

**SPECIALLY DESIGNED ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH
(SDAIE) FOR LANGUAGE MINORITY STUDENTS**

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The growth of linguistic and ethnic minority students in U.S. schools has challenged educators to rethink basic assumptions about schooling (Olson, 2010; Crawford, 2004; Cummins, 1994; Ovando & Collier, 1985). Instructional programs based on models that subscribe to the notion that students share the same cultural background, speak the same language, and have the same academic preparation are not meeting the needs of today's students.

The purpose of this paper is to propose that when limited-English-proficient students (now called English Learners in various literature) participate in well-designed, well-implemented programs of instruction, they can successfully acquire English and they may reach satisfactory levels of competence in academic areas as well (Crawford, 1994; Crawford, A.N. 2005). One successful approach at providing comprehensible subject matter input and English language acquisition in classes with limited-English-proficient students is the increased use of "specially designed academic instruction in English" (SDAIE) (Peregoy & Boyle, 2008).

The organization of this paper is as follows: First a brief overview of educational programs for limited-English-proficient students is provided. This is followed by a description of SDAIE driven instruction including desirable implementation characteristics. The role of the student's primary language in SDAIE driven instruction is then addressed followed by a discussion of the teaching skills required of SDAIE instructional personnel. Finally, the paper discusses techniques used in the SDAIE classroom and socio-cultural factors affecting second language learning student's achievement.

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, schools were designed to educate three distinct populations of students: those students who were capable of completing advanced graduate studies; those students who

completed college study and obtained white-collar employment; and blue collar or laborer who may or may not have graduated from high school (Díaz-Rico, Weed, 1995). Those who were not successful in school generally could find a place in society, though not always with the guarantee of a secure employment future (Betances, 1986). For the most part, those students who found professional or specialist positions in society reflected a similar cultural background, that of the white middle class. Schools also reflected, and often continue to reflect, the values and habits of the white middle class. It is not surprising, therefore, that students with matching backgrounds were the most successful.

Today's students come from diverse language, cultural, and nationality backgrounds. They, like their predecessors, have ambitions of obtaining economic and social success and many view school as the most significant vehicle in reaching these dreams. The question is, are schools accommodating them? The cultural construction of schools and classrooms may not ensure that all students have an equal educational opportunity. Culture is a part of the educational process that has been virtually invisible but can no longer remain so (Brown, 1987; Heath, 1986; Cummins, 1994, 2005). By understanding the influence that culture has on students, educators can prevent or at least reduce the unfair advantage those students who share the dominant culture have over those students whose cultures differ from the mainstream. Contemporary educators recognize that culture includes more than the habits and beliefs of students and teachers. The school itself fosters a culture in which the physical environment, daily routines, and social and academic integration of students with teachers and peers, advantage some and push away others. Educators need both a foundation of cultural awareness and the ability to acquire further awareness and knowledge of the backgrounds, habits and values of communities they serve. These community "funds of knowledge" can facilitate adaptations,

both school wide and in individual classrooms, which more effectively address the needs of diverse student populations (Moll, 1990; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978; Olson, 2010).

Past educational practices maintained an attitude of "Americanizing" the child of the non-English speaking residents and immigrants (Crawford, 1995). This practice continues into the present, though often less harsh in tone. Schools in the United States were traditionally designed to educate students whose native language was English. Students whose home language was other than English were expected to grasp both the scope and the sequence of the typical English curriculum at the same pace and with the same ease as the native speakers of English (Genzuck, 1988). This unrealistic expectation has led to frustration, confusion, and trauma for many language minority students, parents and educators. This sink-or-swim approach functioned simply: Those with the ability to understand English succeeded while those who could not understand sank into the torrent of the all-English curriculum. Luckily, those with poor English skills could often find adequate employment without advanced schooling. In today's technological society, however, those without schooling often obtain employment merely at minimum wage, and jobs at the high end of the wage scale are well beyond their grasp. The well paying assembly line, agricultural or manual labor employment opportunities have been replaced by minimum wage fast food and service positions (Gold, 1992).

In this sink-or-swim approach, there is a widespread failure on the part of teachers and program designs to understand the role of language in learning and a lack of understanding about the language acquisition process. The traditional belief is that exposure to English is the means to learn it. More is considered better (Cummins, 1994). More exposure to the English language will result in a more rapid advancement by students. If schools recognized a need for English

language instruction, such instruction often took on a compensatory demeanor. Language minority students were labeled as deficient and remediation programs were prescribed. English as a second language (ESL) was considered a remedial curriculum (Cummins, 1994). These programs usually emphasized grammar, spelling and pronunciation, all of which had to be mastered before the student was allowed to explore the academic curriculum.

Unfortunately history tells us that the majority of students in these programs did not succeed in public schools. Historical review suggests that for every one that “made it” there were hundreds who did not make it (Betances, 1986; Crawford, 1995, 2005). Then why do we have these beliefs about our ancestors that so many made it without special programs or assistance? Scientists refer to it as selection bias. This perspective suggests that we have heard from those who made it, those who made it tell us about it. They write books, they write letters to the editor, or appear on television and radio. They have the ability to describe their success stories. Those who didn’t make it do not tell us about their histories of failure. Why? Because they can’t, they don’t have the skills or the ability to share their stories (Krashen, 1994, Betances, 1986).

To illustrate this inability to educate language minority students we must also recognize the large number of these students amassed in our secondary schools who despite being close to the age at which they should be able to graduate, are still not English proficient and have incurred major academic deficits. This students are now labeled “Long Term English Learners”. The majority of secondary school English learners are indeed “Long Term English Learners” - in United States schools for more than six years without reaching sufficient English proficiency to be redesignated as fluent proficient - (Olson, 2010).

For all language minority students, there should be an opportunity to develop a far greater degree of facility in the target language than is the case when participating in traditional programs. The opportunity to actually study meaningful content material via the target language and to interact socially as well as academically with native speakers of the language offers numerous benefits (Cummins, 1994; Willig, 1985; Hakuta, 1986). In addition, for the language minority student the opportunity to spend some portion of the day nurturing and sustaining mother-tongue skills provides academic benefits as well (Krashen & Biber, 1988; Cummins, 1994; Willig, 1985; Hakuta, 1986).

Comprehensive second language school programs for these English learners based upon sound principles for more effectively meeting the needs of these students can be applied across contexts, understanding that the actual program that can be mounted in any one school or district will differ depending on the numbers of students, dispersal across district sites, and capacity. Components of a quality program may include specialized English Language Development (ELD) strategies, clustered placement in heterogeneous and rigorous grade-level content classes mixed with English proficient students and taught with differentiated SDAIE strategies, explicit language and literacy development across the curriculum, native speakers classes for flexibility and movement as students progress, systems for monitoring progress and triggering support, and a school-wide focus on study skills, among other components.

What goes on inside these classrooms is crucial. Placing students with language needs and academic gaps into rigorous courses with high-level content depends upon instruction that is designed and adapted to their unique needs. This paper focuses on the SDAIE instructional characteristics and strategies that can add to a collective response to this urgent challenge.

WHAT IS SDAIE?

Studies investigating second language acquisition emphasize the importance that comprehensible second language instruction plays in providing the cognitive foundations needed for students' academic success (Krashen & Biber, 1988). Linguists suggest that we all acquire language the same way, by understanding messages. The idea that we acquire language by understanding messages, or comprehensible input, clarifies what the role of the second language classroom should be. We acquire language not when we memorize vocabulary lists or do grammar exercises, but when we understand what people say to us or what we read. Moreover, an emphasis on grammar, spelling, and accurate pronunciation is secondary to the primary purpose of language instruction, to teach students to understand, communicate and to function successfully in society (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). To acquire language, we need to understand what is said, not how it is said. The best language lessons are therefore interesting conversations, good books, films, and activities that are fun and engaging. A variety of situations in which we are absorbed in the meaning of what is said to us or what we read. Given messages we understand, or comprehensible input, language acquisition is nearly inevitable, our brains cannot help but acquire language (Krashen, 1988). To help students attain their educational goals, educators now need a foundation of language acquisition principles and knowledge of effective and appropriate language acquisition methodologies in order to adapt instruction to the needs of our language minority students. Additionally, language and academic development are enhanced when a respect for and incorporation of a student's primary language is included in the instructional model (Lambert, 1980; Genesee, 1987).

One of the major issues considered in the acquisition of English as a second language is the extent of access to the core curriculum during that process (Crawford, 1994). A study of programs designed for limited-English-proficient students in California suggests that most limited-English-proficient students, especially those in middle and senior high schools, did not have access to aspects of the core curriculum that would permit them to advance to college preparatory courses or to receive a diploma (Berman, Chambers, Gandara, McLaughlin, Minicucci, Nelson, Olsen, & Parrish, 1992; Olson, 2010). They were usually grouped together in numerous ESL classes that focused exclusively on language, not core curriculum.

Specially designed academic instruction in the content areas of the curriculum in the second language adds substantially to the knowledge and vocabulary that students need as a base for comprehension as they read and think in any language (Krashen, 1985). California now uses the terms ELD (English language development) and SDAIE (specially designed academic instruction in English) to replace ESL (English as a second language) and sheltered instruction. This change has been implemented to more clearly differentiate the teaching of language through content (ELD) from the teaching of content through language that second language students can understand (SDAIE). In both cases, the theoretical model indicates that language and content can be developed together if teachers use the needed techniques to make the input comprehensible (Freeman, & Freeman, 1995). SDAIE is defined as the teaching of grade-level subject matter in English specifically designed for speakers of other languages. This approach applies to all aspects of instruction, including planning, classroom management, lesson delivery, and assessment. It is most appropriate for students who have reached an appropriate level of proficiency in English (speaking, comprehension, reading and writing) and who possess basic literacy skills in their own language (California Dept. of Education, 1993, 2009). On the surface

many will see this description as being synonymous with “sheltered English”. SDAIE is broader in its support of the core curriculum. In the SDAIE approach, language is viewed as the vehicle for content instruction and content instruction as the vehicle for language instruction. In other words teachers plan lessons not only to meet curricular objectives related to content but also to include appropriate language objectives for their students.

SDAIE is appropriate for students who have met the following criteria (California Dept. of Education, 1993):

- A threshold English language proficiency (including mastery at specified levels of reading and writing skills as well as oral skills)- intermediate and above,
- Primary language literacy, and
- Appropriate academic content background - different subjects by age/grade.

Additionally, SDAIE is an approach recommended for instructors who possess the competency to make lesson content comprehensible and relevant to limited-English-proficient students with intermediate English fluency (Calif. Dept. of Education, 1993). This approach emphasizes the development of grade-level to advanced academic competencies and should be viewed as one component among many within a comprehensive program. It is used as a bridge between primary language instruction and placement in mainstream English.

Distinctive characteristics exist that describe desirable application of the SDAIE approach and the strategies that are employed in its implementation. Table 1 provides some of these desirable characteristics:

Table 1**Desirable Characteristics in Implementing SDAIE**

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- Cooperative and thematic learning environments;
 - Teacher delivery that contextualizes content using comprehensible input and uses techniques such as rephrasing and paraphrasing;
 - A variety of interactive strategies including student to student, student to teacher, student to text, and student to self (reflection, self-evaluation);
 - Careful planning of the environment, instruction, and materials;
 - Identification and selection of focus concepts that integrate student learning;
 - Facilitating a connection of focus concepts to students' experiences, knowledge, and needs to know;
 - Selection of scaffolds to assist students' engagement and performance (social-affective, linguistic, cognitive-academic, metacognitive-metalinguistic);
 - Continuous observation, monitoring, and assessment leading to teachers' modifications of instructional procedures and to students' increasing autonomy;
 - Encourage free voluntary reading and the use of fiction across the curriculum to supplement related subject matter teaching.
 - Multicultural development and awareness and the validation of diversity.
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THE ROLE OF PRIMARY LANGUAGE

The role of primary language is vital and strategic in SDAIE classes. The first language can help in the development of literacy in the second language (Cummins, 2005). For example once a student learns to read in the primary language, their mechanical knowledge of reading rapidly transfers to other language they acquire. And once the reading ritual is established, acquisition of the procedures, usages and customs of writing can rapidly take place (Krashen,

1988). Similarly, once students discover how their primary language can be used to solve problems and help thinking, they can easily learn to use a second language in the same way. Literacy related abilities are much easier to develop in the primary language. Once they are developed, they can be applied to any other language the student acquires. There is a common underlying proficiency associated with literacy that can be used in all the languages a student knows (Cummins, 1994). Students do not have to re-learn content material they have acquired in their primary language, they simply need to acquire the second language vocabulary to describe it.

Primary language literacy is considered to be the link to content area access and core curriculum. The more highly developed literacy skills students have in their primary language, the more they will benefit from SDAIE classes (Krashen, 1994; Cummins, 1994).

Three key areas should be considered when planning instructional programs for limited-English-proficient students. (1) Students in SDAIE classes should have access to content area materials and resources in the primary language. (2) When a student is placed in a SDAIE class, primary language instructional support personnel should be available to provide a direct connection to the content. (3) In order to maximize instruction, every effort should be made to cluster students by linguistic and academic needs (California Dept. of Education, 1993).

Under specific circumstances, including multiple language settings or situations in which primary language instruction is not possible, a variety of instructional strategies will be necessary to meet student language and academic needs. When access to the core curriculum is not possible through direct primary language instruction, other resources should be used in order to provide as much core access as possible. These include both human and material resources as suggested below in Table 2.

Table 2**Additional Resources Available to Provide Primary Language Access to Core Curriculum**

Human Resources:	Material Resources:
bilingual instructional staff, community language schools and other community agencies, on-line classes volunteer speakers of target languages peer and cross-age tutors, teacher teams in other grades/schools, college student tutors	primary language texts, trade books, and reference books, periodicals audio and video recordings, on-line classes and instructional offerings primary language computer programs, distance learning experiences, global learning networks, wikis and listservs CD-DVD'S with various language tracks, podcasts interactive video and multimedia

SDAIE TEACHERS

The needs of limited-English-proficient students and the needs of mainstream students may be quite different. To address these unique needs the teacher of SDAIE requires additional training in language development as well as knowledge of the content area curriculum (Echevarria & Graves, 2007; Peregoy & Boyle, 2008) Providing the same robust curriculum and using the appropriate strategies and materials means adaptations must be made to meet those needs. Traditional teaching approaches alone are not sufficient for limited-English-proficient students. They do not necessarily adapt instructional strategies and materials to meet student's linguistic needs or utilize their prior experience. There is an on-going concern among language development teachers that adaptation too often is interpreted to mean "dumbing down" of texts and concepts (Cummins, 1994; Olson, 2010). This must be avoided for SDAIE is not a watered

down curriculum and is not a substitute for English language development (ELD) and content instruction. The difference between SDAIE and content-based ESL is the focus. Content-based ESL is an approach that is used to develop English language proficiency through the use of concepts and themes from various subject areas. This approach emphasizes English language development rather than content. SDAIE emphasizes developing knowledge in content areas and learning English language is a desired by-product (Genzuk, 2011). Maintaining the rigor of the curriculum, SDAIE provides elaboration and enrichment of grade level subject matter. SDAIE needs to be distinguished from mainstream instruction. It is only one component of a full instructional program that includes primary language, English language development, and mainstream instruction for limited-English-proficient students. It is not a stand-alone program.

SDAIE is usually an instructional component within a bilingual or English language instructional program that includes a variety of instructional strategies and methods. These strategies might include: whole language, cooperative learning, and comprehensible language input to help make subject matter instruction in English understandable for limited-English-proficient students. SDAIE is most appropriate for students who have achieved primary language literacy skills, and have reached intermediate levels of proficiency in English that permits them to benefit from this type of instruction. The overriding goal of SDAIE is to make the grade level core curriculum comprehensible, meaningful and challenging to limited-English-proficient students whose English proficiency is at the intermediate level. Language minority students realize equal educational opportunity through a comprehensive program of instruction where English language development is accompanied by access to the core curriculum through primary language instruction (Cummins, 1994).

TECHNIQUES USED IN THE SDAIE CLASSROOM

In SDAIE lessons the subject matter and the delivery of the lessons use as many extra-linguistic clues and modifications as possible. The primary objective is to provide comprehensible input. In other words to make sure that what people say to the students or what they read is understood (Krashen, 1988). Providing background knowledge is a powerful means of making lessons and materials understood. Background knowledge may be provided through the student's first language. When using English as the medium of instruction teachers may change their speech register by slowing down, limiting their vocabulary and sentence length, by repeating, emphasizing, and explaining key concepts, and by using examples, props, visual clues and body language to convey and reinforce meaning. There are several other strategies that provide "scaffolding", or assisted instruction, in which the teacher and learner engage in a series of interactions that ultimately lead to instances of actual learning for limited-English-proficient students in SDAIE programs. These techniques will make subject matter instruction more comprehensible. Below is a synthesis of some suggested techniques for the SDAIE classroom that can enhance the provision of comprehensible input (adapted from Sullivan, 1992):

- **Increase wait time, be patient.** Give your students time to think and process the information before you provide answers. A student may know the answers but need more processing time in order to say it in English.
- **Respond to the student's message, don't correct errors (Expansion).** If a student has the correct answer and it is understandable, don't correct his or her grammar. The exact word and correct grammatical response will develop with time. Instead, repeat his or her answer, putting it into standard English, use positive reinforcement techniques.

- **Simplify teacher language.** Speak directly to the student, emphasizing important nouns and verbs, using as few extra words as possible. Repetition and speaking louder doesn't help; rephrasing, and body language does.
- **Don't force oral production.** Instead, give the student an opportunity to demonstrate his or her comprehension and knowledge through body actions, drawing pictures, manipulating objects, or pointing. Speech will emerge.
- **Demonstrate, use visuals and manipulatives.** Whenever possible, accompany your message with gestures, pictures, and objects that help get the meaning across. Use a variety of different pictures or objects for the same idea. Give an immediate context for new words. Understanding input is the key to language acquisition.
- **Make lessons sensory activities.** Give students a chance to touch, listen, smell and taste when possible. Talk about the words that describe these senses as students physically experiences lesson. Write new words as well as say them.
- **Pair or group students with native speakers.** Much of a student's language acquisition comes from interacting with peers. Give students tasks to complete that require interaction of each member of the group, but arrange it so that the student has linguistically easier tasks. Utilize cooperative learning techniques in a student-centered classroom.

- **Adapt the materials to student’s language level, maintain content integrity.** Don’t “water down” the content. Rather, make the concepts more accessible and comprehensible by adding pictures, charts, maps, time-lines, and diagrams, in addition to simplifying the language.

- **Increase your knowledge.** Learn as much as you can about the language and culture of your students. Go to movies, read books, look at pictures of the countries. Keep the similarities and differences in mind and then check your knowledge by asking your students whether they agree with your impressions. Learn as much of the student’s language as you can; even a few words help.

- **Build on the student’s prior knowledge.** Find out as much as you can about how and what a student learned in his or her country. Then try to make a connection between the ideas and concepts you are teaching and the student’s previous knowledge or previous way of being taught. Encourage the students to point out differences and connect similarities.

- **Support the student’s home language and culture; bring it into the classroom.** An important goal should be to encourage the students to keep their home languages as they also acquire English. Let students help bring about a multicultural perspective to the subjects you are teaching. Encourage students to bring in pictures, poems, dances, proverbs, or games. Encourage students to bring these items in as part of the subject you

are teaching, not just as a separate activity. Do whatever you can to help your fluent English-speaking students see all students as knowledgeable persons from a respected culture.

Text Characteristics for SDAIE Compatible Instructional Materials

Studies have shown that SDAIE teaching results in both subject matter learning as well as impressive amounts of language acquisition (Crawford, A.N., 2005; Edwards, 1984; Lafayette & Buscaglia, 1985). With the focus of SDAIE lessons on subject matter teaching, text materials play a significant role in the acquisition of language and subject matter materials. Teachers have often constructed their own materials to address the specific needs of English-language-learners. However, there now exist many commercial materials that are specially designed to aid in acquiring necessary content and skills in cross-curricular areas. The following checklist will help you select appropriate text materials for your ESL/ELL students.

- Does this text enhance access through comprehensible input?
- Do the visuals match the text on the page to better illustrate abstract concepts?
- Are there supplemental visual supports through posters, study-prints, overhead transparencies, photos, reproductions of documents, textbook illustrations, internet graphics, PowerPoints, video, and CD-DVD programs on computer?
- Is the student's prior background elicited and utilized to aid comprehension? How?
- Do the materials build background through discussion, hands-on experiences, literature examples, and/or demonstrations?

- For students who are beginning and early intermediate learners of English, are there captions, headings, or margin notes that allow for some very basic reading of the main points of the text?
- Are there prepared questions for students at all levels of English proficiency so that everyone is engaged in the lesson and the teacher is checking for understanding of all levels of students?
- Are there study aids such as graphic organizers, matrices, webs, Venn diagrams, story maps, and class-note outlines? Do students have the use of bilingual dictionaries?
- Is there a preview of the instructional material in the student's primary language through recorded summary, video, CD/DVD or other multimedia?
- Are there ways for students to demonstrate their understanding that do not require a native-like level of English proficiency? What are they?
- How are families informed of the student's progress? Are there alternatives for homework that students with limited English proficiency can actually do? What are they?
 - (adapted from Jimenez, 1992).

It is important to note that if teachers take into account the importance of teaching language through content, making the input comprehensible, and getting students to work together collaboratively, a new view of curriculum emerges. Teachers can no longer simply use a set of techniques to make their lectures more comprehensible. Considering the earlier mentioned characteristics in implementing SDAIE, teachers must also consider restructuring their classrooms to ensure that students are actively involved in working together to solve problems.

During this process, students are more likely to develop the language needed for academic success (Freeman & Freeman, 1995; Echevarria & Graves, 2007; Peregoy & Boyle, 2008).

SOCIOCULTURAL DETERMINANTS OF STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

Language is not the only significant variable in the success of limited-English-proficient students (Cummins, 1988; Cortés, 1986). Cummins suggests that socio-cultural determinants of minority student's school failure are more fundamental than linguistic factors. Bilingual or specially designed academic instruction is merely part of the educational intervention that is necessary. Education should remove the racial and linguistic stigmas of being a minority student. Schools tend to perpetuate messages about minority student's social position. In reaction, these students frequently exhibit what Cummins calls "bicultural ambivalence," or shame of the home culture and hostility toward the second (Cummins, 1994). One example of this would be the language minority student that fails to speak his/her home language, even when their English proficiency is inadequately developed.

By contrast, SDAIE has social as well as academic benefits. It is based on concepts, theories, and hypotheses that have their roots in the notion of providing relevancy and meaning to lessons as well as taking pride in one's cultural background. This concept recognizes that status relations between minority and majority groups exert a major influence on school performance. The lower the status of a group, the lower the academic achievement (Crawford, 2005).

SDAIE builds on the student's prior knowledge and brings the student's home language and culture into the classroom. This key concept emphasizes the social dimension of learning that results from the support of parents and family, community members and other caregivers (Tharp

& Gallimore, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978). These other capable teachers are utilized by tapping into their “funds of knowledge” (Moll, 1990), the socio-historical background and knowledge they possess, and exploiting the relevant role they play in the students life. These funds of knowledge are brought into the classroom and embedded into SDAIE lessons. The collective wisdom of both the significant others and the teacher are far more meaningful and interesting to students. This not only increases the attention to lessons by students, but also elevates the status of the minority group hence providing a key ingredient to Cummins framework for minority student achievement and majority group acceptance.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

When limited-English proficient students have intermediate English proficiency, they should be provided full access to the entire curriculum through the careful application of comprehensible language strategies in specially designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE). The focus of the instruction in early stages needs to be on enhancing comprehension through the pacing of teacher input and through the extensive use of nonverbal language, props, illustrations, realia, etc. Long Term English Learners need rigor. The curriculum provided to these students cannot be dumbed down. They need challenging, rigorous, relevant curricula along with the instructional strategies and targeted support based on individualized assessment that will enable them to succeed in a rigorous class (Olson, 2010).

SDAIE is most successful when students have acquired sufficient amounts of English that they can successfully negotiate thoughtful, relevant content that is not weakened or watered down. It is delivered in a manner that is sensitive to the linguistic needs and learning styles of

the students. Therefore, the term “sheltered” has been eliminated from much of the literature and replaced with SDAIE in order to preserve the intent of rigorous core curriculum instruction.

Student progress in English language acquisition, in the core academic curriculum, and in literacy is enhanced for students who have developed a high level of proficiency in the primary language, including listening, oral language, reading, and writing skills at cognitive/academic levels. In addition, background knowledge they develop from the core curriculum in the primary language and curricular connections to the student’s culture and background provides a strong base for learning in English.

Additionally specialized English Language Development course(s) are needed to develop “Academic Language” which focuses on powerful oral language development, explicit literacy development, instruction in the academic uses of English, high quality writing, extensive reading of relevant texts, and an emphasis on academic language and complex vocabulary.

Teaching subject matter to English Learners requires direct, explicit instruction on strategies needed to build vocabulary and comprehend grade-level texts and participate in discussion about the content. All classes should be designed for explicit language development and focus on academic language as needed for studying the specific academic content of the class. Although developing knowledge in the content areas is the main purpose of SDAIE, learning the English language is a valuable by-product.

Placing students with language needs and academic gaps into rigorous courses with high level content depends upon comprehensible instruction that is designed and adapted to their needs. Creating the right combination of course offerings and carefully placing and monitoring student success in these courses is a necessary and major component of providing the quality education that both Short Term, and Long Term English learners need and deserve.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT - Describes understandable and meaningful language directed at people acquiring a second language. Characteristics include focus on communicating a meaningful message rather than on language forms; frequent use of concrete contextual referents such as visuals, props, graphics, and realia; acceptance of the primary language use by the learner; minimal overt correction by instructor; and the establishment of positive and motivating learning environments.

CONTENT BASED ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) - An approach used to develop English language proficiency through the use of concepts and themes from various subject areas. This approach emphasizes English language development.

CONTEXTUALIZATION - Embedding language in a context by using manipulatives, pictures, gestures, and other types of realia to make it more meaningful for students.

CORE CURRICULUM - Those subjects that a student must master in order to be promoted to the next grade or to graduate. The implication is that the curriculum for these subject areas represents a core of knowledge that all students, regardless of language proficiency, must master.

CULTURAL BROKER - Someone who mediates between two or more cultures.

INTERACTIVE ENVIRONMENT - A classroom environment that is designed instructionally to utilize strategies such as cooperative and collaborative learning, to ensure interaction between students, students and texts, students and educational staff, and student and self.

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY - Includes mastery at specified levels of reading and writing skills as well as oral skills in a language.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) - A student whose proficiency in English has been determined to be limited according to state approved tests.

MODELING - Giving students clear examples of what is requested of them for imitation. Learners need to see or hear what a developing product looks like.

NEGOTIATION OF MEANING - Communicative interaction using comprehensible input and output that facilitates language acquisition and/or cognitive development. It occurs when participants find themselves in situations where they have a vested interest in understanding messages and having their own messages understood.

PRIMARY LANGUAGE - The first language of the student as documented by a “home language survey.”

PRIMARY LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION - The use of the student’s primary language for direct grade level instruction.

PRIMARY LANGUAGE LITERACY - The ability in the primary language to speak, read, write, and understand at the appropriate age/grade level of the student.

PRIMARY LANGUAGE SUPPORT - Any use of the primary language that enables students to understand terms and content and supports directly the content instruction that is to be delivered in the second language.

REALIA - Authentic objects and sources of information used as a resource for students to develop meaning from language.

SCAFFOLDING - Instruction or support mechanisms given in such a way that they enable students to safely take risks, handle tasks involving complex language, and reach for higher goals with the help of teachers or more capable peers. Scaffolds are temporary because as the teacher observes that students are capable of handling more on their own, she/he gradually hands over responsibility to them. The ideal scaffolds are support mechanisms that teachers build in order to enable their students to perform at higher levels than they are right now. Built into the concept of scaffolding is the idea of handing responsibility over to the learners for the kinds of activity they engage in. Types of instructional scaffolds include modeling, bridging, contextualization, schema building, metacognitive development, and text representations.

SCHEMAS - Clusters of meanings that are interconnected. Schema building is when new information is woven into pre-existing structures of meaning so that students see the connection through a variety of activities.

SDAIE - The teaching of grade-level subject matter in English specifically designed for speakers of other languages. It is most appropriate for students who have reached an appropriate level of proficiency in English (speaking, comprehension, reading and writing) and who possess basic literacy skills in their own language.

THRESHOLD LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY - The minimum level of language proficiency that allows a student to access a curriculum that is rich and rigorous and engages and fosters critical thinking and critical interaction.

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