

In this issue. . .

**IN THE NEWS:** News stories of interest this month.

**ELL UPDATE**

ELL NEWS BRIEFS: Big shake-ups possible for the education of ELLs in NYC and updates on the implementation of English-only initiatives in Massachusetts and Arizona.

**JUST THE FACTS**

THE FEDERAL BUDGET FOR ELLs FROM FY 2002 TO FY 2004: A look at the changes in federal funding for ELLs from FY2002 congressional appropriations to the President's FY2004 request.

**FROM THE STATES**

PROJECT BEGINNING: A LOW COST, EFFECTIVE EXAMPLE OF TEACHER TRAINING: Broward County's answer to fostering higher ELL achievement in the mainstream classroom.

**AT ISSUE**

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CALL MATERIALS: The components of computer-assisted second language learning and some applications to ELL classrooms.

~ ~ **IN THE NEWS** ~ ~

*Just cut and paste links into your browser to view stories.*

**English program limited to 5 years; 40% may be affected**

*St. Paul (Minn.) Pioneer Press - 2/20/03*

Funding cuts will limit the time that English Language Learners can stay in Minnesota programs.

<http://www.twincities.com/mld/pioneerpress/living/education/5218615.htm>

**Results mixed on ELL testing**

*St. Paul (Minn.) Pioneer Press - 2/25/03*

Districts, not students, worry over test results as funding hangs in the balance.

<http://www.twincities.com/mld/twincities/living/education/5254817.htm>

**English-only to be enforced next year**

*The Arizona Republic - 3/10/03*

Superintendent Horne's tighter regulations will allow only ELLs classified as "English speakers" to take native-language classes.

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/local/articles/0310englishOnly10.html>

**Flexibility sought on bilingual education**

*The Boston Globe* - 3/9/03

Massachusetts Latino community expresses concerns over implementation of Question 2.

[http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/068/learning/Flexibility\\_sought\\_on\\_bilingual\\_education+.shtml](http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/068/learning/Flexibility_sought_on_bilingual_education+.shtml)

~ ~    **ELL UPDATE**    ~ ~

ELL NEWS BRIEFS

**With Big Changes in NYC Schools, the Education of ELLs Still Undecided**

As part of the multi-year program called "Children First," introduced in January 2003, Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Klein will implement a new agenda for educating the students of New York City Schools. In a letter to parents from Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Klein, key facets of "Children First" were described:

- "Reorganization of the Department of Education's management structure into a unified, streamlined system dedicated to instruction and designed to drive resources from bureaucratic offices into the classroom." Chancellor Klein has already appointed ten regional superintendents to replace what were previously 40 districts, headed by 40 superintendents.
- "Adoption of a single, coherent system-wide approach for instruction in reading, writing, and math. . ." Except for the 200 highest achieving schools, city-wide curriculum and textbooks have been adopted for grades K-8. In addition, a full-time reading and math coach will be in every school to increase professional development for teachers.
- "Institution of a new parent support system to make schools more welcoming to students' families and to give you [the parents] the tools you need to be full partners in the education of your children." Details of this part of the plan include a Parent Coordinator in every school, and Parent Engagement Boards to replace the Community Schools Board in the 40 districts that have been dissolved.

The future of the Division of English Language Learners and Parent Outreach, headed up by Superintendent Edna Vega, is uncertain. Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Klein are expected to release a new plan for the education of New York City's ELLs around the middle of March.

**The Implementation of Question 2 and ELL MCAS Participation in Massachusetts**

Passed in November 2002, Question 2 is the Massachusetts version of an English-only initiative that has already been underway for a number of years in California and Arizona. For the most part, it completely dismantles bilingual education programs (except for limited use of waivers), and many school districts are struggling to purchase new textbooks and re-train teachers in structured immersion techniques. A document released by the Massachusetts Department of Education on January 31, 2003 is a "working draft" that provides school districts guidance in implementing Question 2.

The most important parts of "Questions and Answers Regarding Question 2: English Language Education in Public Schools" include:

- 1. Timeline for implementation.** Except for Section 7 (administration of standardized testing to ELLs), the entirety of Question 2 will not take effect until September of the 2003-2004 school year.
- 2. Time limitation on ELL enrollment in sheltered immersion.** Although Question 2 reads that ELLs shall be educated "during a temporary transition period not normally intended to exceed one school year," the Questions and Answers document goes on to say that "this language may not be interpreted to mean that there is a cap or limitation on the amount of time that an English learner may participate in a sheltered English immersion or any other type of language support program. . . Since students acquire proficiency in English at different rates, districts cannot limit to one year the provision of language support services to English learners who are not yet able to participate meaningfully in the district's programs."
- 3. Elements of effective sheltered immersion instruction.** This document cites ten important elements of sheltered immersion, based on the *Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)* developed by Deborah Short, Jane Echevarria, and Mary Ellen Vogt. (For more information on SIOP, see the January issue of this newsletter.) The most important include: lesson plans that include both content and language objectives based on the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, availability of supplementary materials that support content objectives and contextualize learning, and adaptation of content in texts to meet ELLs' proficiency levels.
- 4. ELL participation in standardized testing.** Both *No Child Left Behind* and Question 2 require districts to annually assess ELLs starting this school year. While awaiting an English proficiency assessment will be developed by 2004, school districts are to use CTB/McGraw-Hill's Language Assessment Scale – Reading and Writing (LAS-R/W) combined with the Massachusetts English Language Assessment – Oral (MELA-O). ELLs are also required to be assessed annually in subject matter, but a start date for this assessment is still undecided.
- 5. Teacher qualifications.** Question 2 only requires that teachers be "fluent and literate in English," but Title VI requires teachers to be trained to teach sheltered English immersion. This training includes either a current transitional bilingual education or ESL license and "assurance from the Superintendent that the individual has taken professional development courses in sheltered English immersion strategies, first and second language acquisition, using [Massachusetts] Department [of Education] guidelines."

### **The Strengthening of Arizona's Proposition 203**

In another piece of English-only news, Superintendent Tom Horne recently announced tighter regulations for use of waivers in Arizona schools. Saying that "Proposition 203 was not enforced. There are still plenty of bilingual education programs," Horne increased the level of English language proficiency necessary to take bilingual programs from a "3" to a "4" on a five point scale. In addition, Arizona will offer English language acquisition classes for half a day and subject area content for a half-day. "Even the half-day should be content-rich, so they are learning science and social studies while they are learning English. That is one of the areas that I want to push," Horne said in an interview with Michelle Adam, an *ELL Outlook* staff writer.

When asked what would occur if ELL students were unable to master English effectively after one year in sheltered immersion classes, Horne answered: "I am not sure I know what the answer would be. I would want to hear from the experts on that. From my point of view, that may be up to the schools."

Implementation of these new guidelines is slated for September of the 2003-2004 school year. The Arizona Department of Education will sponsor a seminar on best practices for academically successful English immersion this spring.

~ ~ **JUST THE FACTS** ~ ~

THE FEDERAL BUDGET FOR ELLS FROM FY 2002 TO FY 2004

*Below is a summary of funding changes between 2002, 2003, and 2004 for some of the major ELL programs run by the Department of Education. The figures from 2002 and 2003 are the final appropriations passed by Congress, and the 2004 figures are the requests recently sent by President Bush to Congress. The figures in parentheses are the percent change from the previous year. In recent years, Congress has appropriated more than the President has requested. FY 2004 may follow this same pattern.*

**FY 2002 Appropriation**

Reading First State Grants \$900,000,000  
Early Reading First \$75,000,000  
Total Reading First \$975,000,000  
Migrant (ESEA I-C) \$396,000,000  
English Language Acquisition (ESEA III) \$664,269,000  
Even Start \$250,000,000  
Title I \$10,350,000,000

**FY 2003 Appropriation**

Reading First State Grants \$986,762,000 (+9.6%)  
Early Reading First \$73,767,000 (-1.6%)  
Total Reading First \$1,060,529,000 (+8.8%)  
Migrant (ESEA I-C) \$391,455,000 (-1.1%)  
English Language Acquisition (ESEA III) \$685,515,000 (+3.2%)  
Even Start \$245,889,000 (-1.6%)  
Title I \$11,702,021,000 (+13.1%)

**FY 2004 Presidential Request**

Reading First State Grants \$1,050,000 (+6.4%)  
Early Reading First \$100,000,000 (+35.6%)  
Total Reading First \$1,150,000,000 (+8.4%)  
Migrant (ESEA I-C) \$396,455,000 (1.2%)  
English Language Acquisition (ESEA III) \$665,000,000 (-3.0%)  
Even Start \$175,000,000 (-28.8%)  
Title I \$12,350,000,000 (+5.5%)

~ ~ FROM THE STATES ~ ~

PROJECT BEGINNING: A LOW COST, EFFECTIVE EXAMPLE OF TEACHER TRAINING

With the added regulations of *No Child Left Behind*, voter-passed initiatives, and new laws passed down by policy-makers, school districts are undergoing continuous challenges to meld theory, in the form of law, into practice. With the implementation of a new law, teachers have to be re-trained and school districts have to undergo a fundamental shift in philosophy to adapt to new rules, often with large outlays of money.

After the *League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) et al. v. State Board of Education* Consent Decree went into effect in 1990, Broward County Public Schools ran into dilemmas similar to those that districts in Arizona and Massachusetts are currently trying to solve with the ongoing challenges surrounding implementation of voter-passed English-only initiatives. Although not forced to educate ELLs in structured immersion classrooms (Florida law lets each district decide what programs are best for their students), the 1990 Consent Decree places a framework of requirements on school districts to educate ELLs with fair and successful methods.

As a part of the Consent Decree, many Broward County secondary teachers were allowed to be "grandfathered," and were not required to undergo the same training required of new ELL teachers. To train these teachers who had been previously "grandfathered," Project Bilingual ESOL Training to Enrich Instruction in Reading, or, more simply "Project BEGINNING," was established. The goals of this program were to fill the district's need for qualified ESL/bilingual teachers, to strengthen the instructional techniques of secondary English/Language Arts teachers to help them to adequately educate ELLs, to train teachers in technology, and to train teachers to identify ELLs who had been previously under-designated as Gifted and Talented in the past. The majority of teachers in Project BEGINNING are mainstream teachers in subject area classrooms; only a small percentage teach in self-contained ESOL/bilingual classrooms. Project BEGINNING is fully funded by Title VII: Training for Teachers (renamed Title III).

### **Program Components**

Project BEGINNING is supported by research that includes Linda Darling-Hammond and Deborah Ball's *Teaching for High Standards: What Policy Makers Need to Know and Be Able to Do* (1998) and Wayne Thomas and Virginia Collier's *School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students* (1997). It combines in-house district ESOL endorsement courses and college courses offered by St. Thomas University:

- The district ESOL endorsement courses include content from *The Language Arts Through ESOL Guide*, a companion manual to the Sunshine State Standards for Language Arts. Components include: Principles of Language Acquisition, Parental Involvement/Engagement, Language Arts Through ESOL: Instructional Strategies, Instructional Program Planning and Delivery, and Assessment and Testing.
- The courses offered by St. Thomas University, developed in collaboration with Broward County's Bilingual/Foreign Language/ESOL Education Department,

include Methods of Teaching English as a Second Language, ESOL Curriculum and Materials, Testing and Evaluation, Cross Cultural Communication, and Applied Linguistics.

Project BEGINNING also offers workshops in addressing the use of computers and technology in ESOL instruction and in identifying gifted ELLs.

### **Results of Project BEGINNING**

Project BEGINNING started in the 2000-2001 school year and operates until the end of this current school year. It has trained over 2,000 Broward County teachers. In the 2000-2001 school year alone, over 49,841 students were taught by teachers who participated in Project BEGINNING. Of the students trained by Project BEGINNING teachers, approximately 8% were defined as ELLs--the other 92% consisted of transitioned ELLs or native speakers of English. Total program costs for the 2000-2001 school year were \$222,210.94, or roughly \$4.46 per student.

Project BEGINNING is not only cost effective, but extremely successful at fostering higher achievement for both ELLs and native speakers of English. Results from the program are summarized in the two quotes below:

- "For students taught by Fall 2000 BEGINNING participants, the average Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) score in FCAT-NRT [Florida Comprehensive Assessment-Norm Referenced Test] Reading in the 1999-00 school year was 31.1 for LEP [ELL] students, increasing 6.3 NCE points to 37.4 in the 2000-01 school year. Also, the average NCE score for non-LEP students in the 1999-00 school year was 52.1, increasing 2 NCE points to 54.1 in the 2000-01 school year."
- "For students taught by Fall 2000 BEGINNING participants, the average NCE score in FCAT-NRT [Florida Comprehensive Assessment-Norm Referenced Test] Mathematics in the 1999-2000 school year was 41.2 for LEP [ELL] students, increasing 6.7 NCE points to 47.9 in the 2000-01 school year. Also, the average NCE score for non-LEP students in the 1999-00 school year was 57.8, increasing 2.6 NCE points to 60.4 in the 2000-01 school year."

It must be noted, however, that since there was no control group, other variables, along with Project BEGINNING teachers, may have had an impact on the results.

Thomas and Collier attest to the success of a program that achieves results such as these: "an instructional program that consistently produces student achievement gains of 5 NCEs is an unusually effective program" (Thomas & Collier, 1997). However, the harsh reality of these successes is that one year is not enough time to erase the achievement gap "because typical English language learners in such a program will be able to close the initial 25-30 NCE achievement gap with native-English speakers in about 5-6 years, if they demonstrate sustained NCE gains of 5 NCEs per year for 5-6 consecutive years" (Thomas & Collier, 1997). Thankfully, in the case of Project BEGINNING, some of these benefits will continue in later years as the methods these secondary content teachers learned will continue to benefit more and more students.

*Information for this article was gathered from "Project Bilingual ESOL Training to Enrich Instruction in Reading (BEGINNING) Status Report." Additional information was provided by Maria Ligas, Research Specialist, Title III, School Board of Broward County. Visit*

[http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/research\\_evaluation/Reports/Project%20Bilingual%20ESOL%20Training.pdf](http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/research_evaluation/Reports/Project%20Bilingual%20ESOL%20Training.pdf) for a full text of the report.

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CALL MATERIALS

**By Joy Egbert**

*ELL Outlook* Contributing Writer

*In a high school remedial English course in which a majority of the students were English language learners, Ms. Parks was faced with low student motivation, a lack of interest in grammar and essay writing, and the administrative requirement to take her students to the computer lab twice a week for an hour. She consulted her colleague Ms. Avis, a second grade teacher at the elementary school also working hard to integrate the range of ELLs in her class into content-area activities. Ms. Avis suggested that they work together on a computer activity that could help motivate Ms. Parks' students to use their English and computer skills and help Ms. Avis' second graders to meet content area goals. They met to brainstorm ideas.*

Like the teachers in the scenario above, educators are still exploring the boundaries and clarifying the components of computer-assisted language learning (CALL). Although in many classrooms it has not changed much from its origin as software providing drills and other language practice for learners, CALL has come in some classrooms to include many different technologies and tasks. It now spans a range from the use of individual drill software to interaction between native and non-native speakers over the Internet. Through the years of research and practice in CALL, three clear themes have emerged:

- The focal point in CALL is not the technology but the words "enhanced" or "assisted" that indicate that technology is only a facilitator in the language learning process.
- CALL occurs in many contexts and with many diverse participants. We need to be prepared to meet a variety of needs.
- CALL should be grounded in theory and practice from a number of fields, especially the pedagogy of applied linguistics and second language acquisition, and the fields of psychology and computer science as they relate to that pedagogy.

In addition, CALL materials development should be based on conditions for optimal classroom language learning regardless of the specific tools used. Although these conditions have been characterized in different ways, a general list (from Egbert & Hanson-Smith, 1999) follows, including examples of software packages and activities that demonstrate potential implementations in language classrooms.

**1. Learners have opportunities to interact socially and negotiate meaning.**

Effective learning takes place when learners work actively with other people whom they come to understand and with whom they can use language creatively.

**2. Learners interact in the target language with an authentic audience.** An effective use of time is to make sure that the audience has a stake in what learners are saying or presenting so that a) there will be some interaction among learners and b) learners have a reason to listen. Software that presents an information gap or

that encourages learners to become experts and share their expertise supports this condition.

**3. Learners are involved in authentic tasks.** An authentic task is the most important of these learning conditions because the task influences all of the others (Egbert & Jessup, 1996). For our purposes, an "authentic" task is one that learners perceive that they will use outside of class in their "real" world, or that parallels or replicates "real" functions beyond the classroom. Authentic materials abound on the Internet, including newspapers, magazines, and other kinds of resources.

**4. Learners are exposed to and encouraged to produce varied and creative language.** Learners need multiple forms of input and a variety of ways to express themselves as they "try on" a different language and culture and possibly even a new way of approaching knowledge and the learning process.

**5. Learners have enough time and feedback.** Figuring out how to give students the appropriate amount of time and how to administer the feedback they need is one of the most difficult but also most important conditions to meet.

**6. Learners are guided to attend mindfully to the learning process.** Students who perceive the *how* and *why* of the task that the software presents will be attentive and motivated to learn.

**7. Learners work in an atmosphere with an ideal stress/anxiety level.** Language learners should feel comfortable enough to take risks with the target language, but they should not be put to sleep by overly simple-minded tasks and exercises. Programs that allow learners to work at their level and follow their progress help create this condition.

**8. Learner autonomy is supported.** Supporting learner control over some facets of their learning can help the teacher to provide for different language levels, interests, and learning styles. Presentation software, html editors, and publishing packages can be used to support learner autonomy.

The TESOL standards (TESOL, 1997), like the conditions listed above, encourage the development of language-learning tasks that provide opportunities for a wide variety of students to interact socially in the target language for authentic purposes. Especially important to those developing and implementing CALL materials are focusing on language use instead of language study, encouraging meaningful language use, offering adequate information or research resources, and seizing upon opportunities to assist learners in making crucial choices in the learning process. However, in most language classrooms, teachers currently have two choices: Use commercial software or Web sites developed for native English speakers or use the typically grammar-based drill software and Web sites developed for ESL students. Neither of these solutions is advantageous in creating optimal language learning environments. What language teachers and learners need is software, Web sites, activities, and accompanying documents that meet the conditions by providing authentic situations, prompts for working *around* and *through* the computer rather than just with it, multiple types of language input (e.g., including graphics, text, video), opportunities for varied output (e.g. creating graphics, texts, videos), and choices that learners can make based on their understanding of both content and language. Ms. Avis and Ms. Parks, (from the opening scenario) found solutions for their classes that met these conditions.

*Ms. Avis and Ms. Parks decided to create a project using Kid Pix, which was available at both schools. Their project presented an authentic task as teams of high school students paired with teams of elementary school learners to create slide shows to help other second graders to understand content-based concepts. The high school students first learned how to use Kid Pix and then planned and organized the rest of the project. High school and elementary teams collaborated and interacted around the computer to figure out how to present the information about their content and to provide feedback to each other in English. Learners demonstrated their understandings and exercised choices by adding text, graphics, and movies to their slide shows. The handouts and activity suggestions that accompanied the presentations required the high school students to consider their audience, decide what voice was appropriate to write in, and be careful about their grammar as they presented to an authentic audience. They also had chances to explain grammar, spelling, and other language rules to the second graders as they worked together. Both Ms. Avis and Ms. Parks met their goals through the use of technology. Most important, the project was integrated easily into the pedagogical goals of both classes, rather than being used as an add-on.*

This scenario, based on an actual case, demonstrates that computer technologies can be used effectively for a variety of English learners in a range of settings. However, few teachers have the time, creativity, and knowledge to create such activities. In short, CALL materials based on sound principles must be developed to support more effective language learning and make the learning and teaching of language more efficient. The challenge, then, for educators, materials designers, and curriculum developers is to create stand-alone software, Web sites, and other materials that can be used as tools in language classrooms; use that meets the needs of diverse learners with pedagogically sound practices.

*Joy Egbert is Assistant Professor at Washington State University in Pullman. She is an award-winning teacher, researcher, and software developer. Her research and teaching interests include CALL and teacher education.*

---

### **Course Crafters, Inc.**

*Since 1993, Course Crafters, Inc. has specialized in researching, developing, translating, and producing high-quality student and teacher materials, with a unique expertise in developing materials for English Language Learners, in both English (ESL) and Spanish.*

*In the same way that educational materials act as the bridge between theory and practice, we would like The ELL Outlook to act as the bridge between educational publishers and educators. By providing summaries and analysis of current research, profiles of state and district methods for educating English language learner (ELLs), and interviews with in-the-field educators, policy makers, and researchers, The ELL Outlook will strive to investigate and reveal methods for attaining our shared goal: high academic achievement for **every** student, in **every** classroom.*

---

For **MORE INFORMATION, FULL REFERENCES, PREVIOUS ISSUES**, or any **QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS** you might have, call 978-465-2040 and dial extension 236. Or email Alex at [alex@coursecrafters.com](mailto:alex@coursecrafters.com).

To **SUBSCRIBE** a friend, email [alex@coursecrafters.com](mailto:alex@coursecrafters.com) with **SUBSCRIBE A FRIEND** in the subject line and their email address in the body of the email.

To **UNSUBSCRIBE**, email [alex@coursecrafters.com](mailto:alex@coursecrafters.com) with **UNSUBSCRIBE** in the subject line.

© 2002 Course Crafters, Inc.