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English Learners in 21st-Century Classrooms

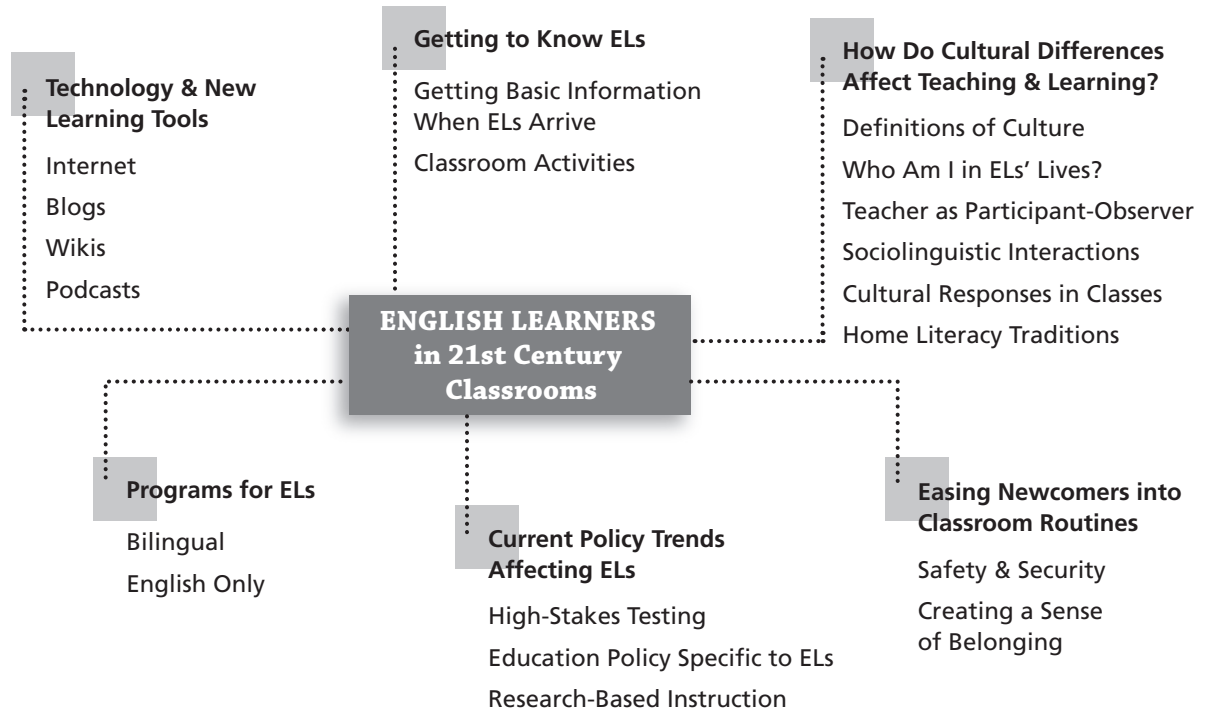
“In her classroom our speculations ranged the world. She breathed curiosity into us so that each day we came with new questions, new ideas, cupped and shielded in our hands like captured fireflies. When she left us, we were sad; but the light did not go out. She had written her indelible signature on our minds. I have had lots of teachers who taught me soon forgotten things; but only a few who created in me a new energy, a new direction.

I suppose I am the unwritten manuscript of such a person.

What deathless power lies in the hands of such a teacher!”

—JOHN STEINBECK, recalling his favorite teacher

Chapter Overview



In this chapter, we provide you with basic information on English learners in today's classrooms, including discussion of demographic changes, legislative demands, and technological innovations that impact teachers and students. We address the following questions:

1. Who are English learners?
2. How can I get to know my English learners when their language and culture are new to me?
3. How do cultural differences affect the way my students respond to me and to my efforts to teach them?
4. How do current policy trends affect English learners?
5. What kinds of programs exist to meet the needs of English learners?
6. How are teachers using the Internet and other digital tools to enhance learning in 21st century classrooms?

Teaching and learning in the 21st century is filled with challenge and opportunity, especially when teaching students for whom English is a new language. Let's begin by showing you one school's continual effort to bring their English learners into the 21st century using the Internet and other technologies in ways that support their academic and language learning, while promoting social development, self-esteem, and individual empowerment.

At a California elementary school serving more than 50 percent English learners, students use the Internet and other digital technologies to create and present individual multimedia projects they work on over the course of the school year. Fifth-graders, for example, choose either PowerPoint or iMovie to present an autobiography written on the computer and illustrated with drawings or digital photos of their home, their family, and other important people in their lives. The autobiographies include a vision of themselves in a future career followed by a dramatic video recording in which they read their own “This I Believe Statement.” Throughout the process, students help each other and are supported by constructive feedback from their peers, parents, and teacher. In the production stage, students embed a voice-over narration with text and illustrations indicating the skills and support they will need to achieve their desired career goal. At centers in their two-computer classrooms, the fifth-graders use digital audio and video recorders, scanners, computer software, and the Internet to conduct research, create storyboards, and produce their final PowerPoint or iMovie piece. At the end of the year, students present their multimedia projects to their parents, peers, and friends in the primary grades.

This vignette describes a very different kind of classroom from the one many of us enjoyed in the past. Indeed, we live in awesome times filled with rapid changes—changes that proffer both grand opportunities and daunting challenges affecting everyone, including K–12 teachers. Technological advances are changing the way we live and learn, from interactive Internet to social networking sites to smartphones with built-in cameras and beyond. Communication has become available instantaneously worldwide. A dazzling array of information is available at the touch of a button. Privacy has diminished and secrets are almost impossible to keep, even at top levels of government. These technological advances not only impact our personal lives but they also affect the political and economic realities of countries throughout the world. Economically, for example, consider the outsourcing of customer service jobs by U.S. companies and the increasing globalization of many businesses. Politically, Internet and cell phone communication has facilitated uprisings against dictatorships and networking among subversive organizations. More than ever, human beings are connecting with others on the planet through digital and Internet technology. And significantly, that technology is constantly changing.

As the world grows smaller through communication, people are becoming more mobile in a variety of ways. For example, international migrations have changed the demographics of many countries, including the United States, Canada, and the European countries. The coexistence of people from diverse cultures, languages, and social circumstances has become the rule rather than the exception, demanding new levels of tolerance, understanding, and patience. Even as immigration has changed the face of countries such as the United States, occupational mobility has added another kind of diversity to the mix. Earlier generations planned on finding a job and keeping it until retirement at age 65. Today, the average wage earner will change jobs as many as five times prior to retirement. These changes are due to the rapid evolution of the job market

as technology eliminates or outsources some jobs, while creating new ones that require retooling and retraining. Even as immigrants arrive and people change jobs, the gap between rich and poor continues to widen in the United States, threatening social mobility for those in poverty and the working class. These changing demographics thus add another element to the ever-shifting field on which we work and play. Now, more than ever, the education we provide our youth must meet the needs of a future defined by constant innovation and change.

Into this field of challenge and change, teachers provide the foundation on which all students, including English learners, must build the competence and flexibility needed for success in the 21st century. The vignette illustrates some of the technological tools now available to young people as they envision themselves in a personally productive future and express their dreams in a multimedia format to share with others. It is our hope that this book will provide you the foundations to help your students envision and enact positive futures for themselves. To that end, we offer you a variety of theories, teaching strategies, assessment techniques, and learning tools to help you meet the needs of your students and the challenges they will face today and in the future. Our focus is K–12 students who are in the process of developing academic and social competence in English as a new language.

There are a number of basic terms and acronyms in the field of English learner education that we want to define for you here. We use the term **English learners (ELs)** to refer to non-native English speakers who are learning English in school. Typically, English learners speak a primary language other than English at home, such as Spanish, Cantonese, Russian, Hmong, Navajo, or other language. English learners vary in how well they know the primary language. Of course, they vary in English language proficiency as well. Those who are beginners to intermediates in English have been referred to as **limited English proficient (LEP)**, a term that is used in federal legislation and other official documents. However, as a result of the pejorative connotation of “limited English proficient,” most educators prefer the terms **English learners, English language learners, non-native English speakers,** and **second language learners** to refer to students who are in the process of learning English as a new language.

Over the years, another English learner category has emerged: **long-term English learner** (Olsen, 2010). Long-term ELs are students who have lived in the United States for many years, have been educated primarily in the United States, may speak very little of the home language, but have not developed advanced proficiency in English, especially academic English. They may not even be recognized as non-native English speakers. Failure to identify and educate long-term English learners poses significant challenges to the educational system and to society. In this book, we offer assessment and teaching strategies for “beginning” and “intermediate” English learners. If you are teaching long-term English learners, you will likely find excellent strategies described in the sections for intermediate English learners. Some beginning strategies may apply as well.

The terms **English as a Second Language (ESL)** and **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)** are often used to refer to programs, instruction, and development of English as a non-native language. We use the term *ESL* because it is widely used and descriptive, even though what we refer to as a “second language” might actually be a student’s third or fourth language. A synonym for ESL that you will find in this book is **English language development (ELD)**.

New Learning Tools as Technology Evolves

Many of your students in K–12 classrooms have substantial experience with computers, cell phones, the Internet, and other digital technologies. Other students may have little or no such experience at all. In any case, all your students will need to become proficient at using the Internet and other technologies for academic learning. In particular, they will need to learn safe, efficient, and critical Internet use, and they will need to acquire the flexibility to adapt to new applications that develop each day. For example, consider the advances in the Internet itself that have occurred over the decades. Early on, the Internet provided one-way access to websites, creating what amounted to a very large encyclopedia, sometimes referred to as *Web 1.0*. You will want to help your students use *Web 1.0* to access, evaluate, and use information appropriately, while applying the rules of safe and ethical Internet use. The term *Web 2.0* is used to define the more collaborative capabilities of the Internet that became available as Internet technology evolved. Using blogs, for example, students may create an ongoing conversation about subjects they are studying. With wikis, students may collaborate to create a story or an encyclopedia for the class similar to Wikipedia. We mention these two tools briefly here and offer details on how to use them in subsequent chapters. Bear in mind, however, that there are over 200 webtools available to teachers, and that number grows daily, even as web technology continues to evolve (Leu, Leu, & Coiro, 2004; Solomon & Schrum, 2010). Throughout our book we integrate ways teachers are using the Internet and other digital tools to enhance and extend student learning and to prepare them for success in the 21st century.

Who Are English Language Learners?

Students who speak English as a non-native language live in all areas of the United States, and their numbers have steadily increased over the last several decades. Between 1994 and 2004, for example, the number of ELs nearly doubled, and has continued to increase in subsequent years. By 2008–2009, the number had reached 5,346,673. Between 1999 and 2009, U.S. federal education statistics indicated that EL enrollment increased at almost *seven times* the rate of total student enrollment (www.ncela.gwu.edu/faqs/). States with the highest numbers of English learners are California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Illinois. In recent years, however, EL populations have surged in the Midwest, South, Northwest, and in the state of Nevada. For the 2000–2001 school year, the last year for which the federal government required primary language data, states reported more than 460 different primary languages, with Spanish comprising by far the most prevalent, spoken by about 80 percent of ELs (Loeffler, 2005).

It may surprise you to learn that in the United States, native-born English learners outnumber those who were born in foreign countries. According to one survey, only 24 percent of ELs in elementary school were foreign born, whereas 44 percent of secondary school ELs were born outside the United States (Capps, Fix, Murray, Ost, Passel, & Herwantoro, 2005). Among those English learners who were born in the United States, some have roots in U.S. soil that go back for countless generations, including American Indians of numerous tribal heritages.

Others are sons and daughters of immigrants who left their home countries in search of a better life. Those who are immigrants may have left countries brutally torn apart by war or political strife in regions such as Southeast Asia, Central America, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. Finally, there are those who have come to be reunited with families who are already settled in the United States.

Whether immigrant or native born, each group brings its own history and culture to the enterprise of schooling (Heath, 1986). Furthermore, each group contributes to the rich tapestry of languages and cultures that form the basic fabric of the United States. Our first task as teachers, then, is to become aware of our students' personal histories and cultures, so as to understand their feelings, frustrations, hopes, and aspirations. At the same time, as teachers, we need to look closely at ourselves to discover how our own culturally ingrained attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and communication styles play out in our teaching and affect our students' learning. By developing such understanding, we create the essential foundation for meaningful instruction, including reading and writing instruction. As understanding grows, teachers and students alike can come to an awareness of both diversity and universals in human experience as shared in this poem by a high school student who emigrated with her parents from Cambodia (Mullen & Olsen, 1990).

*"You and I Are the Same"**

*You and I are the same
but we don't let our hearts see.
Black, White and Asian
Africa, China, United States and all other
countries around the world
Peel off their skin
Like you peel an orange
See their flesh
like you see in my heart
Peel off their meat
And peel my wickedness with it too
Until there's nothing left
but bones.
Then you will see that you and I
are the same.*

How Can I Get to Know My English Learners?

Given the variety and mobility among English learners, it is likely that most teachers, including specialists in bilingual education or ESL, will at some time encounter students whose language and culture they know little about. Perhaps you are already accustomed to working with students of diverse cultures, but if you are not, how can you develop an understanding of students from unfamiliar linguistic and cultural backgrounds? Far from a simple task, the process requires not only

*Kien Po, "You and I Are the Same." 1990. San Francisco: California Tomorrow. Reprinted with permission of the author.

fact finding but also continual observation and interpretation of children's behavior, combined with trial and error in communication. Thus the process is one that must take place gradually.

Getting Basic Information When a New Student Arrives

When a new student arrives, we suggest three initial steps. First of all, begin to find out basic facts about the student. What country is the student from? How long has he or she lived in the United States? Where and with whom is the student living? If an immigrant, what were the circumstances of immigration? Some children have experienced traumatic events before and during immigration, and the process of adjustment to a new country may represent yet another link in a chain of stressful life events (Olsen, 1998). What language or languages are spoken in the home? If a language other than English is spoken in the home, the next step is to assess the student's English language proficiency in order to determine what kind of language education support is needed. It is also helpful to assess primary language proficiency where feasible.

Second, obtain as much information about the student's prior school experiences as possible. School records may be available if the child has already been enrolled in a U.S. school. However, you may need to piece the information together yourself, a task that requires resourcefulness, imagination, and time. Some school districts collect background information on students when they register or upon administration of language proficiency tests. Thus, your own district office is one possible source of information. In addition, you may need the assistance of someone who is familiar with the home language and culture, such as another teacher, a paraprofessional, or a community liaison, who can ask questions of parents, students, or siblings. Keep in mind that some children may have had no previous schooling, despite their age, or perhaps their schooling has been interrupted. Other students may have attended school in their home countries.

Students with prior educational experience bring various kinds of knowledge to school subjects and may be quite advanced. Be prepared to validate your students for their special knowledge. We saw how important this was for fourth-grader Li Fen, a recent immigrant from mainland China who found herself in a regular English language classroom, not knowing a word of English. Li Fen was a bright child but naturally somewhat reticent to involve herself in classroom activities during her first month in the class. She made a real turnaround, however, the day the class was studying long division. Li Fen accurately solved three problems at the chalkboard in no time at all, though her procedure differed slightly from the one in the math book. Her classmates were duly impressed with her mathematical competence and did not hide their admiration. Her teacher, of course, gave her a smile with words of congratulations. From that day forward, Li Fen participated more readily, having earned a place in the class.

When you are gathering information on your students' prior schooling, it's important to find out whether they are literate in their home language. If they are, you might encourage them to keep a journal using their native language, and if possible, you should acquire native language books, magazines, or newspapers to have on hand for the new student. In this way, you validate the student's language, culture, and academic competence, while providing a natural bridge to English reading. Make these choices with sensitivity, though, building on positive

responses from your student. Bear in mind, for example, that some newcomers may not wish to be identified as different from their classmates. We make this caveat because of our experience with a 7-year-old boy, recently arrived from Mexico, who attended a school where everyone spoke English only. When we spoke to him in Spanish, he did not respond, giving the impression that he did not know the language. When we visited his home and spoke Spanish with his parents, he was not pleased. At that point in his life, he may have wanted nothing more than to blend into the dominant social environment—in this case an affluent, European American neighborhood saturated with English.

The discomfort felt by this young boy is an important reminder of the internal conflict experienced by many youngsters as they come to terms with life in a new culture. As they learn English and begin to fit into school routines, they embark on a personal journey toward a new cultural identity. If they come to reject their home language and culture, moving toward maximum assimilation into the dominant culture, they may experience alienation from their parents and family. A moving personal account of such a journey is provided by journalist Richard Rodriguez in his book *Hunger for Memory* (1982). Another revealing account is the lively, humorous, and at times, brutally painful memoir, *Burro Genius*, by novelist Victor Villaseñor (2004). Villaseñor creates a vivid portrayal of a young boy seeking to form a positive identity as he struggles in school with dyslexia and negative stereotyping of his Mexican language and culture. Even if English learners strive to adopt the ways of the new culture without replacing those of the home, they will have departed significantly from many traditions their parents hold dear. Thus, for many students, the generation gap necessarily widens to the extent that the values, beliefs, roles, responsibilities, and general expectations differ between the home culture and the dominant one. Keeping this in mind may help you empathize with students' personal conflicts of identity and personal life choices.

The third suggestion, then, is to become aware of basic features of the home culture, such as religious beliefs and customs, food preferences and restrictions, and roles and responsibilities of children and adults (Ovando, Collier, & Combs, 2003; Saville-Troike, 1978). These basic bits of information, although sketchy, will guide your initial interactions with your new students and may help you avoid asking them to say or do things that may be prohibited or frowned on in the home culture, including such common activities as celebrating birthdays, pledging allegiance to the flag, and eating hot dogs. Finding out basic information also provides a starting point from which to interpret your newcomer's responses to you, to your other students, and to the ways you organize classroom activities. Just as you make adjustments, your students will also begin to make adjustments as they grow in the awareness and acceptance that ways of acting, dressing, eating, talking, and behaving in school are different to a greater or lesser degree from what they may have experienced before.

Classroom Activities That Let You Get to Know Your Students

Several fine learning activities may also provide some of the personal information you need to help you know your students better. One way is to have all your students write an illustrated autobiography, "All about Me" or "The Story of My

Life.” Each book may be bound individually, or all the life stories may be bound together and published in a class book, complete with illustrations or photographs. This activity might serve as the beginning of a multimedia presentation, such as the one described in the vignette at the beginning of this chapter. Alternatively, student stories may be posted on the bulletin board for all to read. This assignment lets you in on the lives of all your students and permits them to get to know, appreciate, and understand each other as well. Of particular importance, this activity does not single out your newcomers because all your students will be involved.

Personal writing assignments like this lend themselves to various grade levels because personal topics remain pertinent across age groups even into adulthood. Students who speak little or no English may begin by illustrating a series of important events in their lives, perhaps to be captioned with your assistance or that of another student. In addition, there are many ways to accommodate students’ varying English writing abilities. For example, if students write more easily in their native tongue than in English, allow them to do so. If needed, ask a bilingual student or paraprofessional to translate the meaning for you. Be sure to publish the student’s story as written in the native language; by doing so, you will both validate the home language and expose the rest of the class to a different language and its writing system. If a student knows some English but is not yet able to write, allow her or him to dictate the story to you or to another student in the class.

Another way to begin to know your students is to start a dialogue journal with them. Provide each student with a blank journal and allow the student to draw or write in the language of the student’s choice. You may then respond to the students’ journal entries on a periodic basis. Interactive dialogue journals,

When students share information about their home countries, they grow in self-esteem while broadening the horizons of their peers.



described in detail in Chapters 5 and 7, have proven useful for English learners of all ages (Kreeft, 1984). Dialogue journals make an excellent introduction to literacy and facilitate the development of an ongoing personal relationship between the student and you, the teacher. As with personal writing, this activity is appropriate for all students, and if you institute it with the entire class, you provide a way for newcomers to participate in a “regular” class activity. Being able to do what others do can be a source of great pride and self-satisfaction to students who are new to the language and culture of the school.

Finally, many teachers start the school year with a unit on a theme such as “Where We Were Born” or “Family Origins.” Again, this activity is relevant to all students, whether immigrant or native born, and it gives both you and your students alike a chance to know more about themselves and each other. A typical activity with this theme is the creation of a world map with a string connecting each child’s name and birthplace to your city and school. Don’t forget to put your name on the list along with your birthplace. From there, you and your students may go on to study more about the various regions and countries of origin. If Internet access is available, students might search the Web for information on their home countries to include in their reports. The availability of information in many world languages may be helpful to students who are literate in their home languages. Clearly, this type of theme leads in many directions, including the discovery of people in the community who may be able to share information about their home countries with your class. Your guests may begin by sharing food, holiday customs, art, or music with students. Through such contact, theme studies, life stories, and reading about cultures in books such as those listed in Example 1.1, you may begin to become aware of some of the more subtle aspects of the culture, such as how the culture communicates politeness and respect or how the culture views the role of children, adults, and the school. If you are lucky enough to find such community resources, you will not only enliven your teaching but also broaden your cross-cultural understanding and that of your students (Ada & Zubizarreta, 2001).

Not all necessary background information will emerge from these classroom activities. You will no doubt want to look into cultural, historical, and

■ Example 1.1

Useful Books on Multicultural Teaching

- Banks, J. A. (2009). *Teaching strategies for ethnic studies* (8th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Darder, A. (1991). *Culture and power in the classroom: A critical foundation for bicultural education*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
- Igoa, C. (1995). *The inner world of the immigrant child*. New York: St. Martin’s Press.
- Nieto, S., & Bode, P. (2011). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education* (6th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Tiedt, P. L., & Tiedt, I. M. (2010). *Multicultural teaching: A handbook of activities, information, and resources* (8th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

geographical resources available at your school, on the Internet, or in your community library. In addition, you may find resource personnel at your school, including paraprofessionals and resource teachers, who can help with specific questions or concerns. In the final analysis, though, your primary source of information is the students themselves as you interrelate on a day-to-day basis.

How Do Cultural Differences Affect Teaching and Learning?

The enterprise of teaching and learning is deeply influenced by culture in a variety of ways. To begin with, schools themselves reflect the values, beliefs, attitudes, and practices of the larger society. In fact, schools represent a major socializing force for all students. For English learners, moreover, school is often the *primary* source of adaptation to the language and culture of the larger society. It is here that students may begin to integrate aspects of the new culture as their own, while retaining, rejecting, or modifying traditions from home.

Teachers and students bring to the classroom particular cultural orientations that affect how they perceive and interact with each other in the classroom. As teachers of English learners, most of us will encounter students whose languages and cultures differ from our own. Thus, we need to learn about our students and their cultures while at the same time reflecting on *our own* culturally rooted behaviors that may facilitate or interfere with teaching and learning (Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch, & Greenfield, 2000). In this section, we define basic aspects of culture in the classroom as a starting point for looking at ourselves and our students in this light.

Definitions of Culture

Culture may be defined as the shared beliefs, values, and rule-governed patterns of behavior, including language, that define a group and are required for group membership (Goodenough, 1981; Saville-Troike, 1978). Thus defined, culture comprises three essential aspects: what people know and believe, what people do, and what people make and use. Culture therefore serves to ensure group cohesion and survival. Every child is born into the culture of a particular group of people, and through the culture's child-rearing practices every child is socialized, to a greater or lesser extent, toward becoming first a "good boy" or "good girl" and ultimately a "good man" or "good woman" in the eyes of the culture. Thus, culture may be thought of as the acquired knowledge people use both to interpret experience and generate behavior (Spradley, 1980).

It is important to note that cultures are neither monolithic nor static. Rather, they include many layers and variations related to age, gender, social status, occupation, wealth, and power. Cultural changes occur as people encounter or develop new ideas and ways of being. Technology offers a handy example of cultural change if you consider the impact of cell phones and social networking sites such as Facebook. Contrast how people today keep up with each other in the United States, for example, compared to the days of the Pony Express just 150 years ago! Bearing in mind the complexity of culture, we offer some ways to consider its effects on classroom interactions, including developing your skill as an effective participant-observer.

Who Am I in the Lives of My Students?

Working effectively with students from diverse cultures presents challenges and opportunities. As the teacher, you are in a position to inspire your students and open their eyes to the future in ways that no one else can. As you think back on your own schooling, you probably recall teachers who made a difference in your life. Because you have such great impact on your students, it's important to acquire the habit of self-reflection with regard to your own teaching practices and interpersonal relationships with students. For example, one deeply committed high school teacher we know undertook an action research project in which she tape-recorded her writing conferences with individual students. While transcribing her data, she discovered that she ended her conferences with White students by saying she looked forward to the next conference, but with her Black students she merely bid them good-bye. She was shocked by this distinct difference in treatment and upset to the point of tears, especially so because one of her stated curriculum goals was to empower *all* her students through writing. Through the process, however, this teacher was able to change her conference style to treat all students equitably with the same encouragement. At the same time, she gained a powerful insight into how easily a teacher can unintentionally perpetuate inequalities inherent in the dominant society rather than transcending and transforming them for the better. Through her critical self-examination process, this fine teacher had attained a new level of **ideological clarity** (Bartolomé, 2000; Cadiero-Kaplan, 2007). Teaching, like parenting, allows significant opportunities for a deeper understanding of ourselves and our influence on the lives of others.

Becoming an Effective Participant–Observer in Your Own Classroom

When you make observations in your classroom, you are actually using some of the tools used by anthropologists when they study another culture through *ethnography* (e.g., introspection, interviewing, observation, and participant observation). As the teacher, you are automatically both **participant** and **observer** in the classroom culture. To learn about yourself and your students through personal interactions, you may need to hone your skills in observing and interpreting behaviors, including your own behavior. Observation skills are especially important when you first meet your students, whether at the beginning of the school year or when they first enroll in your class. One procedure to help focus your observations is to keep a journal in which you jot notes at the end of each day concerning your interactions with students and their responses to you. Does she seem comfortable seeking help from you? Is he starting to form friendships? In which activities does your new student appear most comfortable: small-group activities, individual seatwork, listening to stories, drawing pictures? In which activities is the student reluctant? By noticing activities that are most comfortable for students, you can make sure that your newcomer has frequent opportunities to participate in them. In this way, you build a positive attitude toward what may as yet be an alien environment: school. From there, you may gradually draw the student into other school routines.

To make the most of your introspective reflections and observations, you might need some concepts to guide interpretations. In other words, it's one thing to notice that Nazrene "tunes out" during whole-class lessons but quite another to figure out why, so that you can alter your instruction to reach her. To provide you with some interpretive touchstones, we suggest you consider for a moment some aspects that constitute culture, because these represent potential sources of overt conflict or silent suffering if your classroom rules and structures conflict with those already culturally ingrained in your students.

For a start at describing aspects of culture, we summarize in Table 1.1 "cultural content" with questions outlined by Saville-Troike (1978) categorized into various components, including (1) family structure; (2) definitions of stages, periods, or transitions during a person's life; (3) roles of children and adults and corresponding behavior in terms of power and politeness; (4) discipline; (5) time and space; (6) religion; (7) food; (8) health and hygiene; and (9) history, traditions, holidays, and celebrations. Table 1.1 provides a number of questions that you might ask yourself about these aspects of culture. As you read the questions, try to answer them for your own culture and for a different cultural group to get a sense of similarities and differences across cultures. Do you find potential points of conflict in the classroom context? How might you deal with them?

When students in our university classes discuss the questions in Table 1.1 according to their own family traditions, interesting patterns emerge. Although many students identify with middle-class, European American cultural values, such as punctuality, some also add special traditions passed down from immigrant grandparents or great grandparents, including special foods and holiday traditions. Other students come from families who have been in this country for centuries, yet maintain particular regional traditions such as herbal healing practices. In addition, some students have maintained strong religious traditions, such as Buddhist, Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Hindu, Judaic, Muslim, and traditional American Indian beliefs. From these discussions, we find that each individual actually embodies a variety of cultures and subcultures.

One student found the cultural questions an interesting way to look at her own family. Her parents had met and married in Germany, her father an Egyptian and Coptic Christian, her mother a German Catholic. From there, they moved with their three young children to the United States. Najia reflected, with some amusement, on how different her German relatives were from her Egyptian relatives. For example, her German relatives visited once or twice a year, making plans well in advance and staying a short, predetermined amount of time. Her Egyptian relatives, in contrast, "couldn't seem to get enough of each other." They loved long visits, with as many of the family together as possible. Najia's German mother emphasized orderliness and punctuality in the home, with carefully scheduled and planned meals. The family ate at the specified hour, and all were expected to be there on time. With such differences concerning time and space, Najia wondered that her parents were able to make a highly successful marriage. She attributed their success in part to their individual personalities: Her mother, an artist, is by nature easygoing and flexible; her father, an electrical engineer, is an organized thinker and planner. As individuals, they seemed compatible with many of each other's cultural ways. Najia's reflections are a reminder that people's behavior combines both cultural and individual differences.

TABLE 1.1 Cultural Content and Questions

Cultural Content	Questions
Family structures	What constitutes a family? Who among these or others live in one house? What are the rights and responsibilities of each family member? What is the hierarchy of authority? What is the relative importance of the individual family member in contrast to the family as a whole?
Life cycles	What are the criteria for defining stages, periods, or transitions in life? What rites of passage are there? What behaviors are considered appropriate for children of different ages? How might these conflict with behaviors taught or encouraged in school? How is the age of the children computed? What commemoration, if any, is made of the child's birth and when?
Roles and interpersonal relationships	What roles are available to whom, and how are they acquired? Is education relevant to learning these roles? How do the roles of girls and women differ from those of boys and men? How do people greet each other? What forms of address are used between people of differing roles? Do girls work and interact with boys? Is it proper? How is deference shown and to whom and by whom?
Discipline	What is discipline? What counts as discipline and what doesn't? Which behaviors are considered socially acceptable for boys versus girls at different ages? Who or what is considered responsible if a child misbehaves? The child? Parents? Older siblings? The environment? Is blame even ascribed? Who has authority over whom? To what extent can one person impose his or her will on another? How is behavior traditionally controlled? To what extent and in what domains?
Time and space	How important is punctuality? How important is speed in completing a task? Are there restrictions associated with certain seasons? What is the spatial organization of the home? How much space are people accustomed to? What significance is associated with different locations or directions, including north, south, east, and west?
Religion	What restrictions are there concerning topics discussed in school? Are dietary restrictions to be observed, including fasting on particular occasions? When are these occasions? What restrictions are associated with death and the dead?
Food	What is eaten? In what order and how often is food eaten? Which foods are restricted? Which foods are typical? What social obligations are there with regard to food giving, reciprocity, and honoring people? What restrictions or proscriptions are associated with handling, offering, or discarding food?
Health and hygiene	How are illnesses treated and by whom? What is considered to be the cause? If a student were involved in an accident at school, would any of the common first aid practices be considered unacceptable?
History, traditions, and holidays	Which events and people are sources of pride for the group? To what extent does the group in the United States identify with the history and traditions of the country of origin? What holidays and celebrations are considered appropriate for observing in school? Which ones are appropriate only for private observance?

Sociolinguistic Interactions in the Classroom

One particularly important aspect of culture that can affect teaching and learning has to do with the ways the teacher uses language during instruction. Because teaching and learning depend on clear communication between teacher and students, the communicative success of teacher–student interactions is crucial. Early on, difficulties may arise from lack of a common language. However, communication difficulties may persist even after students have acquired the basics of English if the student and teacher are following different sociocultural rules for speaking (Cazden, 1986). For example, if the home culture values strict authority of adults over children and if children are only supposed to speak when spoken to, then these same children may be reluctant to volunteer an answer in class. You might quite logically interpret this reluctance as disinterest or lack of knowledge, when in fact the student may simply be waiting for you to invite him or her to respond. On the other hand, some students may not want to answer your questions because displaying knowledge in class amounts to showing off, causing them to stand out, uncomfortably spotlighted at center stage (Philips, 1983). Some students consider an enthusiastic display of knowledge impolite because it might make their friends appear ignorant. These examples illustrate how cultural values affecting language use may impede teacher–student communication in either English or the home language.

Language use differences can be especially confusing in the realm of teacher questioning. Research has shown that teachers often do not allow much *wait time* after asking a question in class (Rowe, 1974; see also Nunan, 2005). It turns out that what is considered enough wait time in everyday conversations varies across cultures, as do rules concerning how and when to interrupt and the number of people who may speak at once (Bauman & Scherzer, 1974; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984; Schieffelin & Eisenberg, 1984; Shultz, Erickson, & Florio, 1982). In addition, students must learn classroom rules regarding who can speak with whom and when (Mehan, 1979). These rules may vary with the activity structure (e.g., teacher-led lesson versus small-group projects) and from one teacher to the next. Thus, it is important to make *your* rules explicit for speaking in class and to allow sufficient wait time for students to respond. Helping students find their comfort zone for expressing themselves appropriately in class will pay off in learning, self-esteem, and social relationships.

Another potential problem area is the known-answer, display question (i.e., questions used to assess student knowledge for which the teacher already knows the answer). For some students, these known-answer questions might be considered odd or of dubious purpose (Heath, 1983; Mehan, 1979), resulting in student reluctance to participate in such interrogations. Furthermore, research has shown that when teachers ask authentic questions, those to which the answer is not already known, the length and complexity of student responses increases substantially compared to answers given to display questions (Nunan, 2005; Brock, 1986, cited in Nunan, 2005). In addition, when students respond to authentic questions, additional conversational interchanges often ensue as meanings are clarified and elaborated. Such negotiation of meaning serves both learning and language development. You might want to reflect on your own questioning practices in terms of wait time, question types, and the actual phrasing you use. If your questions are greeted with blank stares, try modifying your questioning style, or

perhaps reserve discussion questions for small-group activities. Another possibility is to introduce question-and-answer sessions with a brief explanation of what you are trying to accomplish and why. That way, if students are unaccustomed to your question types, you will at least help them understand your purpose for asking them.

Culturally Related Responses to Classroom Organization

There are other cultural differences that may interfere with student participation in learning activities in the classroom. One of these is the social organization of lessons (Mehan, 1979). Within the constraints of time and adult assistance, teachers typically use whole-class, small-group, and individualized formats for instruction. It is important to recognize that these formats represent distinctly different types of **participation structures** (Philips, 1983), each with its own rules about when to speak and how. Students may experience various degrees of comfort or discomfort with these various formats based on both cultural and individual differences (Au & Jordan, 1981). For example, the use of small groups for cooperative learning is intended to increase learning for all students but especially for ethnic minority students (Kagan, 1986). The rationale is that many ethnic minority cultures instill strong values of group cooperation and that such instruction will therefore build on familiar cultural experiences.

In addition, cooperative groups provide students with practice in getting along with people different from themselves to the extent that groups consist of students with different backgrounds. We are convinced that cooperative group learning is a valuable tool for teachers for the reasons described. However, it is important to keep in mind that some students may feel that the teacher, as the academic authority, is the only proper person to learn from in the classroom. One way to accommodate such students is to balance your use of group work with necessary teacher-directed instruction. When you do ask students to work in cooperative groups, you need to explain your reasons for doing so, thereby showing



Internet Resources

The California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (CATESOL) site is a good place to begin your exploration of issues relating to English language learners (www.catesol.org/index.html). For example, the CATESOL news link contains articles and reports on recent events (e.g., James Cummins's views on No Child Left Behind and ELL students). Another link contains official position papers on important topics such as the Role of English as a Second Language in Public Schools Grades K–12, Language Policy, and Literacy Instruction for English Language Learners.

You might also want to visit the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) Website at www.ncela.gwu.edu to explore the extensive resources, online library, databases, frequently asked questions, classroom ideas, and more, all aimed at improving teaching and learning for ELLs. The site will also link you to current K–12 education policy briefs. You might want to choose one of the frequently asked questions to answer and discuss with your classmates.

that group learning is valid academically. In fact, parents may need to hear your reasons as well. We knew one child who was functioning beautifully in cooperative groups, yet during parent conferences, his father politely asked when we were going to start teaching! Cultural differences in teaching practices thus present challenges to teachers, students, and parents alike.

In summary, we know that different students may be more comfortable with some instructional formats than with others and that their feelings stem from both cultural and individual preferences. We suggest you *use a variety of formats to meet the multiple needs of your diverse students*. Your best route is to be aware of how you create the participation structures of learning (i.e., grouping formats) to observe and interpret student responses with thoughtful sensitivity, making modifications as needed. In so doing, you **differentiate instruction** (Tomlinson, 1999) according to particular student needs, a topic we discuss in Chapter 3 and apply in subsequent chapters.

Literacy Traditions from Home and Community

As you approach the teaching of reading and writing to English learners, you will want to be aware of the literacy knowledge your students bring with them. Literacy knowledge stems not only from prior schooling but also from experiences with the ways reading and writing are used in the home and community (Au & Jordan, 1981; Boggs, 1972; Heath, 1983). It is helpful to become aware of how reading and writing are traditionally used in the community because these traditional literacy uses will influence your students' ideas, beliefs, and assumptions about reading and writing. You will want to build on these ideas and make sure to expand them to include the functions of literacy required by U.S. schools and society. Let's make this concept more clear through some examples.

Gustavo, age 7, entered the first grade of an urban elementary school in February, halfway through the academic year. He had come from rural Mexico, and this was his first time in school. He didn't even know how to hold a pencil. At first, he was so intimidated that he would refuse to come into the classroom at the beginning of the school day. With persistent coaxing from the teacher and her assistant, he reluctantly complied. Once in, Gustavo was anxious to fit into the normal class routines. He loved to wave his hand in the air when the teacher asked a question, although at first he didn't know what to do when called on. That part of the routine took a little time to master.

One day, as we were chatting with Gustavo, he began to tell us all about his little town in Michoacán, about the travails of the trip *pa' l norte* (to the north), and then about an incident when his 2-year-old sister became critically ill. His mother, he recounted, knew what medicine the baby needed, but it was only available in Mexico. So they had to find someone who could write to send to Mexico for the medicine. They did, and Gustavo's baby sister recovered.

What does this story tell us about the concept of literacy that Gustavo offers for the teacher to build on? First, we can surmise that Gustavo has not had extensive opportunities to explore reading and writing at home. He probably has not been read to much nor has he been provided with paper and pencils for dabbling in drawing and writing—the very activities so highly recommended today as the foundation of literacy development. On the other hand, Gustavo is well aware of how important it is to be able to write—it was a matter of life and death for his

sister! Furthermore, he is aware of the inconveniences, not to say dangers, of illiteracy. Thus, at the tender age of 7, Gustavo brings a deeper understanding of the importance of literacy than many children whose rich early literacy experiences allow them to take such things for granted. Gustavo's motivation and understanding provide the foundation on which the teacher may build. Gustavo needs daily exposure to the pleasures and practical functions of print through stories, poems, rhymes, labels, letters, notes, recipes, board games, instructions, and more. With practice and hard work, his proudest moment will come when he himself writes the next letter to Mexico.

In contrast to Gustavo, students who are older when they immigrate often bring substantial experience and skill in reading and writing in their home language. These experiences and skills provide a good foundation for learning to read and write in English. Students who read in their home language already know that print bears a systematic relationship to spoken language, that print carries meaning, and that reading and writing can be used for many purposes. Moreover, literate students know that they are capable of making sense of written language. Such experience and knowledge will transfer directly to learning to read and write in English, given English language development and appropriate literacy instruction (Cummins, 1981; Dressler & Kamil, 2006; Hudelson, 1987; Odlin, 1989). Thus, when students arrive with home language literacy skills, teachers do not have to start all over again to teach reading and writing (Goodman, Goodman, & Flores, 1979; Peregoy, 1989; Peregoy & Boyle, 1991, 2000). Rather, they can build on an existing base of literacy knowledge, adding the specifics for English as needed—a topic developed fully in subsequent chapters.

In addition to literacy knowledge, newcomers with substantial prior education often bring academic knowledge in areas such as mathematics, science, history, and geography. It is important to find out about such expertise to recognize it, honor it, and build on it. You might also seek ways for your students to share their particular knowledge with the rest of the class. To conclude our discussion of culture, we suggest you take another look at your own cultural ways again to focus on how your attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions might play out in your classroom.

How Can I Ease Newcomers into the Routines of My Classroom When They Know Little or No English?

As you begin to learn more about your students, you will be better able to offer them social and emotional support. Only when new students become comfortably integrated into your classroom's social and academic routines will optimal second language acquisition and academic learning occur. Thus, you'll need to give special effort and attention to those who are newcomers to the country. Adapting from Maslow's hierarchy of human needs (Maslow, 1968), we discuss basic strategies for integrating new students, especially younger children, into your classroom. Two basic needs you will want to consider are (1) safety and security and (2) a sense of belonging. By paying close attention to these basic needs, you lay the foundation for meeting your students' self-esteem needs and for their growth in language and academic abilities.

First Things First: Safety and Security

When English language learners first arrive in school, a “first things first” approach is helpful, following Maslow’s views. The first concern, then, must be with creating a feeling of safety and security. To address this need, there are several things you can do. For example, it is helpful to assign a personal buddy to each newcomer, and if possible, one who speaks the newcomer’s home language. The buddy must be a classmate who already knows the school and is comfortable there. The buddy’s job is to accompany the newcomer throughout the day’s routines to make sure he or she knows where to find such essentials as the bathroom, the cafeteria, and the bus stop. The newcomer needs to learn not only where things are but also the various rules for using them. For example, each school has its own rules about how to line up and collect lunch at the cafeteria, where to sit, how to behave, and when to leave. Furthermore, there are culturally specific rules about how to eat particular kinds of food—rules that we take for granted but that may be totally foreign to a new arrival. Perhaps you yourself recall feeling tentative and intimidated the first time you ate in the school cafeteria. If so, you will have some idea of the anxiety that can accompany the first days of school for a youngster who is new not only to the school but also to the entire culture it represents. The personal buddy helps the new student through these initial days, helping alleviate anxieties and embarrassments that are bound to occur.

Another way to address the safety and security needs of newcomers is to follow predictable routines in your daily classroom schedule. Most teachers follow a fairly stable schedule within which instructional content varies. Predictability in routine creates a sense of security for all students, but it is especially important for students who are new to the language and culture of the school. In fact, your predictable routines may be the first stable feature some students have experienced in a long time, especially if they have recently immigrated under adverse circumstances.

Creating a Sense of Belonging

An additional way to promote security and create a sense of belonging is to assign your student to a home group that remains unchanged for a long time. In classrooms in which student seating is arranged at tables, the home group may be defined by table. The purpose of the home group is to develop mini-communities of interdependence, support, and identity. If such groups are an ongoing aspect of classroom social organization, with rules of caring, respect, and concern already in place, then the home group provides an ideal social unit to receive a newcomer.

Regardless of how you organize your classroom, it’s a good idea to seat new students toward the middle or front of the classroom, in a place where you can observe them closely and where they can observe the classroom interactions of other, more experienced students. We don’t recommend placing new students at the back or other far reaches of the room. Students who speak little or no English sometimes tend to be placed at the periphery of the classroom where they blend into the woodwork. Even if you feel a child can’t understand a word you are saying, you can integrate the child into the class by simply looking his or her way while speaking. We encourage conscious integration of newcomers into the social fabric of the classroom so as to avoid unconscious marginalization.

By paying close attention to the social and emotional needs of your new students, you will be laying the foundation for the early stages of language acquisition. For example, the one-on-one attention of the personal buddy offers numerous opportunities for your newcomer to learn many English words and phrases at the survival level. In addition, repetition of classroom routines provides non-English speakers with ideal language learning opportunities because the words and phrases that accompany such routines are constantly repeated within a meaningful, concrete context. If you count the number of times a child hears such functional phrases as “It’s lunch time now” and “The quiet table may line up first,” you will get an idea of how valuable such **context-embedded** (Cummins, 1980) language can be for rapid learning of basic English expressions. Finally, integrating newcomers into cooperative groups provides further social and academic language learning opportunities, as discussed in detail in Chapter 3. By attending to the security needs of your ELs, you simultaneously lay a firm foundation for English language acquisition.

As English language acquisition progresses and students begin to become a part of the social fabric of your class, they are well positioned to grow in self-esteem through successful participation in both the social and academic aspects of classroom life. Growth in self-esteem will be especially facilitated if you have found ways to recognize and honor students’ home languages and cultures. Again, Maslow’s theory provides a useful way to look at the initial needs of newcomers. As the social-emotional foundation is laid, all the other aspects of personal growth may begin to interweave and support each other, with social and academic competence creating self-esteem and reinforcing feelings of security and belonging. In the process, English language development will be further enhanced.

Current Policy Trends Affecting the Education of English Learners

Whether you are new or experienced in the field of education, media reports have no doubt introduced you to various reform efforts in education promoted by federal and state education policy. Because disparate needs and interests are served by education policy, and because there are always divergent points of view as to how any problem may be solved, the arena of educational policy is filled with controversy and debate. In this section, we briefly discuss education policies affecting English learners across the nation and offer additional resources on this complex topic.

Academic Standards and Assessment

The implementation of academic standards and assessment permeates all levels of education today. If you are in a teaching credential program, for example, chances are your coursework addresses standards to teach and assess what you should know and be able to do to be an effective teacher. Similarly, standards have been delineated for K–12 students that specifically define the knowledge and skills that students must attain for promotion and graduation in subjects such

as reading, math, science, social science, and English language arts. In addition, many states have adopted the Common Core State Standards launched by the National Governors Association for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers (www.corestandards.org). In addition, standards have been developed that specifically address English language development for students new to English (e.g., Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages [TESOL], 2006; California State Department of Education, 2002). Teachers generally need to become familiar with the standards of the content areas they teach and with standards specific to English learners. In this section, we introduce you to basic issues in standards-based reforms. In Chapter 3, we discuss how teachers implement standards-based instruction in their classrooms.

The standards and assessment movement traces its origins to *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), a national report funded by the U.S. Congress that called for improvement in education across the country. Among the outcomes of the report was the development of the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), a large-scale, national assessment program that permits comparisons among states on student achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics. By conducting periodic assessments of students in grades 4, 8, and 12, NAEP is able to provide the public with a report card on how well students are doing across the nation. The findings have been used to spur education reforms, such as the reading instruction reforms of the 1990s, aimed at increasing student achievement. The current focus on rigorous academic standards, assessment, and accountability can all be traced back to the reforms called for in *A Nation at Risk*. Importantly, NAEP has not assessed student ability to use the Internet for learning purposes, including Internet reading comprehension skills. However, NAEP is currently developing a technology and engineering literacy framework along with test item specifications targeted for completion in 2014 (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/techliteracy>, retrieved June 24, 2011).

In line with today's emphasis on standards and assessment, a large-scale effort to serve English language learners has been undertaken by the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium (www.wida.us/) involving 15 states serving more than 420,000 English learners in grades preK–12. Among their many accomplishments, WIDA developed English language proficiency standards that served as the basis for TESOL's *PreK–12 English Language Proficiency Standards* (TESOL, 2006), which address social language and academic language development in the content areas, including performance expectations for listening, speaking, reading, and writing. (See Chapter 3 for more information on the TESOL standards.) The WIDA Consortium has also developed an English language proficiency test aligned with their standards and a variety of other standards and assessment tools to help teachers and administrators better serve English learners. Furthermore, WIDA has developed primary language resources, including Spanish language proficiency standards and test report forms to parents or guardians in 19 languages. The WIDA Consortium website merits a visit because new resources are continually added.

In recent years, the push for high academic standards and achievement has gained momentum. Standards documents are generally structured to include (1) content standards that delineate what students should know and be able to do, (2) benchmarks that specify expected knowledge and skills for each content standard at different grade levels, and (3) progress indicators that describe how

well students need to do to meet a given content standard (Laternau, 2003). Criteria for achievement are thus built in to the standards.

High-Stakes Testing

Hand in glove with the use of curriculum standards is the implementation of high-stakes, standardized testing to measure how well standards are being met. Serious consequences may be applied when standards are not met, supposedly to motivate achievement and increase accountability (Ananda & Rabinowitz, 2000). For example, performance on a high school exit exam may determine whether a student will receive a high school diploma, regardless of passing grades in all required high school coursework. Similarly, standardized test performance may play a part in deciding grade retention or promotion of students in elementary, middle, and high school. School funding may depend on raising test scores. Furthermore, teachers and principals may be held directly accountable for student achievement (Afflerbach, 2002). Low-achieving schools, for example, may be subject to re-staffing measures, in which teachers and principal are moved elsewhere and a totally new staff brought in.

The teeth in the jaws of high-stakes testing were sharpened by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), federal legislation reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) originally passed in 1965 to improve academic performance among lower-achieving, “economically disadvantaged” students. Although standardized tests have long been used to identify students who qualify for educational assistance, NCLB raised standardized testing to a higher pitch by requiring states to implement “accountability systems” covering all public schools and students. No Child Left Behind mandated rigorous testing in reading and math for all students in grades 3 through 8. In addition, states were to establish and meet “progress objectives” demanding that *all* groups of students reach academic proficiency within 12 years. Significantly, results must be broken down and reported by poverty, race, ethnicity, disability, and limited English proficiency (U.S. Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2002, p. 1). With test scores highlighted by subgroup in this way, schools have had to focus efforts on the achievement of students in those categories. As a result, NCLB provided new impetus to improve instruction for English learners and others in the affected subgroups. Unfortunately, funding for NCLB has been limited, leaving schools in the precarious position of increasing test scores without meaningful support. Yet, NCLB has imposed negative sanctions when achievement goals are not met, including shuffling teachers and principals around to other schools so as to entirely restaff schools that have low test scores.

With standardized test scores at the forefront of education policy, it is important to note that *socioeconomic status* has proven to be one of the strongest predictors of standardized test performance. Children from low-income families consistently score lower than those in more affluent circumstances; and racial, ethnic, and language minority students are overrepresented in the lower income brackets. Unfortunately, it is unrealistic to assume that simply mandating achievement will improve learning or even raise test scores, especially with the high

EXPERT WEBCAST 1.1

English Language Learners in Middle School and High School (9:49)



Three experts discuss demographics, trends, and myths concerning adolescent students and literacy. In addition, they discuss what is most difficult for ELs and offer different approaches to use in today's classroom.

<http://www.colorincolorado.org/webcasts/middleintro/>

pressure atmosphere it creates. For example, we have heard young children anxiously voice concern that their test performance might cause their favorite teacher to be moved to another school.

Equally problematic is the danger that test scores may be used inappropriately either to retain students or to sort them into less challenging instructional programs. Even worse, high-stakes testing may actually increase the already high dropout rate among racial, ethnic, and language minority students. Because of the lifelong consequences of educational decisions based on high-stakes testing, it is essential that these tests be proven both fair and valid for all students, especially those living in poverty. Therefore, constant scrutiny is needed to monitor the effects of high-stakes testing to ensure that all students are provided meaningful and equitable access to a high-quality education, one that welcomes them in rather than pushing them out and one that broadens their life choices rather than narrowing them (Escamilla, Mahon, Riley-Bernal, & Rutledge, 2003; Valdez Pierce, 2003).

In addition to issues related to socioeconomic status, testing and progress mandates such as those in NCLB pose special problems for many students new to English. First of all, *English proficiency* itself affects student performance and may render test results inaccurate if not totally invalid (Abedi, 2001; Abedi, Leon, & Mirocha, 2001). If performance is low, it may not be clear whether the cause is limited English knowledge, insufficient content knowledge, or a combination of both. In addition to English language proficiency, other factors may affect English learners' preparedness for successful performance, including the amount, quality, content, and continuity of prior schooling relative to the content and format of the test (TESOL, 2003).

Furthermore, NCLB actually requires an *accelerated learning pace* for English learners to close the achievement gap between them and the general student population. With research showing that it takes 5 to 10 years to development academic language proficiency (Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002), this progress mandate is ill informed and highly unrealistic for many English learners. Finally, it is important to remember that English proficiency is necessary but not sufficient for academic achievement in an English language curriculum. It takes more than knowledge of the language to make progress in school. Quality instruction, a safe and supportive school environment, student motivation, and parental support are also factors that come into play.

Finally, an important element missing from the NCLB legislation and testing are technological skills in the new literacies, including online reading comprehension and using the Internet for learning. As we have seen, federal laws like NCLB drive the curriculum, with support and punishment doled out based on standardized test scores. With its silence on technology skills, NCLB has further neglected students living in poverty because they are the ones most likely to be without computers and the Internet both at home and at school (Leu, McVerry, O'Byrne, Kiili, Zawilinski, Everett-Cacopardo, Kenneky, & Forzani, 2011). As federal laws, such as the ESEA, come up for reauthorization, it is important to define and assess technology skills in order to provide the financial support needed to equip schools and prepare all students to effectively use digital tools for learning.

In summary, in recent decades we have witnessed a tidal wave of calls for high educational standards and assessment. In the past, curriculum content has been generally similar in schools across the country, but states and local communities have always retained control over the specifics. However, the national

standards and assessment movement is leading toward a standardized, uniform national curriculum. Whether these reforms will finally help or hinder learning among *all* students remains to be seen. More problematic is the implementation of high-stakes testing, the effects of which have the potential to create larger divisions between rich and poor and between those with power and those without.

Education Policy Specific to English Learners

Although English learners are affected by general education policy, they are also subject to policies specific to their English proficiency status. Federal law requires schools to identify and serve students in need of educational support based on English language proficiency. The purpose of such educational support is twofold: (1) to promote English language development and (2) to provide meaningful instruction so that students may learn academic content appropriate to their grade level. Schools are free to choose the kind of program they believe will best meet the needs of their students, including whether students' primary language will be used for instruction or not. Since 1968, when the ESEA Title VII Bilingual Education Act was passed, bilingual education programs have been developed throughout the country, using languages such as Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, French, and Portuguese. In addition, bilingual programs have served numerous American Indian languages such as Navajo, Cherokee, and Crow. However, with the passage of NCLB, the bilingual education provisions of ESEA Title VII have *not* been reauthorized for the first time in history. The current reauthorization of the ESEA thus effectively eliminates federal support for (but does not prohibit) bilingual instructional programs.

Instead of supporting bilingual instruction, the comprehensive NCLB Act placed heavy emphasis on English language proficiency, not only for students but also for teachers, who must be certified as proficient in written and oral English. Although allowing schools their choice of program type, the act requires them to use instructional methods that research has proven effective. To increase accountability, the act requires states to establish standards and benchmarks for English language proficiency and academic content. Academic content standards are to be aligned with those established for the general K–12 student population.

The elimination of federal support for bilingual education represents the culmination of several decades of heated debate, not just among lawmakers and educators, but among the general public as well. Arguments against bilingual education have often centered on the effectiveness of bilingual instruction in teaching English, with no attention given to potential benefits of bilingualism or primary language use and maintenance. Proponents and opponents both cite research and statistics to support their cases regarding the effectiveness of bilingual instruction (Crawford, 1999; Faltis & Hudelson, 1998; Lessow-Hurley, 2009; Ovando, 2003; Ovando et al., 2003). Research seldom provides absolute, unequivocal findings, however. Instead, results have to be interpreted based on the research method, including background information on students and teachers in the study, the type of program implemented, the extent to which teachers follow the program model, and many other variables. Because it is difficult to control for these variables, research results are usually open to criticism on either side of the debate. In the final analysis, research findings tend to play a smaller role than attitudes, values, beliefs, and ideology in the effectiveness debate. We offer additional resources on bilingual education in Example 1.2.

■ Example 1.2**Useful Books on Bilingual Education**

- Brisk, M. E. (2005). *Bilingual education: From compensatory to quality schooling* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Crawford, J. (1999). *Bilingual education: History, politics, theory and practice* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: Bilingual Educational Services.
- Cummins, J. (2001). *Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: California Association for Bilingual Education.
- Faltis, C. J., & Coulter, C.A. (2008). *Teaching English learners and immigrant students in secondary schools*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Lessow-Hurley, J. (2009). *The foundations of dual language instruction* (5th ed.). New York: Addison-Wesley Longman.
- Ovando, C. (2003, Spring). Bilingual education in the United States: Historical development and current issues. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 27 (1), 1–24.

In addition to the effectiveness issue, anti-bilingual-education sentiment is fueled by the belief that to unify diverse groups, English should be used exclusively in public settings. The use of languages other than English in hospitals, social service agencies, schools, voting booths, and other public venues is considered anathema by members of the “English-only” movement, promoted by groups such as U.S. English and English First. Resentment against immigrants and resources allocated to serve them adds fuel to the English-only movement. These sentiments have found their way into a variety of ballot initiatives in states, such as California and Arizona, aimed at (1) eliminating bilingual education, (2) restricting public services to immigrants, and (3) requiring English as the “official language” to the exclusion of all others. Whether such initiatives are upheld in the courts or not, they send a chilly message that finds its way into our classrooms as we attempt to create positive learning environments for English learners (Gutierrez et al., 2002).

In summary, English learners are subject to both *general* education policy and to policy *specific* to their English learner status. Educational reform in the United States has become extremely politicized in recent decades. Now, more than ever, state and federal legislators are mandating not only the content of the curriculum but at times also the method of instruction. Greater and greater emphasis is being placed on English as the exclusive language of instruction. These trends are leading to greater uniformity and standardization in curriculum and instruction. The current emphasis on detailed and specific curriculum standards and concomitant high-stakes testing has placed tremendous pressure on students, teachers, and principals to get students to test well. These trends existed before the passage of NCLB and are likely to continue with subsequent reauthorizations of ESEA. Now, as never before, educators need to form a strong voice in the political processes that create education policy.

Using Research and Expert Views to Inform Practice

Over the past decade or so, education policymakers have called for systematic reviews of research and expert opinion to identify best practices in the field of English learner education. One such effort funded by the U.S. Office of Education addresses “effective literacy and English language instruction for English learners in the elementary grades” (Gersten, Baker, Shanahan, Linan-Thompson, Collins, & Scarcella, 2007). We summarize the report’s five major recommendations for you here. First, **formative assessments** of English learners’ reading should be carried out to identify students who may need extra help learning to read. Second, **small-group interventions** are then recommended to provide focused instruction in areas of assessed need. Third, **vocabulary instruction** is highlighted. Essential content words should be taught in depth along with instruction on common words, phrases, and expressions not yet learned. Fourth, **academic English** instruction should be provided to develop students’ ability to use English for academic discourse, reading and writing text, and formal argument. Fifth, **peer-assisted learning** opportunities should be provided frequently. In particular, students should work in pairs to complete structured, academic tasks. Paired students should represent different levels of ability or English language development. Chapter 3 provides an overview of effective English learner instruction, and throughout this book, you will find numerous strategies for addressing these research-based recommendations.

What Kinds of Programs Exist to Meet the Needs of English Learners?

If you are fairly new to the enterprise of educating English learners, you might be interested in the kinds of programs in place throughout the country to serve them. We offer such information in the following sections so that you will have an idea of what some school districts are doing. If your school has just begun to experience growth in English learner populations, these general descriptions may provide a starting point for considering a more formalized English language learner support program. It is important to reiterate that *federal law* requires that all English learners be provided with an educational program that provides them (1) *access to the core curriculum* and (2) *opportunities for English language development*. Districts are given substantial latitude in selecting program types and choosing whether to use the students’ home language for instruction. However, all schools are required to have English language development (ELD) standards for their English learners, and these standards must be aligned with the English language arts (ELA) standards that apply to all students. In addition, student progress must be assessed with appropriate instruments so as to hold schools accountable for student achievement. State laws govern program requirements at a more specific level. Thus, as you consider program development for your English learners, you will want to seek information from your state and local offices of education.

English Learner Program Models

English language learners find themselves in a wide variety of school programs, from those carefully tailored to meet their specific linguistic and cultural needs to programs in which little is done differently to accommodate them. Perhaps the simplest distinction among programs is whether two languages or one is used for instruction. *Bilingual education programs* are defined as educational programs that use two languages, one of which must be English, for teaching purposes. Bilingual education programs have taken many forms, but two goals are common to all: (1) to teach English and (2) to provide access to the core curriculum through the home language while students are gaining English language proficiency (Lessow-Hurley, 2009). Bilingual programs vary in primary language use, ranging from using it as an initial bridge to English to aiming for full bilingualism and biliteracy for every student. In addition to bilingual programs, there are program models that use only English for instruction. Like bilingual programs, these programs are required to teach English while providing access to the core curriculum. In order to meet these two requirements, substantial support for English learners is essential, which may include sheltering techniques for content instruction and special English language development instruction. Chapters 3 through 11 of this book offer many strategies for such instruction.

Before discussing program models, we need to say a little about immersion programs because the term *immersion* has been used in different ways. The earliest immersion program model, developed in Canada in the 1960s and in use today, was designed to teach a minority language to native English speakers. For example, in Ontario, native English-speaking students learn French as a second language. In the United States, native English-speaking students learn languages such as Spanish or Cantonese. In immersion programs, teachers use the new language for instruction as a means of second language development for their students. Teachers modify both their language use and their instruction to help students understand, participate, and learn—even though their second language proficiency is limited. Language, content, and literacy instruction take place in the students' new language in the early grades, with the gradual introduction of English (native language) language arts as they progress up the grades. The ultimate goal is full bilingualism and biliteracy in English and the minority language. Programs following the Canadian model are therefore *bilingual* programs designed to serve language majority students.

The Canadian immersion model has also been adopted by some American Indian tribes as a way of reviving or saving tribal languages that are threatened with extinction. In these programs, students are immersed in the tribal language, with the gradual addition of instruction in English. Full bilingualism in the tribal language and English is the goal. Another variation on the Canadian model is “two-way immersion,” or dual-language programs, which aims for bilingualism and biliteracy for *both* English learners and native English speakers. Dual language, or two-way immersion, programs have been extensively studied and evaluated in Canada, the United States, and elsewhere with consistently positive results (Genesee, 1984, 1987; Lindholm & Gavlek, 1994; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Swain & Lapkin, 1989).

In addition to its use in bilingual instruction, the Canadian immersion model has influenced the development of sheltered English teaching strategies, which

form the basis of some monolingual, English-only program models, including structured English immersion. We discuss sheltering strategies in Chapter 3. In Table 1.2, you will find a chart of program models that describes eight different program types, the program focus, the students involved, and how the program uses the primary language. The models are sequenced according to the extent of primary language use, from *none* in the English-only mainstream model to

TABLE 1.2 English Learner Program Models

Program Type	Language(s) of Instruction and Language Development Goals	Students in Classroom	Use of Primary Language (L1)
1. Mainstream or General Education	Instruction in English. Goal: English proficiency	English dominant and EL K–12 students	No L1 support provided to EL students
2. Structured English Immersion	Instruction in English. ESL instruction provided in class or as pull-out. Goal: English proficiency	English dominant and EL K–12 students in mainstream classroom	L1 may be used to for support if feasible
3. Sheltered Instruction or Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE)	Instruction in English with sheltering support for academic content learning. Goal: English proficiency for academic use	EL students K–12	L1 may be used for support if feasible
4. Newcomer Program	Intensive instruction in English for one year or less. Students separated from mainstream classrooms. Goal: Transition to English instruction in sheltered or mainstream classrooms	EL students K–12 who are recent immigrants and those with interrupted schooling	L1 support for ELs if feasible; acculturation and family/community component; students provided with modified classroom instruction and support primarily in English
5. Early Exit Transitional Bilingual Program	L1 used to teach literacy and academic content as a bridge to English. English used increasingly to 2nd or 3rd grade or for 2–3 years in grades 7–12. Goal: Transition to English instruction	EL students K–12	Students taught in both L1 and English; transfer to English-only programs after 2–3 years

TABLE 1.2 *Continued*

Program Type	Language(s) of Instruction and Language Development Goals	Students in Classroom	Use of Primary Language (L1)
6. Late Exit Transitional Bilingual Program	L1 used to teach literacy and academic content. English used increasingly to 5th or 6th grade or for 4–5 years in grades 7–12. Goal: Transition to English instruction	EL students K–12	Students transfer to English-only programs after 4–6 years
7. Maintenance Bilingual Program	L1 used to teach literacy and academic content along with English. Goal: L1 maintenance and English proficiency	EL students and monolingual English-speaking students K–12	Primary language receives sustained focus along with gradual development of English
8. Dual Language Program	L1 and English used to teach literacy and academic content. Goal: Full bilingualism and biliteracy for social and academic purposes	EL students and monolingual English-speaking students K–12	Students use both languages to learn language and academic content in two languages.

balanced use and development of the primary language and English in the dual-language program model. As you read the brief descriptions, think of them as skeletons that may vary considerably in the flesh as differences in communities, students, teachers, and administrators affect program implementation.

Quality Indicators to Look for in Programs Serving English Learners

We have seen that English learner programs vary widely. However, there are certain basic elements recognized by professionals in English learner education that any quality program should include (TESOL, 1992, 2006). Quality programs support students' growth in English language proficiency, cognitive development, academic achievement, and social-cultural adjustment. Quality programs include the following components that promote the linguistic, academic, and social development of English language learners:

- 1. Comprehensive English language instruction** that addresses students' particular language proficiencies and prepares them to handle academic content-area material in English.

2. **Academic content-area instruction** that is challenging; grade level and age appropriate; and geared to students' English development levels, prior knowledge, educational experience, and academic needs.
3. **Opportunities for primary language development** and use as an important resource for promoting academic and social-emotional development.
4. **Professional development opportunities** for language specialists and classroom teachers that expand their abilities to meet ELs' linguistic, academic, and social-cultural needs, including updating teachers' repertoires of technology applications, especially the Internet, for teaching and learning.

Enhancing Learning in the 21st Century Using Technology

In order to prepare our students to succeed in the 21st century, we are challenged to teach curriculum essentials in ways that are coherent, relevant, and technologically current. It is not simply a matter of transmitting information and skills (Cummins, 2009). With so much available on the Internet and elsewhere, we are challenged to help students make sense of large quantities of information, to critically evaluate ideas and assertions, to analyze and solve problems, and to synthesize and communicate their own conclusions and recommendations. In addition to helping students think critically and problem-solve effectively, we need to promote their ability to work well with others as they do so. These cognitive and social processes depend on effective communication skills, including oral, written, graphic, pictorial, and digital communication. Moreover, knowledge of multiple languages and cultures is more important than ever as globalism increases our mutual interdependence. Finally, we need to create classrooms that offer students opportunities to exercise their creativity and imagination. All of these goals must involve the use of state-of-the-art technology, including the Internet and other digital tools.

At this juncture, we want to underscore that exciting as they are, the technologies we use in class are only tools that can mediate and enhance learning (Parker, 2008). They constitute a means to an end, not the end in itself. Furthermore, as you choose these newer tools, you will need to consider the English proficiency required for students to benefit from them and the kind of help you might offer to help them get involved. Some Internet and communication technologies can provide help themselves, such as pictures, photos, print-to-speech capability, and relevant websites in a student's primary language. As you begin to consider new technologies to support your classroom instruction, we recommend the following questions as a guide for evaluating their potential benefits (Cummins, Brown, & Sayers, 2007, p. 109). The more "yes" answers you have to these questions, the better the tool!

1. Does the technology-supported instruction (TSI) provide cognitive challenge and opportunities for deep processing of meaning?
2. Does the TSI relate instruction to prior knowledge and experiences derived from students' homes and communities?

3. Does the TSI promote active, self-regulated, collaborative inquiry?
4. Does the TSI promote extensive engaged reading and writing across the curriculum?
5. Does the TSI help students develop strategies for effective reading, writing and learning?
6. Does the TSI promote affective involvement and identity investment on the part of the students?

This edition integrates the use of the Internet and other digital tools that can motivate, support, and enhance students' content learning and language development. It also offers numerous Internet resources you can access to further your own learning. We encourage you to consider the previous six questions to evaluate each technology-mediated strategy we recommend. Finally, it is important to underscore importance of teaching your students how to use the Internet safely and ethically. Therefore, it is essential that you check with your principal to find out district policy regarding safe, ethical, and appropriate use of the Internet and other digital tools. You can find examples of such guidelines on the Internet yourself by typing in key words "Internet safety." To highlight its importance and to promote deeper understanding, why not guide your students in developing *their own* Internet rules using the process writing strategies detailed in Chapter 7?

A Guide to Internet Resources in Each Chapter

In Table 1.3, you will find a chart showing how we highlight Internet resources throughout this book. First of all, you will find boxes in each chapter introducing you to "expert webcasts" (an expert talks about a particular topic) and "classroom webcasts" (a teaching or assessment strategy is shown in action). Each box will give you the subject, the length of the video, and the URL if you wish to explore a topic further. In addition, we have integrated numerous online resources throughout the chapters for your own learning and to further involve your students in exploring the possibilities of the Internet. We hope these new Internet resources will add a useful and interesting dimension to this book.

TABLE 1.3 Guide to New Internet Resources in This Book

Category	Characteristics	Topics
Expert Webcasts	These web videos give you a chance to hear the experts share their views on their special topics. Here you'll find the URL and the length of the video. Length varies from (1:10) 1 minute, 10 seconds to (1:29:15) 1 hour, 29 minutes, 15 seconds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Academic Language ■ Adolescent Literacy and Technology ■ Assessment ■ Differentiated Instruction ■ ELs in Middle and High School ■ Language Acquisition and Comprehensible Input ■ Power of Poetry ■ Response to Intervention (RTI) ■ Teaching Reading and Vocabulary

TABLE 1.3 *Continued*

Category	Characteristics	Topics
Classroom Webcasts	These webcasts/videos give you a chance to view strategies used in classrooms. Here you'll get the URL and length as well as the classroom level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Content-Area Reading ■ Guided Reading ■ Reading Strategies ■ Running Records ■ Using Projects to Assist EL Learning
Web 1.0	These are mostly generative encyclopedic sites where you can find many links to areas such as teaching lessons, articles, webcasts, and other information you might be looking for.	There are more than 100 selected sites within chapters and at the end of each chapter.
Web 2.0	Theses are interactive websites such as blogs, wikis, podcasts, and vodcasts.	There will be examples of how these are used in and out of classrooms.

Summary

In this chapter, we have highlighted the rich diversity among students who are learning English as a second language in school. In our descriptions, we focused on children's different experiential backgrounds and strengths, while pointing out particular challenges they face in school. Because we believe strongly in building on each student's prior knowledge and experience, we suggest a variety of ways you can get to know your English learners, even though you may not yet share a common language. These activities include personal writing topics, interactive journal writing, and writing by students in their home language. Knowing that cultural differences can create an initial source of miscommunication, we have pointed out various components of culture defined by anthropologists, while suggesting ways to recognize and honor cultural differences among students in the classroom. We have also discussed how classroom organization and language use may be more or less comfortable for students as a result of both cultural and individual differences. We suggest cooperative group learning as one strategy for integrating students into the classroom fabric and promoting English language acquisition. Because we are convinced that social and emotional security forms an essential base for learning, we have also provided a variety of ways to promote newcomers' sense of belonging from day one, using Maslow's hierarchy to give attention to their social-emotional needs. In addition, we discussed how federal and state education policies affect teaching and learning in today's classrooms. Finally, we offered an overview of the kinds of classrooms and programs serving English learners and introduced some of the webtools that will assist you and your students in the 21st-century classroom.

As we come to the conclusion of this chapter, an experience comes to mind that happened many years ago during the summer after my (Suzanne's) first year of teaching second grade in a Spanish/English bilingual maintenance program in Guadalupe, California. I had gone to my mother's home reservation, the Flathead

Indian Nation in northwestern Montana, to visit relatives and enjoy the summer celebrations. From there, we proceeded to the Crow Fair in southeastern Montana, where people gathered from all over the United States and Canada for singing, dancing, stick games, fry bread, beadwork, turquoise jewelry, and festivities at what is billed as the “biggest tipi encampment in the world.” You meet a lot of new people at Crow Fair. One afternoon while relaxing in the shade with my relatives near the Little Bighorn River, we met a family from Canada: mom, dad, and three teenagers. The father, a lanky, long-haired man in his late 40s, asked me what my work was. I replied that I was a bilingual teacher in California and that my second-graders were mostly immigrants from Mexico. I was proud of my work. He paused reflectively and then asked, “Why aren’t you helping your own people?” These words stunned me. My words stuck in my throat and would not form themselves into a meaningful reply. Into the silence, my grandmother intervened, “They are *all* her children.”

In today’s world, these words take on even greater meaning, as the diversity among our students increases daily. Few teachers will go through their careers without encountering students different from themselves in language, culture, race, religion, social class, or land of birth. For teachers of English learners, such differences are a given, representing the challenge and reward inherent in our professional lives. Facilitating English learners to speak, read, write, and learn in a new language has become the task of an increasing number of teachers each day. Without a doubt, it is a task that calls for new learning, not only about theories of language and learning but also about other people, other cultures, and about ourselves.

The essence of our message throughout this book calls for creating a welcoming classroom climate, one that provides each student with a variety of ways to be an active participant and successful contributor. We do not downplay the challenge of creating classroom unity out of student diversity, but we believe strongly that it can be done. Teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students presents an exciting learning opportunity for all of us. Is it easy? Certainly not! The opportunity for any learning and growth—our own and that of our students—is accompanied by great challenge and risk. Successful teaching of culturally diverse students calls for a willingness to go the extra mile, to observe ourselves critically, to question our assumptions, and perhaps to try doing things a little differently: teachers continually learning with open eyes, open minds, and open hearts!

Additional Internet Resources

■ Classroom 2.0

www.classroom20.com/: Classroom 2.0 describes itself as “the social network for those interested in Web 2.0 and Social Media in education.” You can sign up with the group and participate in forums and join special-interest groups such as “Classroom 2.0 Beginner, Elementary School, Mac Classroom, and Distance Collaboration.” This is an award-winning site.

■ Education World

www.educationworld.com: Education World calls itself “The Educator’s Best Friend” and indeed you

can find a great deal in categories such as Teachers, Administrators, Lesson Plans, Technology, and Ed World Community.

■ Online Safety

www.4dmo.com/w/index.php?title=Online_Safety: This site discusses many facets of online safety, including Internet filtering, layers of defenses, educating parents, software and hardware to help parents control Internet access from home, approaches to student rules, and much more.

■ TESL/TEFL/TESOL/ESL/EFL/ESOL Links

<http://iteslj.org/links/>: This link, maintained by the Internet TESL Journal, contains links for teachers as well as students. Under teacher links are articles, lesson plans on a wide variety of subjects, and weblogs of ESL teachers.

■ Virginia Department of Education

www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/index.shtml: This site contains specific step-by-step lesson plans in English and Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Fine Arts, Foreign Language, among many others.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Colombo, M., & Furbush, D. (2009). *Teaching English learners: Content and language in middle and secondary mainstream classrooms*. Los Angeles: Sage.

This is an excellent book for secondary teachers. After introductory chapters, it discusses and gives examples of theory and teaching. Chapters include “Academic Literacy in the Content Areas,” “Assessing Content and Language,” “Making Content Comprehensible,” and other chapters on teaching science, mathematics, history, and language arts. The book is thoughtful and full of teaching strategies and ideas for middle school and high schools teachers.

Crawford, J., & Krashen S. (2007). *English learners in American classrooms: 101 questions and 101 answers*. New York: Scholastic.

This brief book (96 pages) holds a wealth of information gleaned over the years about English learner education in the United States. Written by two longstanding experts in the field, it address 101 frequently asked questions on the topics of EL students, programs, pedagogy, research, heritage languages, criticisms of bilingual education, public opinion, legal requirements, assessment and accountability, politics of language, history, and language policy. At the end of the book, there is a section called “Notes” that offers references specific to the questions in the book in case you want to pursue a topic further. This book is a must-have for anyone who wants an authoritative overview of issues related to English learner education in the United States in a highly accessible, brief format.

Díaz-Rico, L. T., & Weed, K. Z. (2010). *The cross-cultural, language and academic development*

handbook: A complete K–12 reference guide (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

This 334-page book outlines all the basic information considered essential for the California English learner credential. Chapters cover information on second language acquisition and teaching; assessment; culture and cultures in contact; program models; and language program policies and issues. This resource is both comprehensive and up to date in its presentation of theory, research, and practice.

Li, G., & Edwards, P. (2010). *Best practices in ELL instruction*. New York: Guilford.

If you want to know what some of the top researchers and teachers have to say about successful practices for English language learners, this is the book for you. The book consists of five parts: perspectives on ELL instruction, strategies for teaching young ELLs, strategies for teaching adolescent ELLs, best practices in ELL/ bilingual programs and approaches, and critical issues concerning ELL instruction. The book contains an excellent discussion of theory and practice, with the emphasis on practice.

Olsen, L. (2010). *Reparable harm: Fulfilling the unkept promise of educational opportunity for California’s long-term English learners*. Long Beach, CA: Californians Together.

This important monograph documents the unacceptable and “reparable” situation of English learners who move through the grades without ever learning English well enough to graduate high school or succeed in college. These students, known as *long-term English learners*, typically function well in the social uses of English, but

lack academic language skills, including reading and writing for school purposes. This monograph offers a full discussion of such students based on survey data from 40 school districts throughout all regions of California. A picture emerges of “students left behind, parents uninformed, educators unaware, and districts largely stumped about what to do” (p. 1). The monograph offers an analysis of the problem along with seven recommendations of what can be done to improve the situation. Don’t be put off if you are not a California teacher! The phenomenon is widespread and worthy of your attention.

Parker, L. (Ed.). (2008). *Technology-mediated learning environments for young English learners: Connections in and out of our schools*. New York: Erlbaum.

This book brings together the work of leading scholars in examining powerful learning processes using technology with English learners. It is an excellent research reference and pedagogical resource. Articles include “Technology and Literacy Development of Latino Youth” by Richard Duran; “Technology, Literacy, and Young Second Language Learners: Designing Educational Futures” by Jim Cummins; and “Technology in Support of Young English Learners in and Out of School” by L. Leann Parker.

Shatz, M., & Wilkinson, L. C. (Eds.). (2010). *The education of English learners: Research to practice*. New York: Guilford.

This edited book is one of our favorites for translating research and theory into practice. There are

three sections: Early Language Experience and School Readiness, Language and Literacy Principles and Practices in School, and Assessment and Interaction: Working with Children and Families. Chapters include discussions of language acquisition, vocabulary development, and assessment. The last chapter, “Recent Research on English Language Literacy Instruction: What We Have Learned to Guide Practice for English Learners in the 21st Century,” is worth the price of the book alone. This book has guided our thinking throughout preparation of this sixth edition.

Solomon, G., & Schrum, L. (2010). *Web 2.0 how-to for educators*. Washington, DC: International Society for Technology in Education.

Whether you are a technology novice or an Internet veteran, this book is for you! The authors take readers through a step-by-step explanation of various facets of Web 2.0. The first chapter is on blogs and is organized as follows: What is a blog? Why are blogs useful tools? When do teachers use blogs? Who is using blogging for teaching and learning? How do you get started with blogs? Where can you find more information about blogs and blogging? Subsequent chapters—on microblogs, twitter, podcasts, productivity applications, social networks, visual learning tools, virtual environments, and wikis—follow the same format. In addition to providing resources and interactive learning, the book gives many examples of how teachers in schools use Web 2.0. If you buy just one book on Web 2.0, this is the book you’ll want.

Activities

1. As you look at Table 1.1, try to answer as many of the questions as you can regarding your own family traditions. For example, when you think of *family*, are you thinking about your mother and father and perhaps a sister or brother or are you thinking of hundreds of cousins, uncles, and aunts who get together every year for the holidays? Compare your answers with those of another adult. What are the similarities and differences?
2. Take the opportunity to visit a school near you that enrolls newcomer students from other countries. Obtain permission from the principal to visit one of the classrooms. As you observe, try to find out where the students are from and what kinds of special help they are receiving. Use a checklist containing questions such as What language(s) do the students speak? What assistance are they receiving? Is there a paraprofessional who speaks

the students' language(s) or does the teacher use the language? Are there special materials available in the students' home language? What kind of program would you design for these students to promote language development and content-area learning if you were the teacher?

3. Meet with a teacher who specializes in teaching English as a second language. Ask his or her views about the effects of students' cultural and prior educational backgrounds on their school performance. What accommodations does the teacher make to help students adjust? What kinds of programs does the teacher consider best for English learners and why? What kinds of materials or activities has the teacher used with success with English learners?
4. Talk with a child who is learning English as a non-native language. Ask what it is like to learn

English in school; what the hardest part is; what has been fun, if anything; and how long it has taken so far. Ask the student to tell you what program, materials, and activities seem to work best for her or him.

5. Begin an informal study of an ethnic group that you would like to know more about. Begin charting information about the group by listing and noting specific information from Table 1.1, such as family structures, life cycles, roles of men and women in the culture, discipline structures, religion, values, and the like. In addition, after you've gathered descriptive information, look for literature to read by members of that group to get a sense of the culture from an inside view.

MyEducationLab™

Go to the Topics, Instructional Programs and Cultural and Linguistic Diversity, in the MyEducationLab (www.myeducationlab.com) for your course, where you can:

- Find learning outcomes for Instructional Programs and Cultural and Linguistic Diversity along with the national standards that connect to these outcomes.
- Complete Assignments and Activities that can help you more deeply understand the chapter content.
- Apply and practice your understanding of the core teaching skills identified in the chapter with the Building Teaching Skills and Dispositions learning units.
- Examine challenging situations and cases presented in the IRIS Center Resources.
- Check your comprehension on the content covered in the chapter by going to the Study Plan in the Book Resources for your text. Here, you will be able to take a chapter quiz, receive feedback on your answers, and then access Review, Practice, and Enrichment activities to enhance your understanding of chapter content.
- **A+RISE** Visit A+RISE. A+RISE® Standards2Strategy™ is an innovative and interactive online resource that offers new teachers in grades K–12 just-in-time, research-based instructional strategies that meet the linguistic needs of ELLs as they learn content, differentiate instruction for all grades and abilities, and are aligned to Common Core Elementary Language Arts standards (for the literacy strategies) and to English language proficiency standards in WIDA, Texas, California, and Florida.