to make meaningful connections to material; opportunities to develop language through peer interaction; student responsibility for learning; questioning, positive self-talk
SIOP	Upper elementary, secondary	Students need intermediate knowledge of English to truly benefit	Limited: focus is on developing students' use of English	Make content comprehensible to students; promote English language development; instruction in academic English skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking	Stages: 1. Preparation 2. Building background 3. Comprehen-sible input 4. Strategies (explicit teaching, scaffolding, learning strategies) 5. Interaction 6. Practice/ application 7. Lesson delivery 8. Review/ assessment	Cooperative learning; reading comprehension strategies; differentiated instruction; language objectives in content-area classes; using background knowledge; content-related vocabulary; academic literacy practice

APPENDIX A: INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND STRATEGIES (continued)

Method	Age group preference	English language knowledge required	Native language use	Purpose	Program elements	Instructional strategies
SDAIE	All grades	Students need intermediate knowledge of English to truly benefit	Limited: Focus is on developing students' use of English; primarily used in English-only classrooms	Similar to sheltered instruction: provides ELLs with grade-appropriate academic content while promoting English language development	1. Cooperative and collaborative learning groups 2. Scaffolding learning in small groups 3. Teacher as facilitator as students learn to use strategies	Use of realia, manipulatives, visuals, graphic organizers; opportunities for interaction
BCIRC	Designed primarily for grades 2–5 Grades 2 and 3 through 5 and 6 (four year program)	Students should be nearing proficiency in English to transition into mainstream English classrooms	Native language used to scaffold English language development; activities incorporate reading, writing, speaking, listening and thinking skills in both L1 and L2	To help English language learners transition successfully into mainstream English-only classrooms	1. Grouping and teaming 2. Basal-related activities 3. Assessment 4. Homework	Teacher instruction of concepts; language arts instruction integrated with writing; interaction with peers; oral language practice; culturally relevant activities; build and sharing background knowledge and vocabulary; capitalize on students' prior experiences; opportunities for English language development; opportunities for reading and language development; writing exercises; vocabulary activities; building comprehension; building narrative skill; integrates language and academic concept development

APPENDIX A: INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND STRATEGIES (continued)

Method	Age group preference	English language knowledge required	Native language use	Purpose	Program elements	Instructional strategies
ILTIP		Provides instruction to students in native language; English is not necessary during the first year; transition into English over time	Native language instruction during first year; students need to demonstrate continued native-language proficiency in reading and writing; native language support in second and third year; no native language instruction in final program year	To provide support to ELLs' language and literacy development as they transition from native language instruction into English-only instruction	1. Pre-transition 2. Transition I 3. Transition II	Literature units focus on student's background experiences; writing activities; instructional conversations for oral language practice; explicit instruction; opportunities to engage with text; comprehension strategies; independent reading; dictation; lesson in writing conventions; English language development activities in literature; small-group instruction; reading for pleasure; teacher read-alouds; interactive journals

APPENDIX B: BILINGUAL COOPERATIVE INTEGRATED READING AND COMPOSITION (BCIRC) ACTIVITIES[5]

1. Building background and vocabulary
2. Making predictions
3. Reading a selection
4. Partner reading
5. Treasure hunt: story comprehension
6. Story mapping
7. Story retell
8. Story-related writing
9. Words out loud and spelling
10. Partner checking
11. Meaningful sentences
12. Direct instruction in reading comprehension
13. Writing workshops

[5] This program is described on page 15

CENTER ON
INSTRUCTION