



Recommended Educational Practices for Standard English Learners

Cheryl Wilkinson, Jeremy Miciak, Celeste Alexander,
Pedro Reyes, Jessica Brown, and Matt Giani

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Recommended Practices for SELs

CREDITS

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Texas Education Research Center

The University of Texas at Austin
Department of Educational Administration, SZB 310
Austin, TX 78712
Phone: (512) 471-4528
Fax: (512) 471-5975
Website: www.utaustinERC.org

Contributing Authors

Cheryl Wilkinson, Jeremy Miciak, Celeste Alexander, Pedro Reyes, Jay Brown, Matt Giani, Carolyn Adger, and Jeffery Reaser

Prepared for

Texas Education Agency 1701 North Congress Avenue Austin, Texas
78701-1494 Phone: 512-463-9734

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Table of Contents

Glossary of Acronyms	viii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ix
Introduction	ix
Defining “Second Dialects of English Speakers”	ix
Standard English Learners in Texas.....	x
Lack of Educational Services for SELs	xi
Study Description and Methodology	xi
Objective 1	xi
Objective 2	xii
Objective 3	xii
Objective 4	xii
Literature Review Findings	xii
Expert Panel Recommendations	xiv
Rationale for Action	xiv
Best Practices.....	xv
Recommendations for Achieving Best Practice in Texas.....	xv
Conclusions and Next Steps	xvii
Recommendations for Future Research	xviii
Policy Implications	xix
RECOMMENDED EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES FOR STANDARD ENGLISH LEARNERS 1	
INTRODUCTION	1
Defining “Second Dialects of English Speakers”	1
Standard English Learners in Texas	3
Racial/Ethnic and Regional Composition	3
The Texas Education System.....	4
The Texas Education System for SELs.....	4
STUDY DESCRIPTION	5
Objective 1	5
Objective 2	5
Objective 3	5
Objective 4	5
METHODOLOGY	6
Best Practices Literature	6
Texas’ and Other States’ Approaches to Instruction for SELs	6
Professional Development Priorities	6
Expert Panel Review Methodology	7
Panel Meeting and Follow-up Procedures.....	7
LITERATURE REVIEW FINDINGS	8
Introduction	8
Rationale for Action	8
Language Varieties	9
Language Varieties and Academic Achievement	10
Language Varieties and Academic Achievement - Three Hypotheses	11
Instruction for SELs—Program Types	11
Instruction for SELs—Program Goals	12

Recommended Practices for SELs

Acquisition of Standard English.....	12
Enhanced Academic Achievement.....	13
Culturally Relevant Pedagogy.....	13
Curricula for SELs.....	13
Professional Development for Educators Who Serve SELs.....	14
Findings Regarding Other States' Approaches to Language Varieties.....	14
Summary of Literature Review Findings.....	15
EXPERT PANEL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	17
Terminology.....	17
Rationale for Action	18
The Achievement Gap.....	18
U.S. National Assessment of Educational Progress Data	19
Best Practices	21
Recommendations for Achieving Best Practice in Texas.....	22
Recommendation 1	22
Recommendation 2	23
Recommendation 3	25
Recommendation 4	27
Recommendation 5	29
CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS.....	30
Summary	30
Next Steps.....	31
Recommendations for Future Research	31
Policy Implications	32
REFERENCES	35
APPENDICES	42
APPENDIX A.....	42
Texas Demographics.....	42
Texas Standards and Assessments	44
Texas' Approach to Language Varieties.....	47
APPENDIX B.....	48
Methodology	48
Attachment B1: Discussion of Initial Findings as Sent to Expert Panel.....	51
Attachment B2: Panel Meeting Agenda.....	54
Attachment B3: Panel Facilitation Guide	55
APPENDIX C.....	58
Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) Report on Professional Development	58
APPENDIX D	69
Brief Biographies of Expert Panelists	69
APPENDIX E.....	71
Literature Review	71
Curricula for SELs	85
Professional Development for Educators who serve SELs	87
Findings Regarding Other States' Responses to Language Varieties.....	88
APPENDIX F	91
Example Changes to Education Definitions in the Texas Education Code	91
APPENDIX G.....	92

Recommended Practices for SELs

Example Changes to English Language Arts TEKS in Texas Administrative Code from Kindergarten to English IV	92
APPENDIX H	94
Example Rider for Further Study of Student Population	94
APPENDIX I	95
Example Change to Educator Preparation Curriculum in the Texas Administrative Code...	95
APPENDIX J	97
Example Change to Principal Preparation Standards in the Texas Administrative Code.....	97
APPENDIX K	98
Example Changes for Grade 4 and Grade 7 Social Studies TEKS in Texas Administrative Code	98

Glossary of Acronyms

Acronym	Full Term
AAE	African American English
CAL	The Center for Applied Linguistics
CDOE	California Department of Education
C & I	Curriculum and instruction
ELL	English language learner
ELPS	English Language Proficiency Standards
ESL	English as a Second Language
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
LAE	Latino American English
LEP	Limited English proficient
The Panel	The Expert Panel convened for this study
PD	Professional development
SB	Senate bill
SBOE	Texas State Board of Education
SBEC	Texas State Board for Educator Certification
SEL	Standard English learner
SSI	Student Success Initiative
TAKS	Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
TEKS	Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
TELPAS	Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System
TEA	Texas Education Agency
TERC	Texas Education Research Center; usages in this report reference the Center at the University of Texas at Austin

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In Senate Bill (SB) 1, the 81st Texas Legislature modified the Student Success Initiative (SSI). The SSI, a program mandated by the Texas Legislature, focuses on improvement in reading, math, and postsecondary readiness among Texas public school students. Rider 42, section (I) of SB 1 directs the Commissioner of Education to set aside funds:

...for the 2010-11 biennium to contract with an Education Research Center established under Texas Education Code § 1.005 for the purpose of conducting research to determine best practices in curriculum adjustments, instructional strategies, and professional development for teachers related to second dialects of English speakers.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) contracted with the Texas Education Research Center (TERC) at the University of Texas at Austin to conduct this research. The research included three major activities: a review of the professional literature about students who speak dialects of English, production of a report about possible professional development (PD) strategies and the convening of an expert panel (The Panel) which reviewed project reports and assisted TERC in developing recommendations for serving second dialects of English speakers.

Defining “Second Dialects of English Speakers”

The word dialect is “generally used to refer to a variety of a language associated with a regionally or socially defined group of people” (Adger, Wolfram & Christian, 2007, p.1). The development of dialects within a language is a natural phenomenon, and unlike slang or errors, dialects are systematic and rule-governed. However, the term “dialect” is often used to refer only to stigmatized language varieties, this is, language varieties which may call negative attention to individuals who use them (Adger et al.). To avoid these negative connotations, and based on the advice of The Panel, we use the socially neutral term “language varieties” in place of “second dialects of English.”

We define the population referenced by “second dialects of English speakers” as students whose home language is English, and who use language varieties which differ from standard or mainstream English, and we refer to these students as *standard English learners (SELs)*, a term selected and defined by The Panel. Standard English can be defined as the language variety most often used in education, media, government, and enterprise. Educators assume that students who speak English are fluent in standard English when they enter school (O’Neal & Ringler, 2010). Standard English differs from academic English, which is “the language that is used by teachers and students for the purpose of acquiring new knowledge and skills...imparting new information, describing abstract ideas, and developing students’ conceptual

Recommended Practices for SELs

understanding (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994, p. 40). Academic English encompasses language which is both content and structure specific; for example, the academic English needed for math differs from the academic English needed for social studies (O'Neal & Ringler, 2010). Some students command standard English at school entrance, but all students must learn academic English, and proficiency in standard English is frequently needed to do so successfully.

While research and data about SELs are limited at best, it has been hypothesized that students who are not proficient in standard English may struggle in school and that their academic performance may fall below that of their non-SEL peers (Adger et al., 2007). Further, there is evidence that directly teaching standard English to SELs can improve their literacy skills (Wheeler, 2006).

Standard English Learners in Texas

Existing data do not allow the exact number of SELs in the Texas PK-12 student population to be determined. However, it is likely that Texas schools serve large numbers of SELs. Extant research has identified several language varieties and influences across the state. The Atlas of North American English (Labov, Ash & Boberg, 2005) identifies two regional language varieties which are used in Texas. These are labeled "South" and "Texas South". South is the variety used across much of the Southeastern United States, while Texas South is a combination of the varieties brought by settlers from the Lower South (Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana) and settlers from the Upper South (Tennessee, Kentucky and North Carolina). There are a number of areas of the state where students are likely to use African American English (AAE), as estimates suggest that more than half of African American children entering urban schools speak a variety of AAE fluently and that the majority of African American students speak AAE to some degree (Terry, N., 2006). Lastly, language used in Texas has also been strongly influenced by the fact that Texas was a part of Mexico and includes a number of citizens whose language retains features of Spanish (MacNeil & Cran, 2005).

During the 2009-10 school year, Texas served over 4.8 million students in both urban and rural settings (TEA, 2010). TEA states that the 2010 racial/ethnic composition of Texas schools was 48.6 % Hispanic (Latino), 33.3% White, 14% African American, 3.7% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.4% Native American. These percentages show that the majority of Texas students are members of racial/ethnic groups that are traditionally considered minority. This is significant to the present study, in that minority group membership is often associated with the use of language varieties that differ from standard English. Results of the literature review and the opinion of The Panel suggest that the Texas SEL population includes large percentages of African American and Hispanic students. There also may be other groups of SELs.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Lack of Educational Services for SELs

Examining Texas education law and supporting regulations suggests that SELs currently do not receive services that differ from those provided to their peers who are proficient in standard English. SELs:

- Will be assumed to have the level of English proficiency needed to succeed in the general classroom without accommodation. When parents/guardians or students complete a district's home language survey during school enrollment, responses will indicate that the language of the home is English. Since the student speaks English, no language proficiency assessment is required.
- Will be served by general education teachers.
- May or may not receive instruction which directly addresses the features of standard English which they have not yet acquired. The objectives that guide their instruction will be drawn from the general state curriculum (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills; TEKS), which does not delineate knowledge or skills specific to students who are SELs.
- Will receive differentiated instruction at the discretion of individual school districts/schools/teachers.
- Will participate in state accountability assessments of academic content areas, but will not participate in state accountability assessments of English language proficiency.

By The Panel's definition, SELs have yet to acquire standard English, an important component of the language. However, the services they receive are very different from those provided to English language learners (ELLs). ELLs' language needs are identified at school entrance, they are taught by educators who have been prepared to provide instruction matched to those needs, and their acquisition of English is assessed on a regular basis.

Study Description and Methodology

This study was undertaken to explore the needs of the SEL population and to determine how Texas might meet those needs more effectively. Four objectives were defined and each was carried out as described below.

Objective 1

Review literature related to curriculum and instruction (C & I) best practices for SELs, and produce a summary report.

- Data sources included (a) relevant professional literature, (b) a review of other states' policies and (c) data about Texas' student demographics and educational policies.
- Professional literature reviewed included empirical studies, best practice articles and relevant books.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Objective 2

Produce a description of PD best practices for educators who serve SELs based on other states' and national practices.

- The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL)¹ was contracted to write a discussion of PD issues and recommendations for SELs. CAL responded to a request from the TERC to address seven PD topics.
- CAL based its report on research regarding effective PD, the authors' own experiences in providing PD on language variety, the authors' own knowledge of language variety-related PD efforts, and research on teachers' implementation of a language variety awareness curriculum conducted by one author.

Objective 3

Conduct an Expert Panel review of the C & I and PD reports.

- In the second phase of this research, at the recommendation of the Legislature, the TERC convened an Expert Panel which included members with expertise in: (1) linguistics, (2) curriculum development, (3) PD, and (4) accommodating linguistic and cultural diversity within classrooms. Panel Members were Drs. Lisa Green, Elena Izquierdo, William Labov, Noma LeMoine, Rebecca Wheeler and Robert Williams.
- The Panel met as a group to review and critique the literature review and PD reports and their findings.

Objective 4

Develop recommendations regarding best educational practice for SELs, which could include changes to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and to other parts of the Texas Administrative and Education codes that might be used as mechanisms for implementation.

- The Panel assisted in developing the description of best practices and implementation recommendations presented later in this report.

Literature Review Findings

We summarize our findings from our review of the literature and of the current practices of other states as follows:

¹ CAL is a private, nonprofit organization working to improve communication through better understanding of language and culture. Established in 1959, CAL is headquartered in Washington, DC. CAL has earned a national and international reputation for its contributions to the fields of bilingual, English as a second language (ESL), literacy, and foreign language education; dialect studies; language policy; refugee orientation; and the education of linguistically and culturally diverse adults and children.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Finding 1: There is a paucity of research that addresses language variety in the instructional context.

Finding 2: The majority of existing research focuses on AAE and there are some consistent trends in findings about the relationship between AAE and academic achievement.²

Finding 3: The specific relationship between the use of a language variety other than standard English and academic achievement is not well understood.

Finding 4: Instruction that is specifically designed for SELs addresses two main goals: acquisition of standard English and increased academic achievement. Standard English instruction is most often carried out using contrastive analysis/code-switching³; strategies for increasing academic achievement use features of the student's language variety in instruction. Both types of instructional strategies have been successful, but a full research base on either is lacking.

Finding 5: There is little guidance about how students' language varieties should be incorporated into content area instruction.

Finding 6: The affective context in which instruction about language varieties occurs (e.g., teacher attitudes and beliefs about language varieties, whether students perceive instruction as adding to what they know and can do or as a demand to stop using their first language variety, etc.) is critical to its success.

Finding 7: There are few existing curricula that are designed to address the language needs of SELs.

Finding 8: PD for teachers should address four main topics: (a) teacher resistance, (b) teacher beliefs, (c) issues of language, identity and power (e.g., teachers should be prepared to think about the linkages between instruction, language and students' personal and cultural identities), and (d) practical strategies for addressing language varieties in the classroom (Godley, Sweetland, Wheeler, Minnici, & Carpenter, 2006).

² Studies conducted with elementary students that speak AAE have documented a negative association between use of AAE and early reading skills (e.g. Kohler et al., 2007; Terry, N. 2006) and mathematical reasoning (Terry, J. et al. 2010).

³ In Contrastive Analysis, the practitioner contrasts the grammatical structure of one variety with the grammatical structure of another variety (presumably the Standard) in order to add the Standard dialect to the students' linguistic toolbox" (Wheeler, 2006, p.17). Contrastive analysis has often been used as a part of teaching ESL; here, it is modified to highlight the contrasts between varieties of English rather than the contrasts between the structures of two languages (Wheeler, 2006, 2008; Baker, 2002). Contrastive analysis instruction is typically paired with instruction and practice in code-switching, that is, changing a sentence or passage presented in one variety of English to another (Wheeler, 2008; MacNeil & Cran, 2005). See Appendix E for more information.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Finding 9: California state policies define AAE and require additional support for students who use AAE if they have difficulty with standard English phonology, structures and/or spelling. Beyond this, we found no state policies that address instruction for SELs, although New York does require that the student’s use of a language variety be considered when language disorders are diagnosed.

Expert Panel Recommendations

The Panel began its work with a discussion of the terminology that might be needed to identify SELs and formulate educational policy for them. They offered the following as examples of terms the state might define and use:

- A “standard English learner (SEL)” is a student whose primary language is English and who speaks a variety of English that differs from standard English. The term SEL could be used to describe the students referenced in Rider 42.
- “Standard English” is defined as the language variety most often connected with and used in education, media, government, and enterprise.
- “Nonstandard varieties of English” include English varieties that are systematic and rule-governed modes of communication and are acquired by students at home. They differ linguistically from standard English. Such varieties include but are not limited to AAE, Appalachian English, and Latino American English (LAE).⁴

Rationale for Action

The Panel concluded that the State of Texas should make changes in existing educational practices that will help educators recognize SELs as a group and that will help them to meet these students’ unique educational needs. They offered two main reasons for this:

1. Strategies for teaching students standard English are available, and have been used successfully with SELs. Although evidence is limited, available data suggest that these strategies can increase students’ use of standard English features and that this can serve to enhance literacy outcomes (Wheeler & Swords, 2010).
2. The Panel believed that developing educators’ abilities to recognize and meet the needs of SELs, including preparing teachers to deliver instruction that develops features of standard English when such instruction is needed, is one way in which the achievement gap between SELs and their non-SEL peers might be addressed. The Panel recognized that many factors can and do influence the academic achievement of minority students, including SELs. Those identified in the literature include, but are not limited to: school resources and facilities, teacher pay, training and collaboration, teacher and classroom quality, teacher expectations, and student characteristics such as self-esteem and

⁴ The Panel selected the term “Latino American English.”

Recommended Practices for SELs

socioeconomic status (Connor, 2008; Rickford, 1999). However, members of The Panel noted that an achievement gap between racial/ethnic student groups that are likely to include large numbers of SELs and White students has existed for a long time and continues to exist (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010).

Best Practices

The Panel endorsed the following as best practices in C & I for SELs, and as best practices for PD for educators who serve this group. They recommended that Texas take steps leading to the implementation of these practices:

- Recognize SELs as a group with unique linguistic and instructional needs;
- Assure that teachers are able to accurately assess and effectively respond to the linguistic and instructional needs of this group;
- Provide instruction to SELs that enables them to acquire standard English using contrastive analysis and code switching;
- Provide instruction to develop student knowledge of the language varieties used in Texas by explicitly addressing various regional language varieties; recognizing their value, and addressing the role and importance of learning and using standard English;
- Provide instruction to all students that is grounded in student interests and background knowledge;
- Provide educators with the information, skills, strategies and materials needed to offer the instruction described above; and
- Provide information to parents, families, and other stakeholders regarding the nature and goals of contrastive analysis, code switching and language variety instruction.

Recommendations for Achieving Best Practice in Texas

The Panel offered formal recommendations incorporating the best practices they developed and suggested specific steps for their implementation. These were:

Recommendation 1

The Panel recommends that the State of Texas recognize standard English learners (SELs) as a group with unique linguistic and instructional needs.

Proposed Implementation Recommendations

- a. The state should develop an appropriate strategy that educators can use to recognize students who are SELs. One option is to define the term SELs in the Texas Education Code; another is to assist schools in examining demographic characteristics of the students that they serve to see if it is likely that large numbers of SELs are present and offer PD to those schools; a third is to provide general PD that builds educators' capacity to serve SELs.

Recommended Practices for SELs

- b. The State Board of Education (SBOE) should include a statement on the academic and linguistic needs of SELs in the introduction to every grade level in the next version of the English Language Arts and Reading TEKS.
- c. The state should commission a study to investigate what language varieties are present in Texas schools and how educators can recognize them and to explore the association between major language varieties with academic outcomes.

Recommendation 2

The Panel recommends that the State of Texas build educators' awareness of language varieties and their impact on student academic achievement.

Proposed Implementation Recommendations

- a. The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) should modify the requirements for teacher and principal preparation to include mention of language diversity.
- b. The state should prepare and disseminate materials that will help educators understand the similarities and differences between ELLs and SELs.
- c. PD should build educator knowledge and awareness of linguistic diversity in the SEL population, including the historical development of different language varieties and their characteristic linguistic features.

Recommendation 3

The Panel recommends that the State of Texas assist SELs in building their knowledge of standard English by implementing contrastive analysis and code-switching instructional strategies.

Proposed Implementation Recommendations

The Panel recommends that the state attempt to assure that educators are provided high-quality PD that includes opportunities for follow-up instruction and coaching, rather than a "quick-fix" approach to learning these strategies.

- a. The state should gather information about the language varieties spoken in Texas so that PD and instruction can be adapted to them.
- b. PD must be provided to educators, including teachers and administrators, which explicitly addresses regional language varieties; recognizes their value, and addresses the role and importance of learning and using standard English.
- c. PD should be differentiated by grade level to assure that the strategies educators learn are developmentally appropriate for their students, and should be differentiated based on educators' previous level of experience with contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction so that teachers gain advanced knowledge and skills.
- d. As teachers begin to implement contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction, fidelity of implementation should be monitored.
- e. Districts should be encouraged to evaluate the effects of implementing contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Recommendation 4

The Panel recommends that the State of Texas undertake needed actions to assure that instruction that addresses language variety is provided to all students.

Proposed Implementation Recommendations

- a. The state should add knowledge and skills that address the language varieties of Texas to the next revision of the state curriculum standards. These might be added to the Grade 4 and/or Grade 7 social studies TEKS.
- b. PD which supports the study of language varieties, including appropriate instructional strategies and materials, should be provided to educators who teach Texas history, and those who supervise them.
- c. PD which helps educators develop an understanding of SELs from both sociocultural and sociolinguistic perspectives should also be provided.
- d. The state should adopt a formal curriculum which addresses the language varieties of Texas.

Recommendation 5

The Panel recommends that the State of Texas take steps to create a thoughtful and tolerant environment that ensures the acceptability of these proposed changes to all stakeholder groups.

Proposed Implementation Recommendations

Panelists recommended that the legislature and TEA to take a proactive approach in addressing any potential controversy that recognizing SELs as a group and introducing instruction in standard English and language varieties may generate. They suggested that:

- a. The state should make efforts to associate the new program and its instructional strategies with the goal of improved standard English for all students.
- b. Pre- and inservice education for educators should address strategies for communicating with families and communities about program methods and goals.
- c. Schools implementing standard English acquisition programs should make systematic efforts to work with parents and communities.

Conclusions and Next Steps

Both our literature review and The Panel have presented evidence that SELs are a group whose educational needs should be addressed. The language skills with which SELs begin school differ from the language skills of students who begin school speaking standard English. However, while instruction for ELLs is guided by the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) and by other state policy, this is not the case for SELs. SELs may or may not receive instruction that addresses the features of standard English they do not yet command, and the decision regarding whether this instruction is provided is made by individual districts, schools and/or teachers.

Recommended Practices for SELs

The overall recommendation of the Panel is to increase teacher capacity such that teachers recognize SELs in their classrooms and offer instruction that addresses their needs. The Panel recognized that further information about Texas's SEL population is needed, but also believed that strategies that can be used to offer differentiated instruction to SELs (i.e., contrastive analysis/code-switching and language variety awareness instruction) exist. They have been used in classrooms and school districts in other states, and there is evidence that they have achieved success in developing students' standard English skills. While two other states have limited policies that address SELs, implementation of The Panel's recommendations would allow Texas to become the first state to have a comprehensive policy regarding instruction for this group. However, for these recommendations to be implemented there is a need to gather data that will allow the state to develop a better understanding of the SEL population in Texas. Policy issues related to addressing the needs of a heretofore unidentified group must also be addressed.

Recommendations for Future Research

In considering the state's response to the needs of SELs, it is important to recognize the limits of current knowledge about this population and to address the gaps that exist. A necessary first step in any such efforts would be to commission a study of the Texas SEL population. While examining the demography of the state's student population suggests that there may be large numbers of SELs, it is important to verify this hypothesis, to examine achievement data to obtain an accurate estimate of the number of SELs who are, in fact, in need of additional services, to identify the schools and districts which serve them, and to know how many and which language varieties they speak. Such data could inform efforts to develop a language variety awareness curriculum, and could serve as a needs assessment for PD efforts.

Conducting research to study the SEL population requires that an efficient and accurate method for identifying SELs be developed. At present, only one individual student assessment for identifying speakers of language varieties other than standard English exists (Seymour, Roeper & de Villers, 2003); thus, research that leads to the creation of an identification process is critical. While individual identification procedures might be considered, any study undertaken should first address whether identification of individual students is necessary, or whether identification of classrooms, schools or districts which serve large numbers of SELs might be sufficient to allocate resources to address their needs. Likewise, the study should consider whether direct student assessment is necessary, or whether classroom teachers can reliably identify SELs. Should the state decide to serve SELs as a group, it should commission research that addresses these issues.

Research regarding the similarities and differences between the SEL and ELL student populations is also needed. This research should focus on what instructional strategies may be appropriate for both populations, while also elucidating how instruction for the two groups should be differentiated. Using results of this research, it may prove feasible to envision the state's response to SELs and ELLs as separate parts of a larger policy addressing language diversity in Texas' schools. Results should also be used to inform

Recommended Practices for SELs

teacher preparation and PD. Since SELs are currently served by general educators, while ELLs are typically served by either bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) certified teachers, it will be important to assure that both groups of educators are familiar with any instructional strategies that are appropriate for both groups, and that they are also familiar with characteristics of best instructional practices that are unique to the group(s) that they serve.

Finally, future research should address the outcomes of using strategies designed for SELs with English-speaking students who have acquired standard English before school entrance (i.e., non-SELs). We were unable to find any research that addressed either achievement or affective impacts of these strategies for this group. However, Wheeler and Swords (2010) assert:

Code-switching helps *all* (emphasis in original) students understand how dialect contributes to character, voice and setting in literature...lessons directly affirm national standards that require students to appreciate diverse dialects and cultures. Further, the technique of contrastive analysis embodies critical thinking—skills of observation, description, hypothesis formation and hypothesis testing—skills of analysis and synthesis that enhance the abilities of all students. (p. 256)

It is critical that any future research or program evaluations address whether these outcomes are in fact achieved. Educators will need data-based guidance regarding which students should receive contrastive analysis-code-switching instruction.

Policy Implications

As with any new initiative, the consequences of implementing The Panel's recommendations as written must be fully analyzed.

The following areas may be important to address:

- The state is limited in what it has the authority to execute. The state cannot mandate or establish a curriculum, instead it can only recommend and set curriculum standards. Therefore, the state could consider the adoption of policies which address the language varieties in Texas.
- The way in which the state recognizes SELs as a group with unique educational needs, should this be done, is a major consideration.
 - If SELs are defined as a subgroup in the Texas Education Code, they may become a group whose progress is tracked through the accountability system, and whose progress becomes a part of determining accountability ratings for schools and school districts. There may also be fiscal implications.
 - Assuring that the ELPS are used to guide the instruction of SELs, and that SELs are specifically defined in these standards, offers advantages. A successful system for serving students who are acquiring English already exists, and the ELPs have features that appear to be applicable to SELs.

Recommended Practices for SELs

They were designed as an enrichment tool for language acquisition, and the ELPS Proficiency Level Descriptors could be used to measure SELs' standard English language development. However, there are some barriers. For example, although SELs could potentially participate in instruction offered through ESL programs, this would be at the discretion of individual districts, schools and teachers. Should SELs be served outside of ESL programs, it is likely that their instruction would be provided by general educators, rather than teachers who hold ESL certification. At present, these educators are less familiar with language acquisition instruction than are bilingual educators.

- Standards specific to SELs, could be designed using the ELPS as a model. This would allow the advantages of the ELPS to be retained, while incorporating modifications needed to address SELs' unique needs. However, even with an existing model, developing a new system would require large amounts of effort and funding, and might lead to the need for individual identification and accountability.
- Finally, methods that do not require changes in statewide legal codes might be considered. For example, districts or schools most likely to serve SELs could be identified, and those districts or schools could be provided with PD or other assistance in meeting student needs.
- The Panel recommended that language variety awareness instruction be provided to all students. However, their suggestion that changes be made in Social Studies TEKS is difficult to immediately implement. The Social Studies TEKS for the next six years have been set. It will be important to consider other, less formal ways in which language variety awareness instruction can be introduced (e.g., providing PD to Texas History teachers which introduces them to the strategies and materials needed to provide such instruction).
- It is important that any new initiative, including recognizing the needs of SELs, be evaluated in ways that assure that all outcomes that ensue, both intended and unintended, are examined.
- Efforts to recognize the needs of SELs must be considered in a context of competing priorities for limited resources.

Clearly, recognizing the SEL population in Texas, and developing the capacity of Texas educators to begin addressing its needs is an ambitious undertaking, and to do so, many important resource and policy decisions must be thoughtfully made. However, it is important to recognize that there are a number of potential benefits to be gained from these efforts. At a minimum, the skills of Texas educators, and their understanding of the students that they serve will be increased, and their ability to assist students in acquiring a critical skill, the appropriate use of standard English, will be enhanced. At best, all Texas students will leave school with an understanding of the state's language varieties and with the ability to use standard English effectively when they need and choose to do so.

RECOMMENDED EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES FOR STANDARD ENGLISH LEARNERS

INTRODUCTION

The Student Success Initiative (SSI) was enacted by the 76th Texas Legislature in 1999. The SSI, a program mandated by the Texas Legislature, focuses on improvement in reading, math, and postsecondary readiness among Texas public school students. In Senate Bill (SB) 1, the 81st Texas Legislature modified the SSI. Rider 42, section (I) of SB 1 directs the Commissioner of Education to set aside funds:

...for the 2010-11 biennium to contract with an Education Research Center established under Texas Education Code § 1.005 for the purpose of conducting research to determine best practices in curriculum adjustments, instructional strategies, and professional development for teachers related to second dialects of English speakers.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) contracted with the Texas Education Research Center (TERC) at the University of Texas at Austin to conduct this research. The research included three major activities: a review of the professional literature about students who speak dialects of English, the production of a report about possible professional development (PD) strategies and the convening of an expert panel (The Panel) which reviewed project reports and assisted the TERC in developing recommendations for serving second dialects of English speakers.

Defining “Second Dialects of English Speakers”

For purposes of this study, the TERC has defined the population referenced by “second dialects of English speakers” as students whose home language is English, and who use language varieties which differ from standard English. This definition is based both on the language in Rider 42 and on the services which are currently offered to students in Texas. The language of the rider references English dialects, suggesting that students who speak languages other than English are not the intended population. Students who speak other languages are likely to be identified as English language learners (ELLs), and to receive bilingual and/or English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction to address their need to achieve English proficiency. In contrast, there is no identification process or coordinated set of instructional services for students who speak language varieties other than standard English.

In this report, we acknowledge the sensitivity surrounding terminology about language varieties discussed by Adger, Wolfram, and Christian (2007) in their work, *Dialects in Schools and Communities*. According to Adger et al. (2007), the word dialect is “generally used to refer to a variety of a language associated with a regionally or socially defined group of people” (p. 1). Dialects are entirely natural language

Recommended Practices for SELs

phenomena, and all people speak a specific dialect. Indeed, “a person cannot speak a language without speaking a dialect of that language” (Adger et al., p. 2).

This fact is underappreciated in common discourse. The word dialect is often used to refer exclusively to stigmatized language varieties (Adger et al., 2007). To avoid these negative connotations, we use the socially neutral term language varieties to refer to the differing linguistic patterns of geographical regions and socially defined groups. This term arises from our own discussions, as well as the specific recommendations of The Panel (see Methodology section). To maintain consistency across the report, we have incorporated The Panel’s recommendations for terminology throughout.

The most commonly researched language variety in American education is that associated with African American communities. Numerous terms have been used to reference this language variety, including “black English”, “Ebonics,” “African American Vernacular English,” and “African American English” (AAE). In this report, we use the term AAE. Our use of this term is not meant to reference a singular linguistic variety used by all African Americans in the United States. We use the term fully understanding the dynamic nature of language in different sociocultural settings.

Another, less researched language variety is that associated with Hispanic communities in the United States. This language variety has been described as Hispanic English, Spanglish, or Latino English. In this report, we use the term Latino American English (LAE) to reference this language variety. As before, our use of this term is not meant to reference a singular linguistic variety, or to imply that all individuals of Hispanic origin speak LAE.

There are multiple terms used to reference non-stigmatized language varieties. As we reviewed literature, we found a variety of terms used for the “mainstream” language variety, including “standard English,” “formal English,” and “mainstream American English.” At the recommendation of The Panel, the term “standard English” is used to refer to the language variety associated with education, government, media, and enterprise. In doing this, we do not comment on the relative value of one variety of English versus another. We also acknowledge that standard English does not represent a clearly defined, constant entity. Following the lead of Rickford and Wolfram (2009), we assert that standard English is often defined by the absence of stigmatized features. In their words, “if a person’s speech is free of socially disfavored grammatical constructions and socially stigmatized frequency levels of usage for pronunciation features, then it is considered standard” (p. 7).

Further, standard English is distinguished from the language of schools and classrooms. We use the term academic English to describe the variety of English that is most frequently taught and assessed in schools. Academic English is “the language that is used by teachers and students for the purpose of acquiring new knowledge and skills...imparting new information, describing abstract ideas, and developing students’ conceptual understanding (Chamot & O’Malley, 1994, p. 40). Academic English encompasses language which is both content and structure specific; for example, the

Recommended Practices for SELs

academic English needed for math differs from the academic English needed for social studies (O’Neal & Ringler, 2010). Some students command standard English at school entrance, but all students must learn academic English, and proficiency in standard English is frequently needed to do so successfully.

Students who speak a variety of English that differs from standard English are referred to as standard English learners (SELs).⁵ This term parallels the term ELLs, which is used to refer to students who speak a primary language other than English. Similar to the use of “ELL” in educational literature and practice, our use of the term “SEL” should not be used to obscure the varied backgrounds, abilities, levels of English proficiency and educational needs of individual SELs.

Standard English Learners in Texas

In this section, we use demographic and other data about Texas public school students to suggest the characteristics of Texas SELs. The services that are provided to SELs under current education statutes and regulations are also explored. All of these are important considerations in determining whether changes are needed to provide instruction which reflects best practices for this group. Further detail about SELs in Texas, Texas’ curricular standards, and Texas’ assessment framework can be found in Appendix A.

Racial/Ethnic and Regional Composition

Texas public schools served over 4.8 million students in both urban and rural settings during the 2009-10 school year (TEA, 2010). Texas’ large school population is the result of steady population growth in all parts of the state. During the past decade alone, the number of Texas students in Pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 has increased by over 21%, more than three times the national average growth (TEA, 2010). The Texas education system serves the second largest student population in the United States, with only California having a larger student population.

Texas is also serving a progressively more diverse population. TEA states that the 2010 racial/ethnic composition of Texas schools was 48.6 % Hispanic (Latino), 33.3% White, 14% African American, 3.7% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.4% Native American. These percentages show that the majority of Texas students are members of racial/ethnic groups that are traditionally considered minority. This is significant to the present study, in that minority group membership is associated with the use of language varieties that differ from standard English. For example, estimates suggest that more than half of African American children entering urban schools speak a variety of AAE fluently and that the majority of African American students use features of AAE to some extent (Terry, N., 2006).

⁵ The Panel developed this definition.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Texas does not currently collect data that make it possible to distinguish between SELs and students who have acquired standard English before school entrance. As such, it is impossible at this time to accurately count the number of students who may require additional instruction in standard English. In lieu of a precise number, we can consider potential areas in which there are schools that may serve large percentages of SELs, based on what we know about language variety in Texas and how it might intersect with Texas' diverse student population. Extant research has identified several language varieties and influences across the state. The Atlas of North American English (Labov, Ash & Boberg, 2005) identifies two regional language varieties which are used in Texas. These are labeled "South" and "Texas South". South is the variety used across much of the Southeastern United States, while Texas South is a combination of the varieties brought by settlers from the Lower South (Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana) and settlers from the Upper South (Tennessee, Kentucky and North Carolina). In addition, there are a number of areas, especially in the eastern portions of the state, which serve large proportions of African American students. As explained above, many of these students are likely to speak AAE (Terry, N., 2006). Lastly, language use in Texas has also been strongly influenced by the fact that Texas was a part of Mexico and includes a number of citizens whose language retains features of Spanish, creating a unique variety of English (McNeil & Cram, 2005). Overall, it is likely that Texas schools serve large numbers of SELs.

The Texas Education System

Texas organizes instruction using a set of state curriculum standards for instruction and accompanying state accountability tests which measure competency in the knowledge and skills described by those standards. These standards and assessments are used by all Texas districts, schools, and teachers to focus course content and to assess student learning.

The Texas Education System for SELs

Examining Texas education law and supporting regulations suggests that SELs currently do not receive services that differ from those provided to their peers who are proficient in standard English. SELs:

- Will be assumed to have the level of English proficiency needed to succeed in a general education classroom without accommodation. When the parent/guardian or student completes the district's home language survey, responses will indicate that the language of the home is English. Since the student is an English speaker, no language proficiency assessment will be required, and the student will be placed in general education.
- Will be served by general education teachers. These teachers may or may not know how to address the linguistic needs of students who do not speak standard English.
- May or may not receive instruction which directly addresses the features of standard English which they have not yet acquired. The objectives that guide

Recommended Practices for SELs

their instruction will be drawn from the general state curriculum (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills; TEKS), which does not delineate knowledge or skills specific to students who are SELs.

- Will receive differentiated instruction at the discretion of individual school districts/schools/teachers.
- Will participate in state accountability assessments for academic content areas, but will not participate in state accountability assessments of English language proficiency, as the latter are intended for ELLs.

Although they have yet to acquire an important component of English, the services SELs receive are very different from those provided to ELLs. ELLs' language needs are identified at school entrance, they are served by educators who have been prepared to provide instruction that is matched to those needs, and their acquisition of English is assessed on a regular basis.

STUDY DESCRIPTION

This study was undertaken to explore the needs of students who are SELs and to determine how Texas can use best practices suggested in the professional literature and validated by The Panel to effectively meet these unique needs. Its ultimate goal is to make informed, high quality, and practical recommendations to the 82nd Texas Legislature regarding curriculum adjustments and instructional strategies for students who speak varieties of English, along with recommendations regarding PD for educators who serve this group. Objectives for the study included:

Objective 1

Review literature related to curriculum and instruction (C & I) best practices for SELs, and produces a summary report.

Objective 2

Produce a description of PD best practices for educators who serve SELs based on other states' and national practices.

Objective 3

Conduct an Expert Panel review of the C & I and PD reports.

Objective 4

Develop recommendations regarding best educational practice for SELs, which could include changes to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and to other parts of the Texas Administrative and Education codes that might be used as mechanisms for implementation.

METHODOLOGY

This section provides an overview of the methods used to collect the information and data used to address each objective. We include a brief description in this section; a more in-depth description of these procedures appears in Appendix B.

Our study included two distinct phases. During the first phase, we gathered information that would help us to understand SELs and their needs, and that would help us to identify any best practices that exist for this group of students (objectives 1 and 2). We simultaneously searched professional literature and state policies, and worked with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) to address PD issues. We used this information to build a literature review. From the literature review, we identified important questions about best practice that we were unable to answer using existing literature. In the second phase, we presented our findings and questions to The Panel, and obtained their assistance in developing final recommendations about best practices for SELs (objectives 3 and 4). These procedures are described below in the approximate order in which they occurred.

Best Practices Literature

The TERC research team designed a search to identify professional literature investigating best practices in curriculum and instruction for SELs. We also searched for articles that would inform best practices in PD for teachers of this population. We systematically coded each identified article. When all articles were coded, we met to identify emergent themes, and developed an outline that followed the structure of our coding spreadsheet. As sections of the literature review were written, team members reviewed them to ensure that all relevant information was included and adequately reflected the literature base.

Texas' and Other States' Approaches to Instruction for SELs

We sought information to describe any policies and practices that Texas and other states have in place to address curriculum and instruction for SELs and/or PD for educators who serve them. We conducted a telephone interview with experts at CAL, and asked Panelists to identify states with such policies. State education agency websites were utilized to review the policies that were provided to us.

Professional Development Priorities

The CAL was contracted to assist the TERC in developing the PD portion of this study. CAL is a private, nonprofit organization working to improve communication through better understanding of language and culture. Established in 1959, CAL is headquartered in Washington, DC. CAL has earned a national and international reputation for its contributions to the fields of bilingual, ESL, literacy, and foreign language education; dialect studies; language policy; refugee orientation; and the education of linguistically and culturally diverse adults and children. CAL wrote a

Recommended Practices for SELs

discussion of PD issues and recommendations for SELs addressing the following topics (See Appendix C):

1. PD priorities.
2. PD themes or concepts.
3. What type of vocabulary should be used to address the issues surrounding students who speak varieties of English?
4. First steps a state might take to create statewide PD addressing this topic.
5. What capacities a state needs to implement statewide PD around this topic.
6. Variations in the recommended PD depending on language variety used by the population being addressed (e.g. AAE, LAE).
7. How the TEA might develop statewide PD for educators who serve SELs.

CAL based their discussion on research regarding effective PD, their own experience in providing PD on language variety, their knowledge of language variety-related PD efforts, and research on teachers' implementation of a language variety awareness curriculum conducted by one of the report's authors.

Expert Panel Review Methodology

In the second phase of this research, we convened The Panel. We identified potential members of The Panel through a review of prominent literature on SELs and in consultation with scholars interested in this population. Senator Royce West (Texas Senate District 23), the sponsor of the rider creating this research project, also provided a list of six experts to us. Including his nominees, we identified 19 potential Panelists; this final list was approved by TEA.

We sought to create a Panel composed of members representing expertise in: (a) socio-linguistics, (b) curriculum and instruction, (c) PD, and (d) educational policy. Drs. Lisa Green, University of Massachusetts, Elena Izquierdo, University of Texas at El Paso, William Labov, University of Pennsylvania, Noma LeMoine, Los Angeles Unified School District (retired), Rebecca Wheeler, Christopher Newport University, and Robert Williams, Washington University all served on The Panel. A brief biography of each Panelist appears in Appendix D. The Panel was asked to review and critique the literature review, the PD report, and each report's findings. The Panel was asked to assist us in developing a description of best practices and recommendations regarding their implementation from the information we provided and from their vast knowledge of their own disciplines.

Panel Meeting and Follow-up Procedures

The Panel met on November 8 and 9, 2010. Questions generated by the literature review and CAL PD reports were organized by topic. The Panel was asked to formulate recommendations as discussion of each topic ended. At several points during the meeting, recommendations were read back to Panel members, and they were asked to comment and/or revise them as needed. TERC staff also prepared a summary of best practices suggested by Panel members which they reviewed and modified as a group.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Finally, TERC staff showed Panelists portions of the Texas Administrative Code and the Texas Education Code so that they could collaboratively develop wordings for changes needed to implement their recommendations.

Following the meeting, a summary of Panel decisions and recommendations was sent to each Panelist. They were asked to make comments, suggestions or changes as they saw fit. Comments were received from all Panelists and have been incorporated into this report.

LITERATURE REVIEW FINDINGS

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings of the review of professional literature concerning SELs. Major topics addressed include the academic achievement of SELs, instructional strategies and curricula tailored to the needs of SELs, PD for teachers of SELs, and other states' response to the academic needs of SELs. The full literature review, as revised using suggestions from The Panel, appears in Appendix E.

Introduction

Rationale for Action

A long-standing and well-known issue in education is the racial and ethnic achievement gap between the achievement of White students and minority students (African American and Hispanic). The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has tracked African American-White and Hispanic-White achievement gap trends over the past 30 years. All three of these student groups (i.e., African American, Hispanic and White) made gains on the 2007 NAEP reading assessment, which included students in Grade 4 and Grade 8. However, these gains were not sufficient to narrow achievement gaps between minority students and their White peers. Only one instance in which average scores between groups were closer than they had been in 1992 and 2005 was found; this occurred for the difference between African American and White students in Grade 4 (Lee, Grigg & Donahue, 2007).

Because SELs have not historically been identified as a unique student subgroup, it is difficult to quantify what impact being a SEL has on academic achievement. Many researchers believe that race/ethnicity can be used as a proxy for SEL status as patterns of achievement are examined (see, for example, National Research Council, 2010; Wheeler & Swords, 2010; Labov & Hudley, 2009; Craig et al., 2009). While these researchers acknowledge that many diverse factors can influence academic achievement, they assert that national data which document persistent achievement gaps between minority students and their White peers in reading and mathematics are evidence of the impact of speaking a language variety other than standard English. Further information on the reading achievement gap between African American and White students and Hispanic and White students can be found in the section of this report titled "The Achievement Gap."

Recommended Practices for SELs

Wheeler and Swords (2010) describe results of several studies of writing development that suggest that achievement in this area is also affected by SEL status. These studies document that students who enter school using a language variety other than standard English use the grammar of that language variety in their writing, and will continue to do so, even at the community college level. Labov and Hudley (2009, p. 8) state, “In students’ writing, the appearance of nonstandard forms is apparent and overt.”

Language Varieties

Language varieties have been the topic of a large amount of research, much of which addresses linguistics-related topics. Information is available about the language varieties that exist across the United States, their characteristics, and the characteristics of their use. Research that considers language variety in the context of instruction for students in Grade Prekindergarten through Grade 12 is more limited. Many of these addressed the relationship between the frequency of use of the features of a recognized variety of English and academic achievement within a specific content area. There were few empirical studies that addressed either instructional strategies or curricula designed for SELs, and we found no empirical studies that addressed PD for educators who serve these students. Therefore, we begin with three important limitations to our literature review:

1. The most important limitation of the literature that we located was the student groups addressed. Nearly all studies focused on students who speak AAE, with only two studies focusing directly on students who used other language varieties. While our intent was to produce a literature review that encompassed all language varieties that might be used by Texas students, it was not possible to do so. Therefore we use the AAE literature as guidance and apply findings from it to the SEL population as a whole. We understand that there are limitations associated with doing this, as there may be differences between students who speak AAE and the SEL population as a whole. However, students who speak AAE share at least some characteristics with other SELs; most notably, the use of a language variety other than standard English at school entrance.
2. We were not able to locate a research base focused on the instruction of students who have not yet acquired standard English that would meet strict evidence standards, such as those outlined by the What Works Clearinghouse (Institute for Education Sciences, 2008). However, we did find several different small intervention studies which documented increases in the number of standard English features SELs used in their writing after instruction (Wheeler & Swords, 2010). A study of one classroom (Wheeler & Swords, 2010) also documents a narrowing of the gap between scores of African American and White students on year-end NCLB-required testing of the Virginia Standards of Learning.
3. While we focus on language varieties and achievement, we recognize that many other factors may influence school outcomes for SELs. These may include, but are not limited to: school resources and facilities, teacher pay, training and collaboration, teacher and classroom quality, teacher

Recommended Practices for SELs

expectations, and student characteristics such as self-esteem and socioeconomic status (Connor, 2008; Rickford, 1999).

Language Varieties and Academic Achievement

Studies which have directly addressed the relationship between speaking a language variety other than standard English and academic achievement are limited, and mainly focus on the literacy skills of students who speak AAE. Results are complex, and suggest that the effects of speaking AAE on achievement vary with the target literacy skill (e.g., see Kohler et al., 2007). However, several studies suggest that AAE speakers have reading difficulties which reflect their use of this language variety:

- Charity, Scarborough and Griffin (2004) found that AAE speakers' early reading achievement significantly correlated with their familiarity with standard English, with students in kindergarten through Grade 2 who were more familiar with standard English achieving higher reading scores.
- Craig et al. (2009) reported that students in Grade 1 through Grade 5, the rate of production of AAE features negatively correlated with scores on standardized tests of reading achievement. They also found that students who were able to shift more effectively between AAE and standard English achieved higher reading scores than their peers who were not able to shift between language varieties. (Ability to shift was measured using the percentage of difference in the use of AAE features between an oral and a written narrative task.)

We found only one study that directly addressed mathematics achievement (Terry, J. et al., 2009). This study examined the relationship between “density” of AAE use and scores on a standardized test, taking into account language features of each problem, problem difficulty, and overall student ability. While not all language features had an impact on math performance, those that did (possessive –s and verbal –s) were associated with lower math scores for students who spoke AAE.

Likewise, we found only one study which addressed the effects of speaking LAE (Labov & Baker, 2010). Using a group of struggling readers, the study examined the probability that a LAE-based reading error would be followed by further reading errors. The same procedure was used for a group of struggling readers who spoke AAE. Different patterns were found for the two groups, with more types of errors being significant for students who spoke LAE. Labov and Hudley (p. 13) describe implications of these results as follows: “The consequences for an intervention strategy are clear: Latino readers need more assistance than African American readers, particularly in the case of the past tense suffix.”

Overall, while it is limited, available research does suggest that use of a language variety other than standard English can exert a negative impact on reading and mathematics achievement. Recent research suggests that these achievement patterns may differ by language variety.

Language Varieties and Academic Achievement - Three Hypotheses

How using a language variety other than standard English may influence academic achievement is not well understood. Three hypotheses that attempt to explain this relationship have been put forth in the literature. The first hypothesis focuses on teacher bias against language varieties other than standard English, particularly AAE (Goodman & Buck, 1973; Labov, 1995; Connor, 2008). This hypothesis argues that teachers often hold language varieties other than standard English in low regard. They therefore have diminished expectations for SELs and provide lower quality instruction.

The second hypothesis focuses on the linguistic mismatches between language varieties other than standard English and standard English. Again, most research has examined mismatches between standard English and AAE (Cecil, 1988; Labov, 1995). This mismatch can occur across all components in language including: (a) phonology, (b) morphology, (c) semantics, (d) pragmatics, and (e) lexicon, commonly called vocabulary. Differences between-language varieties in all five components are hypothesized to create additional barriers in learning to read and write (Connor, 2008).

The third hypothesis suggests that a student's awareness of linguistic differences between his/her first language variety and standard English, called linguistic flexibility, dialectal awareness, or metalinguistic awareness, explains differences in student achievement. Students who are more aware of differences are better able to make adjustments between language varieties and to select the one that is needed to show their knowledge in a given situation.

Research evidence does not fully support any hypothesis, although there is some support for each. Likewise, no one hypothesis, or even all of them together, fully explains achievement patterns for SELs. This is important to our study, in that it limits our (and the education field's) ability to judge whether current instruction and curricula for SELs truly address the root cause of any academic difficulties that they experience.

Instruction for SELs—Program Types

One way in which instruction has been differentiated for SELs is through the use of the student's own language variety. Three types of programs were initially defined. In "instrumental" programs, the students' first language variety is used as the medium for teaching literacy and other content subjects. In "accommodation" programs, the student's first language variety is always accepted and sometimes encouraged in the classroom (e.g., for use in writing), but it is not used as the medium of instruction, as it would be in an instrumental program. Finally, "awareness" programs use the language variety itself as a focus of study. This may be done as a part of studying literature, by studying the topic of language varieties, or by using contrastive approaches. Based on a review of the literature, Siegel (1999) reports that all three types of programs have been used with success.

Recommended Practices for SELs

More recently, a fourth program type, “integrated instruction” has also been suggested. An integrated program combines general instruction about language variety with instruction in standard English. The only available research (Sweetland, 2006; cited in National Research Council, 2010) reports that an integrated program was more effective than either standard English or language variety instruction alone in teaching standard English spelling and inflectional morphemes.

We found features of all program types represented in the literature that we reviewed. Instrumental programs were least represented, and were found only in a curriculum package for reading. Accommodation and awareness program features were often combined, and this frequently resulted in an integrated approach.

Instruction for SELs—Program Goals

No matter which program type was used, instruction for SELs as described in the literature typically addressed one of two goals. The first was to help students learn standard English; the second was to enhance academic achievement.

Acquisition of Standard English

Three major approaches have been used to assist SELs in acquiring standard English: 1) eradication of the features of first language varieties, 2) no intervention (immersion), and 3) contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction (Harris-Wright, 1999; Rickford, 1999). The first two approaches are described as unsuccessful in all studies we reviewed; only contrastive analysis/code-switching (discussed below) has been shown to increase SELs’ standard English proficiency.

“In Contrastive Analysis, the practitioner contrasts the grammatical structure of one variety with the grammatical structure of another variety (presumably the Standard) in order to add the Standard dialect to the students’ linguistic toolbox” (Wheeler, 2006, p.17). Contrastive analysis is often used as a part of teaching ESL; here, it is modified to highlight the contrasts between varieties of English rather than the contrasts between the structures of two languages. Contrastive analysis instruction is typically paired with instruction and practice in code-switching, that is, changing a sentence or passage presented in one variety of English to another (Wheeler, 2008; MacNeil & Cran, 2005; see Appendix E for further information). The student should learn to identify language varieties (including standard English) and choose among them based on the communicative context. Wheeler and Swords (2010) summarize the “efficacy research” regarding contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction by examining studies conducted at the elementary school, middle school and college levels. In all cases, SELs used more standard English features in their writing after such instruction than they did after traditional instruction.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Enhanced Academic Achievement

We found five empirical studies that examined instructional strategies designed to combine use of students' first language varieties and the teaching of academic content. In each study, the researchers were able to raise achievement through systematic use of students' first language varieties. These studies and their results are described in greater detail in Appendix E.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Descriptions of the potential emotional impact of instruction in standard English on SELs pervade the professional literature. When instruction does not recognize the importance of the student's language variety, students may resist making changes in their language use (Baker, 2002; Hill, 2009), may increase their use of their first language variety features in response to correction (Wheeler, 2006), and may ultimately resist the entire schooling process (LeMoine, quoted in MacNeil & Baker, 2005).

The literature clearly states that it is critical that instruction in standard English or the use of students' own language varieties in academic instruction does not marginalize the students' language and culture. To do this, instruction and its context must recognize the importance of the language varieties used at home and/or in the community in the student's life (Delpit, 2002). Ideas about how this can be done are often described using the terms "culturally relevant" or "culturally responsive" pedagogy. "Culturally relevant pedagogy must provide a way for students to maintain their cultural integrity while succeeding academically" (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Curricula for SELs

Our literature review identified two curriculum packages related to language variety. The first was a bidialectal program to teach reading to speakers of AAE; the second was a program that promotes awareness of language varieties.

Bridge: A Cross-cultural Reading Program, uses student texts written in three language varieties: a form of AAE, a transition between AAE and academic English, and academic English. Bridge students showed statistically significant gains in reading compared to a control group that received traditional instruction (Simpkins & Simpkins, 1981). More recently, Rickford and Rickford (1995) conducted three small-scale studies investigating the Bridge curriculum. Older students preferred the bidialectal readers more than younger students did, and boys preferred them more than girls did, but no impact on reading achievement was found.

The second curriculum is designed to improve awareness of language varieties found in North Carolina among middle school students (*Voices of North Carolina* dialect awareness curriculum, Reaser & Wolfram, 2007). The geographic specificity of the curriculum limits its potential for use by other states, but it may serve as a model for curricula designed to increase awareness of language varieties. A language variety

Recommended Practices for SELs

awareness curriculum such as this might be particularly effective as a precursor to instruction that uses contrastive analysis (Wheeler, 2006).

Professional Development for Educators Who Serve SELs

We did not find any research or program evaluations in the professional literature that centered specifically on the effects of PD offered to educators who serve SELs. However, we did locate descriptions of PD that accompanied some of the contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction programs that we reviewed, as well as other suggestions in the literature regarding best practices for PD for educators who serve SELs.

Overall, programs emphasize that understanding students' linguistic and cultural characteristics are important to the teaching of standard English, and that this understanding must be fostered as a part of PD which addresses instructional strategies. Teachers need an understanding of the features of language varieties other than standard English and of how to teach students who use them (Baugh, 2001). Also, there must be a way to assure that pre- and inservice teachers understand their own feelings about students who do not use standard English. The field of education must decide to confront what should be done about those educators who cannot overcome their deficit patterns of thinking about SELs (Baugh, 2001). PD should teach skills and techniques that allow teachers to understand how they are instructing the SELs in their current classroom, along with understanding what outcomes they are achieving.

Findings Regarding Other States' Approaches to Language Varieties

We located two specific references in state policies to SELs or language varieties other than standard English. One of these is grounded in special education while the other addresses curriculum.

New York's State Education Department has adopted guidelines for speech-language pathologists and audiologists that state that these professionals must be proficient "in the language(s)/dialect(s) spoken by the [student]" and have "sufficient knowledge...in the general linguistic and sociolinguistic issues" in order to "assess or treat [students]" (New York State Education Department, 2009). Guidelines for assessment state that clinicians must be aware of the "typical development in an individual's language(s)/dialect(s), including how to determine and identify typical development based upon the norms of the individual's speech community or communication environment." However, these guidelines only pertain to speech pathologists and audiologists, and are mainly for the purpose of preventing misidentification of students who do not use standard English as language disordered.

In 2008, the California Department of Education (CDOE), led by the California Curriculum Commission and a panel of expert linguists, adopted new criteria for evaluating K-8 reading/language arts/English language arts curriculum materials. The CDOE states that the purpose of these revisions was to promote "a deeper focus on the

Recommended Practices for SELs

instructional needs of English learners, students with disabilities, struggling readers, and *students who use African American vernacular English*” (p. 288, emphasis added). The CDOE report repeatedly makes mention of students who speak AAE. They recommend instructional materials that provide “comprehensive guidance for teachers and effective, efficient, and explicit instruction for struggling readers (any student experiencing difficulty learning to read; may include students who use African American vernacular English, English learners, and students with disabilities).” They also recommend additional instructional support “for students who use African American vernacular English” (p. 293). Thus, California has acknowledged the unique linguistic needs of one group of SELs in a formal and statewide manner. While California did not make specific mention of speakers of language varieties other than AAE, it has taken a step toward addressing SELs’ linguistic needs.

Summary of Literature Review Findings

We summarize our findings from our review of the literature and of the current practices of other states as follows:

Finding 1: There is a paucity of research that addresses language variety in the instructional context.

Finding 2: The majority of existing research focuses on AAE and there are some consistent trends in findings about the relationship between AAE and academic achievement.⁶

Finding 3: The specific relationship between the use of a language variety other than standard English and academic achievement is not well understood.

Finding 4: Instruction that is specifically designed for SELs addresses two main goals: acquisition of standard English and increased academic achievement. Standard English instruction is most often carried out using contrastive analysis/code-switching; strategies for increasing academic achievement use features of the student’s language variety in instruction. Both types of instructional strategies have been successful, but a full research base on either is lacking.

Finding 5: There is little guidance about how students’ language varieties should be incorporated into content area instruction.

Finding 6: The affective context in which instruction about language varieties occurs (e.g., teacher attitudes and beliefs about language varieties, whether students perceive instruction as adding to what they know and can do or as a demand to stop using their home language variety, etc.) is critical to its success.

⁶ Studies conducted with elementary students that speak AAE have documented a negative association between use of AAE and early reading skills (e.g. Kohler et al., 2007; Terry, N. 2006) and mathematical reasoning (Terry, J. et al. 2010).

Recommended Practices for SELs

Finding 7: There are few existing curricula that are designed to address the language needs of SELs.

Finding 8: PD for teachers should address four main topics: (a) teacher resistance, (b) teacher beliefs, (c) issues of language, identity and power (e.g., teachers should be prepared to think about the linkages between instruction, language and students' personal and cultural identities), and (d) practical strategies for addressing language varieties in the classroom (Godley, Sweetland, Wheeler, Minnici, & Carpenter, 2006).

Finding 9: California state policies define AAE and require additional support for students who use AAE if they have difficulty with standard English phonology, structures and/or spelling. . Beyond this, we found no state policies that address instruction for SELs, although New York does require that the student's use of a language variety be considered when language disorders are diagnosed.

EXPERT PANEL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section first presents an overview of The Panel’s findings regarding best practices for SELs. This is followed by a detailed rationale and steps for implementation of the best practices which The Panel endorsed.

Terminology

The Panel began its work with a discussion of the terminology that might be needed to identify SELs and formulate educational policy for them. They offered the following as examples of terms the state might choose to define and use:

A “standard English learner (SEL)” is a student whose primary language is English and who speaks a variety of English that differs from standard English. The term SEL could be used to describe the students referenced in Rider 42.

The term is the one used by the Los Angeles Unified School District’s Academic English Mastery Program. It is designed to parallel the term “English Language Learner.” The two terms both place emphasis on students’ needs for instruction in a form of language that they do not currently command.

The decision to use the term “SELs” to refer to this population necessitated the development of two other definitions:

“Standard English” is defined as the language variety most often connected with and used in education, media, government, and enterprise.

The Panel noted that it is difficult to precisely define standard English. There are fewer difficulties in defining a standard for written English than there are for oral forms of the language, but there is no single, universally agreed upon way even to write English. The fact that different style guides (AP, APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.) exist demonstrates that there is not an ideal or “most logical” written code.

Developing a term that fairly and accurately describes the language that SELs command was one of The Panel’s most challenging tasks. They agreed that the definition should emphasize that students’ first language varieties are systematic, as this is what differentiates a true language variety from slang or simple incorrect usage. Likewise, they advocated for a definition that emphasizes that any language variety, not just standard English, is the outcome of a natural process of language acquisition. The following consensus definition was written:

“Nonstandard varieties of English” include English varieties that are systematic and rule-governed modes of communication and are acquired by students at home. They differ linguistically from standard English. Such varieties include but are not limited to AAE, Appalachian English, and LAE.

Rationale for Action

The Panel concluded that the state should make changes in existing educational practices that will help educators recognize SELs as a group and that will help educators meet these students' unique educational needs. They offered two main reasons for this:

1. Strategies for assisting students who need to acquire standard English are available. Although evidence about them is limited, available data suggest that these strategies can increase students' use of standard English and that this can serve to enhance literacy outcomes (Wheeler & Swords, 2010).
2. The Panel believed that developing educators' abilities to recognize and meet the needs of SELs, including preparing teachers to deliver instruction that develops features of standard English when such instruction is needed, is one way in which the achievement gap might be addressed. The Panel recognized that many factors can and do influence the academic achievement of minority students, including SELs. Those identified in the literature include, but are not limited to: school resources and facilities, teacher pay, training and collaboration, teacher and classroom quality, teacher expectations, and student characteristics such as self-esteem and socioeconomic status (Connor, 2008; Rickford, 1999). However, members of The Panel noted that an achievement gap between White students and student racial/ethnic groups that are likely to include large numbers of SELs has existed for a long time and continues to exist (see below).

The Achievement Gap

Many educators and researchers have addressed the racial and ethnic achievement gap. The African American-White and Hispanic-White NAEP achievement gaps narrowed at the basic skills level during the 1970s and early 1980s, but grew at the advanced skills level during the late 1980s and the 1990s (Lee, 2002). Still, the overall African-American-White and Hispanic-White gaps in NAEP scores have remained large, with the ranges of those gaps falling between 0.5 and 1.0 standard deviation units (Lee, 2002).

Because SELs have not historically been identified as a unique student subgroup, it is difficult to quantify what impact being a SEL has on academic achievement. But as variables such as race/ethnicity status are thought to correlate with one's likelihood of being a SEL, racial/ethnic categories are used as a proxy for SEL status in the following analyses, and we include African American and Hispanic students. We make this choice because research suggests that at least some students from these groups may enter school speaking a variety of English which differs from standard English (Terry, N., 2006; Wolfram & Schilling-Estes, 2006). While interpretation of these results as they apply to all SEL students is speculative, it is the only available option given the lack of data about SELs as a group.

U.S. National Assessment of Educational Progress Data

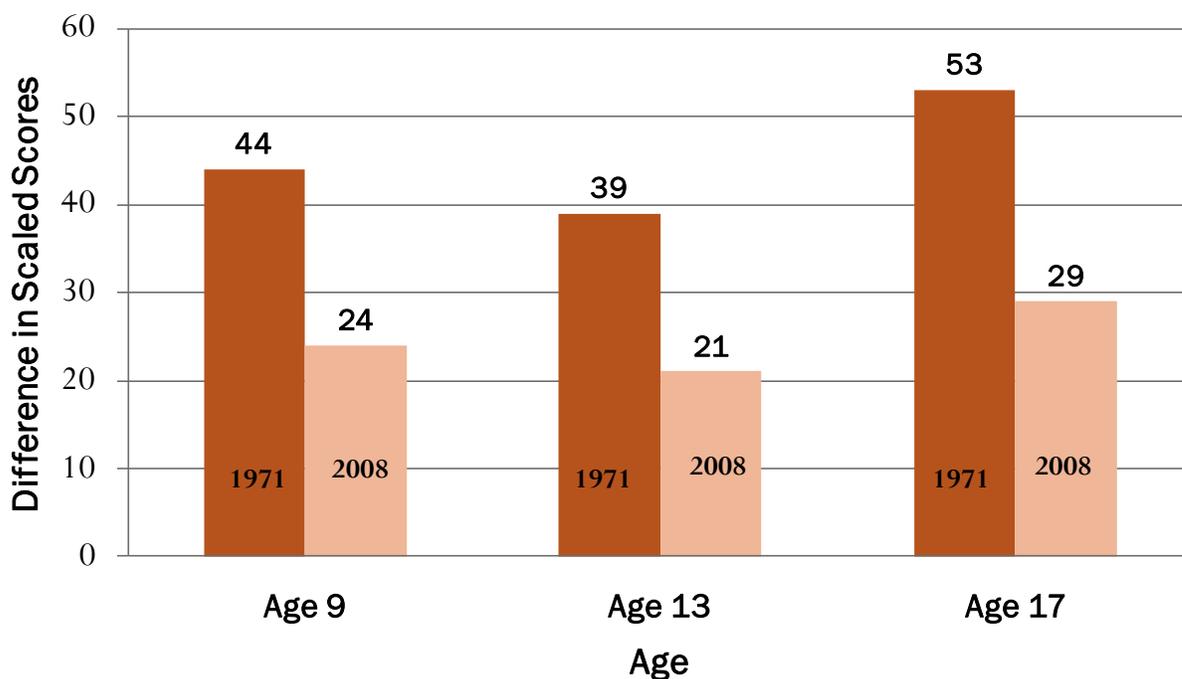
The National Center for Education Statistics (2010) develops a report called The Nation's Report Card annually. Report Cards communicate the findings of the NAEP, a series of vertically-scaled achievement assessments administered to a nationally representative sample of students over time, and present long-term trends in reading and math. Results are separated by age groups (9, 13, and 17-year olds) and differences in scores between racial/ethnic groups are examined. For decades, data from the NAEP have shown that academic achievement varies by race/ethnicity. Selected Report Card results are presented in the next section.

NAEP Reading and Race/Ethnicity

African American-White Gap

Nationally, 9-year-old African American students scored 44 points below their White peers on average on the NAEP reading assessment in 1971, and while this gap has lessened considerably over the past few decades, the average score for African American 9-year-olds was still approximately 24 points lower than the average for White students in 2008. Similar disparities were evident among all age groups. In 1971, 13-year-old African American students scored 39 points below and 17-year-olds African Americans scored 53 points below their White peers in reading on average. The gaps in reading achievement have also become smaller over time for these age groups, but in 2008, average scores for 13- and 17-year old African American students were still 21 and 29 points lower, respectively, than the average for White students (See Figure 1).

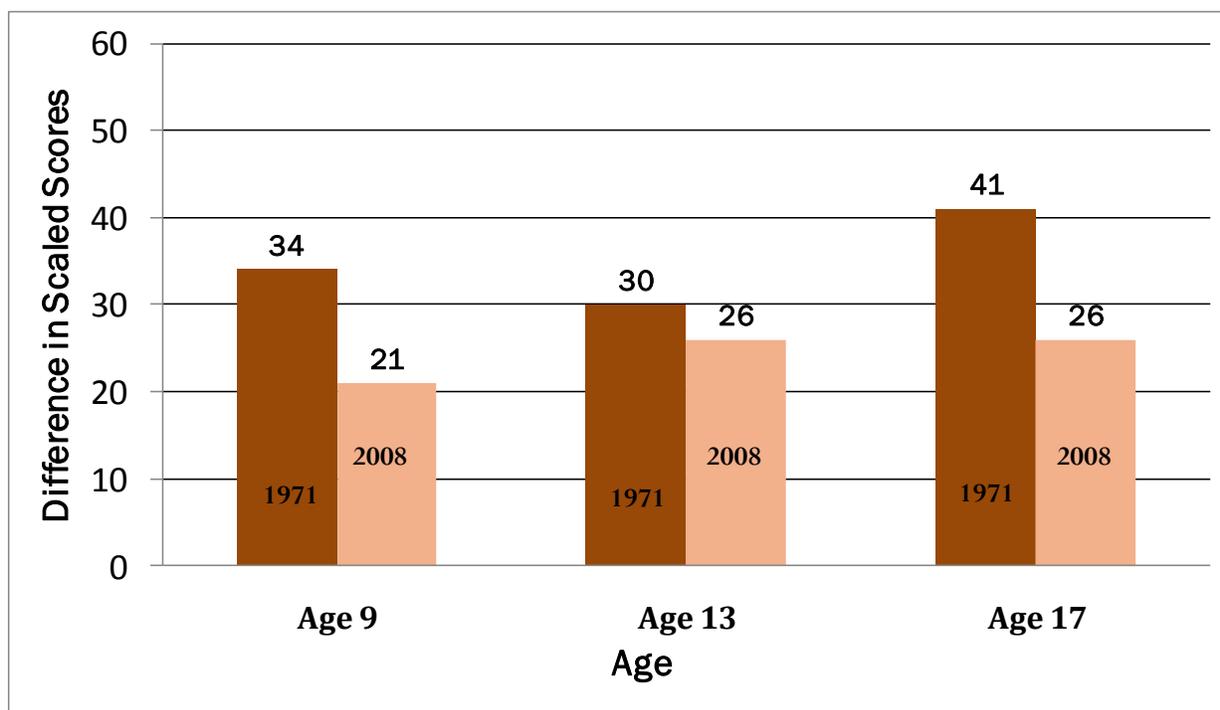
Figure 1: NAEP Reading Results: Gaps in Scaled Scores Between African American and White Students By Age for 1971 and 2008.



Hispanic-White Gap

The NCES also reports on trends in the achievement gap between Hispanic and White students. Generally, the gap between reading scores of Hispanic and White students is less than the gap between African American and White students for all age groups. Nationally, 9-year-old Hispanic students scored 34 points below their White peers on average in 1971. While this gap has lessened over the past few decades, the average score for Hispanic 9-year-olds was still approximately 21 points lower than the average score for White students in 2008. Disparities exist for all age groups. In 1971, 13-year-old Hispanic students scored 30 points below and 17-year-olds Hispanics scored 41 points below their White peers in reading on average. The gaps in reading achievement have also become smaller over time for these age groups, but in 2008, the average score for both 13- and 17-year old Hispanic students was still 26 points lower than the average for White students (See Figure 2).

Figure 2: NAEP Reading Results: Gaps in Scaled Score Between Hispanic and White Students By Age for 1971 and 2008.



Examination of NAEP data by racial/ethnic group confirms that groups that are likely to include large numbers of SELs (i.e., African-Americans and Hispanics) achieve at levels below their White peers in reading. Although SEL status may not be the only reason for these differences in achievement, there is evidence that teaching standard English to these students can improve their literacy skills (Wheeler & Swords, 2010).

Best Practices

The Panel next developed a description of what they saw as best practices in C & I for SELs, and as best practices for PD for educators who serve this group. These were based on their discussions as a panel and on their professional experience, along with their review of the C & I and PD reports. They recommended that Texas begin taking steps that will lead to the implementation of these practices:

- Recognize SELs as a group with unique linguistic and instructional needs;
- Assure that teachers are able to accurately assess and effectively respond to the linguistic and instructional needs of this group;
- Provide instruction to SELs that enables them to acquire standard English using contrastive analysis and code switching;
- Provide instruction to develop student knowledge of the language varieties used in Texas by explicitly addressing various regional language varieties; recognizing their value, and addressing the role and importance of learning and using standard English;

Recommended Practices for SELs

- Provide instruction to all students that is grounded in student interests and background knowledge;
- Provide educators with the information, skills, strategies and materials needed to offer the instruction described above; and
- Provide information to parents, families, and other stakeholders regarding the nature and goals of contrastive analysis, code switching and language variety instruction.

The Panel recognized that implementation of these best practices would be likely to necessitate changes in state standards and other sections of state educational codes. They recommended that these changes be enacted as needed.

Recommendations for Achieving Best Practice in Texas⁷

The Panel offered formal recommendations regarding the best practices they developed, provided a rationale for each recommendation and suggested specific steps for implementation. Following, recommendations are arranged in five broad categories:

- 1) Recognize SELs as a group with unique linguistic and instructional needs,
- 2) Build Texas educators' awareness of language varieties and their impact on student achievement,
- 3) Build SELs' knowledge of standard English by implementing contrastive analysis and code-switching instructional strategies,
- 4) Implement a language variety awareness curriculum, and
- 5) Create a thoughtful and respectful environment to ensure the acceptability of proposed changes to all stakeholder groups.

Recommendation 1

The Panel recommends that the State of Texas recognize standard English learners (SELs) as a group with unique linguistic and instructional needs.

Rationale

Although the specific role of language variety in academic achievement is not completely understood, the evidence reviewed in our report and provided by The Panel is sufficient to conclude that one factor influencing the academic achievement of students in Texas' schools is the need for some of these students to acquire standard English. The Panel emphasized that while extant research is not extensive, in all studies reviewed, the recognition of SELs as a group along with differentiated instruction produced gains in standard English and/ or literacy skills. This evidence, combined with research detailing the prevalence of first language varieties that differ from standard English in many communities in Texas, provided The Panel sufficient cause to recommend the state recognize SELs as a group with unique instructional needs.

⁷ Portions of this section were written by Carolyn Temple Adger and Jeffery Reaser, Center for Applied Linguistics.

Proposed Implementation Recommendations

The Panel offered three specific steps for implementing their first recommendation:

- a. The state should develop an appropriate strategy that educators can use to recognize students who are SELs. One option is to define the term SELs in the Texas Education Code (see sample wording in Appendix F); another is to assist schools in examining demographic characteristics of the students that they serve to see if it is likely that large numbers of SELs are present and offer PD to those schools; a third is to provide general PD that builds educators' capacity to serve SELs. Overall, the Panel believed that the way in which the state chooses to recognize SELs would need to be informed by further research (see below).
- b. The State Board of Education (SBOE) should include a statement on the academic and linguistic needs of SELs in the introduction to every grade level in the next version of the English Language Arts and Reading TEKS (see Appendix G for an example). The proposed wording for this statement is modeled after the existing sections of the introduction which address the needs of ELLs.
- c. The Panel recognized that specific data on the prevalence and impact of first language variety usage in Texas are not available at this time. To address this absence, The Panel recommends that the state commission a study to investigate what language varieties are present in Texas schools and how educators can recognize them and to explore the association of major language varieties with academic outcomes. The study should purposefully sample students from African American and Hispanic communities, but should also consider whether other groups of SELs exist. Results of the study should allow the state to better plan an appropriate response to the educational challenge presented by the different language varieties that exist in Texas. A sample rider that could be enacted to initiate such a study appears in Appendix H.

Recommendation 2

The Panel recommends that the State of Texas build educators' awareness of language varieties and their impact on student academic achievement.

Rationale

Texas' teachers and administrators are of fundamental importance in implementing the changes recommended by The Panel. The Panel therefore recommended that the state take steps to help teachers and administrators build an awareness of the nature of the language varieties present in Texas schools and communities. No policy can replace the judgment of the classroom teacher in determining which features of a child's language use (oral and written) should be targeted for instruction and/or intervention. However, it is essential that all teachers' judgments reflect a scientifically informed

Recommended Practices for SELs

perspective, and that instruction not denigrate students' community language varieties in any way.

Teachers and administrators should understand that language variety is a natural process in the evolution of all languages. Although not all of the particulars of all varieties of English have been specified, some descriptive research has been conducted about the varieties of English that occur in Texas, including AAE, LAE, Southern American English, and standard English. While these varieties share most of their features, they regularly differ from each other in some particulars. Teachers need to know details about the features of their students' language varieties so that they can effectively use a contrastive analysis approach to teach standard English and so that they can distinguish predictable features derived from a student's first language variety from language disability.

Teacher preparation and PD might focus on frequently occurring and well-researched features of the English varieties in Texas from the perspective of their contrast with the parallel features in standard English. A list of these features appears in Adger, Wolfram, and Christian (2007) and elsewhere. Other approaches to teacher learning first examine features that are most highly stigmatized, regardless of their frequency. Lists of common features of AAE and LAE can be found in Green (2002) and Fought (2003), respectively. Resources for other language varieties are also available (Cantrell, 2001; Labov et al. 2005; Reaser & Wolfram, 2007; Rymes & Anderson, 2004).

It is also useful to develop skills educators could use to continue to explore the language varieties present in their schools, since it is impossible to include information about every feature that may turn out to be salient. These skills should prepare them to examine literate, as well as oral language. Panelist LeMoine suggested a "balanced approach" to literacy acquisition for SELs. This approach should incorporate phonics (speech sound) and word-recognition that serve as aids to the construction of meaning in addition to language experience (Adams, 1990). In addition, as part of language experience, educators could identify features of their own students' first varieties through school-based Professional Learning Communities established after teachers receive PD.

Teachers need to understand the possibilities for interaction between speaking a variety of English that differs from standard English and academic learning. Both initial teacher preparation and ongoing PD and learning should reinforce these understandings. However, at the same time, great care must be taken to make teachers aware of the danger of deficit thinking in classrooms—assuming that speakers of varieties that differ from standard English are less able students overall by virtue of their language. Language prejudice is deeply engrained in society (see Adger, Wolfram, & Christian, 2007, for a discussion), and many future teachers will share those societal attitudes as they enter teacher preparation. In the context of developing teachers' abilities to teach standard English, it is essential that teachers appreciate the fact that students' proficiency in their community's variety of English is not a deficit. Students will need to

Recommended Practices for SELs

retain their community variety as they expand their control of standard English and be able to code switch appropriately.

Panelist Izquierdo pointed out that in many ways, SELs can be “viewed through the same lens as ELLs.” She suggested that educators might be able to use some of what they know about the characteristics of ELLs and about instruction for them as they serve SELs.

Proposed Implementation Recommendations

The Panel recommends the state take four immediate steps to build educator awareness of language varieties.

- a. The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) should modify the requirements for teacher and principal preparation to include mention of language diversity.
 - For example, Rule §228.30 of the Educator Preparation Curriculum of the Texas Administrative Code could be modified (see Appendix I for sample language). This modification will help to assure that teacher preparation programs address the topics of culture and language diversity in their curricula.
 - Rule §241.15 of the Standards Required for the Principal Certificate could be modified to add language varieties in the learner-centered values section (see Appendix J for sample wording). As was the case for teacher preparation, this modification will help to assure that principal preparation programs include the topics of culture and language diversity in their curricula.
- b. The state should prepare and disseminate materials that will help educators understand the similarities and differences between ELLs and SELs. These materials should address the characteristics of each group, and should identify instructional strategies which can, and which cannot, be used across groups.
- c. PD which addresses reading should incorporate phonics and meaning construction in addition to language experience.
- d. PD should build educator knowledge and awareness of linguistic diversity in the SEL population including the historical development of the different language varieties and their characteristic linguistic features.

Recommendation 3

The Panel recommends that the State of Texas assist SELs in building their knowledge of standard English by implementing contrastive analysis and code-switching instructional strategies.

Rationale

Panelists were unanimous in their agreement that contrastive analysis and code-switching strategies should be used to help SELs in Texas acquire standard English.

Recommended Practices for SELs

There was almost no discussion of whether these strategies should be used; the Panelists simply went on to discuss how implementation should be carried out. Panelists did point out (as did our literature review) that although the research base about these strategies is not extensive, all available studies have reported success in helping students of differing ages to acquire standard English. Standard English instruction offers an additional way to assist a group of students who, as has been discussed, are frequently low SES and/or minority, and who frequently struggle in school.

Panelist LeMoine pointed out that when SELs do not receive instruction targeting the features of standard English that they do not command, “we test what we don’t teach.” Educators assume that students already know standard English at school entrance (O’Neal & Ringler, 2010); to the degree that TEKS objectives assume command of standard English, students in Texas are also assessed on material that has never been taught.

Panelists believed that existing standard English programs and their accompanying PDs can provide models for the state to follow. Features of existing programs that Panelists suggested should be incorporated into a Texas model include developmental appropriateness, an additive approach, (i.e., students are expected to add standard English to the language that they know, but are not expected to give up their first language variety), and use of multiple types of contrastive analysis across grade levels. Panelists Wheeler and LeMoine stressed that specific instruction in standard English features should not begin “too early,” that is, before students have fully acquired their first language variety. They suggested that instruction must be differentiated by grade level, and that the use of some forms of contrastive analysis should not begin before second grade.

Two well-developed programs for teaching standard English to SELs by way of contrastive analysis/code-switching include PD for teachers. The program developed by Panelist Wheeler (Wheeler 2006; Wheeler & Swords, 2010; See Appendix E for further information) focuses on the writing of AAE speakers in elementary school. The program targets inflectional morphological features (possessive –s, plural –s, etc.) that may be deleted in AAE, as well as several other highly stigmatized items. The approach it takes can be extended to speakers of other varieties, using the descriptions of those varieties reported in sociolinguistic research. A similar approach is used by the Academic English Mastery Program in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LeMoine, 2001). Children are taught some of the intricacies of language varieties and strategies to help them switch to the equivalent standard English feature when appropriate. Both programs offer lessons that can guide classroom practice to some extent, but teachers benefit from PD that provides a deeper understanding of the concepts they will be presenting to their students, as well as the ability to contextualize the information in the local setting. It can be difficult for teachers to overcome the belief that the standard English feature is the “correct” form, but this stance is antithetical to implementing contrastive analysis/code-switching.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Panelists LeMoine and Wheeler confirmed that districts in a number of states have asked them to conduct PD sessions to introduce educators to these two programs. Panelist LeMoine has worked with two districts in Texas: Cypress Fairbanks Independent School District and Dallas Independent School District. Other districts which have initiated PD efforts include: Compton (CA) Unified School District, Elk Grove (CA) Unified School District, Los Angeles (CA) Unified School District, San Francisco (CA) Unified School District, Atlanta (GA) Unified School District, Chicago (IL) Public Schools, Baltimore (MD) County Public Schools, Clark County (NV) Unified School District, Toledo (OH) Public Schools, and Rural Northampton (VA) County Public Schools.

Proposed Implementation Recommendations

Panelists believed that several actions are needed to implement contrastive analysis/code-switching instructional programs in Texas schools. Most of these actions address PD, as Panelists believed it likely that many teachers are not familiar with these instructional strategies. Needed steps are detailed below. Overall, however, The Panel recommended that the state attempt to assure that educators are provided high-quality PD that includes opportunities for follow-up instruction and coaching, rather than a “quick-fix” approach to learning these strategies.

- a. The state should gather information about language varieties in use in Texas so that PD and instruction can be adapted to them.
- b. PD must be provided to educators, including teachers and administrators that explicitly addresses various regional language varieties; recognizes their value, and addresses the role and importance of learning and using standard English. General and special education teachers should be included; bilingual and ESL teachers are probably already familiar with contrastive analysis techniques, and thus, may not need this PD. It is also unlikely that these latter two groups of teachers will serve SELs. If they are included in PD efforts, the content they receive should be differentiated to their needs.
- c. PD should be differentiated by grade level to assure that the strategies educators learn are developmentally appropriate for their students, and should be differentiated based on educators’ previous level of experience with contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction so that teachers gain advanced knowledge and skills.
- d. As teachers begin to implement contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction, fidelity of implementation should be monitored. Results should be used both to improve contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction and to improve PD.
- e. Districts should be encouraged to evaluate the effects of implementing contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction. The impact of changing the context in which this instruction is implemented may be significant.

Recommendation 4

The Panel recommends that the State of Texas undertake needed actions to assure that instruction that addresses language variety is provided to all students.

Rationale

The Panel suggested that Texas should consider offering instruction about language variety for several reasons. First, as mentioned in the literature review results, the success of instruction which uses contrastive analysis/code-switching is dependent on an atmosphere in which both standard English and students' first language varieties are seen as equally effective modes of communication. Panelists pointed out that one of the most effective ways to create this atmosphere, and to change deficit thinking about language varieties, is to study language varieties and their differences. Panelists also reminded us of the results of Sweetland's study (2006; cited in National Research Council, 2010) which suggested that implementing contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction in conjunction with instruction about language varieties was more effective than implementing either type of instruction alone.

Panelists pointed out that the *Voices of North Carolina* curriculum on language variety developed by the North Carolina Language and Life Project at North Carolina State University (discussed in the literature review results) can serve as a model for Texas. Curriculum effectiveness is discussed in Reaser (2006).

Finally, Panelists noted that examining language varieties is an inherently motivating topic for most students, and one that most students enjoy.

Proposed Implementation Recommendations

The Panel recommends that the state do the following to implement instruction about language varieties:

- a. The state should add knowledge and skills that address the language varieties of Texas to the next revision of the state curriculum standards. These might be added to the Grade 4 and/or Grade 7 social studies TEKS or by changing the Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Rule §113.15. Sample wordings for these changes are shown in Appendix K.
- b. PD which supports the study of language varieties, including appropriate instructional strategies and materials, should be provided to educators who teach Texas history, and those who supervise them to develop the strategies needed to teach the new knowledge and skills. PD should explicitly address various regional language varieties, recognize their value, and address the role and importance of learning and using standard English.
- c. PD which helps educators develop an understanding of SELs from both sociocultural and sociolinguistic perspectives should also be provided.
- d. The state should adopt a formal curriculum which addresses the language varieties of Texas. This curriculum should emphasize their geographic and historical beginnings, and be embedded into Texas history courses. Panelists mentioned work that documents the language varieties of Texas has been done by the Texas English Project, Dr. Marianna Di Paolo at University of Utah, and Dr. Guy Bailey at Texas Tech University, among others, and that these experts could be called upon to add to the results of the studies that The Panel had

Recommended Practices for SELs

previously suggested. These experts could also provide information for curriculum development, using the *Voices of North Carolina* curriculum as a model.

Recommendation 5

The Panel recommends that the State of Texas take steps to create a thoughtful and tolerant environment that ensures the acceptability of these proposed changes to all stakeholder groups

Rationale

Panelist Labov pointed out that there have been previous programs that have provided instruction to SELs with the goal of building standard English. These have been successful in terms of student outcomes, but have often been terminated because of parental or public perceptions that they will achieve the opposite effect, that is, stakeholders believe that recognizing and using students' first language varieties in the classroom will lead to a lack of proficiency in standard English. His comments about our literature review (W. Labov, personal communication, November 7, 2010) described multiple examples of this:

- In 1969, the SEEK initiative at Brooklyn College conducted a program using contrastive analysis to improve the language skills of African American dropouts working towards GEDs. In the *Crisis* magazine, Bayard Rustin, Ernest McKinney and many NAACP political leaders denounced this as a plot to teach bad English to black youth.
- Following the 1976 decision of Judge Charles Joiner that teachers should be informed about the home language of children to better teach them to read standard English, it was widely reported that a judge in Ann Arbor had instructed teachers to learn to speak Black English so that they could communicate with their students.
- Although the Simpkins, Holt and Simpkins Bridge program, launched in 1976, achieved good test results, it was shelved by Houghton Mifflin after a number of teachers and parents complained about the use of nonstandard English in the classroom.
- The Oakland Ebonics program initiated in 1996 was soon reduced to a single school, and then disappeared, after it caused national controversy.
- As recently as March 10, 2010, a controversy erupted at the University of North Carolina Wilmington over a course taught by Maurice Martínez, professor of secondary education, who included Black English as part of his curriculum. A professor of criminology and right wing blogger campaigned to have students' tuition for Dr. Martínez' classes refunded.

Panelist Labov therefore suggested that our recommendations include outreach efforts that will apprise all stakeholders about the instruction to be implemented and its intended outcomes before programs are implemented.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Panelist LeMoine agreed with these concerns, and stated the LA Unified School District's Academic English Mastery program often faced questions about program goals. The program used a parent resource center to establish relationships with families and the community and to help them understand program goals and outcomes. The result was that families became some of the Academic English Mastery program's most staunch advocates.

Proposed Implementation Recommendations

Panelists recommended that the legislature and TEA take a proactive approach in addressing any potential controversy that identifying SELs and introducing instruction in standard English and language varieties may generate. They suggested that:

- a. The state should make immediate efforts to associate the new program and its instructional strategies with the goal of improved standard English for all students. The way in which this information is communicated should be carefully tailored to each stakeholder group (educators, families, etc.) and may need to be differentiated based on the language variety of the community in which the program will be implemented (e.g., communication and supporting materials in Spanish may be needed).
- b. Pre- and inservice education for educators should address strategies for communicating about program methods and goals with families and communities. Inservice PD should include both teachers and school administrators at a minimum; at best, it would also include district administrators and school boards.
- c. Schools implementing standard English acquisition programs should make systematic efforts to work with parents and communities. Parent outreach centers modeled after those used by the Los Angeles Unified School District should be used. These Centers trained a small number of parents to work with educators in explaining the program to the community, and these parents received a stipend for the hours that they worked (Panelist LeMoine).

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Summary

Both our literature review and The Panel have presented evidence that SELs are a group whose educational needs should be addressed. The language skills with which SELs begin school differ from the language skills of students who begin school speaking standard English. However, while instruction for ELLs is guided by the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) and by other state policy, this is not the case for SELs. SELs may or may not receive instruction that addresses the features of standard English they do not yet command, and the decision regarding whether this instruction is provided is made by individual districts, schools and/or teachers.

The overall recommendation of The Panel is to increase teacher capacity such that teachers recognize SELs in their classrooms and offer instruction that addresses their

Recommended Practices for SELs

needs. The Panel recognized that further information about Texas's SEL population is needed, but also believed that strategies that can be used to offer differentiated instruction to SELs (i.e., contrastive analysis/code-switching and language variety awareness instruction) exist. They have been used in classrooms and school districts in other states, and there is evidence that they have achieved success in developing students' standard English skills. While two other states have limited policies that address SELs, implementation of The Panel's recommendations would allow Texas to become the first state to have a comprehensive policy regarding instruction for this group.

Next Steps

For these recommendations to be implemented, there is a need to gather data that will allow the state to develop a better understanding of the SEL population in Texas. Policy issues related to addressing the needs of a heretofore unidentified group must also be addressed.

Recommendations for Future Research

In considering the state's response to the needs of SELs, it is important to recognize the limits of current knowledge about this population and to address the gaps that exist. A necessary first step in any such efforts would be to commission a study of the Texas SEL population. While examining the demography of the state's student population suggests that there may be large numbers of SELs, it is important to verify this hypothesis, to examine achievement data to obtain an accurate estimate of the number of SELs who are, in fact, in need of additional services, to identify the schools and districts which serve them, and to know how many and which language varieties they speak. Such data could inform efforts to develop a language variety awareness curriculum, and could serve as a needs assessment for PD efforts.

Conducting research to study the SEL population requires that an efficient and accurate method for identifying SELs be developed. At present, only one individual student assessment for identifying speakers of language varieties other than standard English exists (Seymour, Roeper & de Villers, 2003); thus, research that leads to the creation of an identification process is critical. While individual identification procedures might be considered, any study undertaken should first address whether identification of individual students is necessary, or whether identification of classrooms, schools or districts which serve large numbers of SELs might be sufficient to allocate resources to address their needs. Likewise, the study should consider whether direct student assessment is necessary, or whether classroom teachers can reliably identify SELs. Should the state decide to serve SELs as a group, it should commission research that addresses these issues.

Research regarding the similarities and differences between the SEL and ELL student populations is also needed. This research should focus on what instructional strategies may be appropriate for both populations, while also elucidating how instruction for the two groups should be differentiated. Using results of this research, it may prove feasible

Recommended Practices for SELs

to envision the state's response to SELs and ELLs as separate parts of a larger policy addressing language diversity in Texas' schools. Results should also be used to inform teacher preparation and PD. Since SELs are currently served by general educators, while ELLs are served by either bilingual or ESL certified teachers, it will be important to assure that both groups of educators are familiar with any instructional strategies that are appropriate for both groups, and that they are also familiar with characteristics of best instructional practices that are unique to the group(s) that they serve.

Finally, future research should address the outcomes of using strategies designed for SELs with English-speaking students who have acquired standard English before school entrance (i.e., non-SELs). We were unable to find any research that addressed either achievement or affective impacts of these strategies for this group. However, Wheeler and Swords (2010) assert:

Code-switching helps *all* (emphasis in original) students understand how dialect contributes to character, voice and setting in literature...lessons directly affirm national standards that require students to appreciate diverse dialects and cultures. Further, the technique of contrastive analysis embodies critical thinking—skills of observation, description, hypothesis formation and hypothesis testing—skills of analysis and synthesis that enhance the abilities of all students. (p. 256)

It is critical that any future research or program evaluations address whether these outcomes are in fact achieved. Educators will need data-based guidance regarding which students should receive contrastive analysis-code-switching instruction.

Policy Implications

As with any new initiative, the consequences of implementing The Panel's recommendations as written must be fully analyzed. First, the state is limited in what it has the authority do. The state cannot mandate or establish a curriculum, instead it can only recommend and set curriculum standards. Therefore, the state could consider the adoption of policies which address the language varieties in Texas. Secondly, the way in which the state recognizes SELs as a group with unique educational needs, should this be done, is a major consideration. If SELs are defined as a subgroup in the Texas Education Code, this may have accountability or fiscal implications. For example, SELs may become a group whose progress is tracked through the accountability system, and whose progress becomes a part of determining accountability ratings for schools and school districts. Although neither this report nor The Panel recommend individual identification and tracking of SELs, an initiative to recognize and address their educational needs could ultimately lead to those outcomes.

Methods other than defining the group in the Texas Education Code could be used to recognize the SEL population and address its needs. We present some examples here, with a brief discussion of possible advantages and disadvantages, while recognizing that other possibilities for addressing the needs of SELs might also be explored and developed.

Recommended Practices for SELs

1. SELs could be specifically defined in the ELPS. At present, the ELPS specifically reference only students who are ELLs (see Appendix A).
 - Advantages:
 - This uses a successful, existing system for serving students who are acquiring English.
 - This system has features that may be applicable to SELs. For example, the ELPS recognize that there is a continuum of variety in the English language by defining social and academic language, and set expectations based on language proficiency rather grade level. The ELPS were designed as an enrichment tool for language acquisition, and the ELPS Proficiency Level Descriptors might be used to measure SELs' standard English language development.
 - Disadvantages:
 - Although SELs could potentially participate in instruction offered through ESL programs, this would be at the discretion of individual districts, schools and teachers.
 - Should SELs be served outside of ESL programs, it is likely that their instruction would be provided by general educators, rather than teachers who hold ESL certification. At present, these educators are less familiar with language acquisition instruction than are bilingual educators.
 - ELLs' progress in acquiring the knowledge and skills described in the ELPS is assessed using the Texas Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS). Whether this requirement would apply to SELs, or whether a separate system for measuring progress in English acquisition might be needed, is not known at this time.
2. Design a set of standards specific to SELs, using the ELPS as a model.
 - Advantage: This would allow the applicable parts of the ELPS to be retained, while also incorporating the modifications needed to address SELs' unique needs.
 - Disadvantage: Even with an existing model, developing such a system would require large amounts of effort, funding, and might lead to the need for individual identification and accountability.
3. Districts or schools that serve SELs could be provided with PD or other assistance in meeting student needs. Alternatively, statewide PD in all the content areas could also address characteristics of SELs and what strategies the classroom teacher could utilize to support them.
 - Advantages:
 - Changes in statewide legal codes are not required.
 - There is no need to identify individual students as SELs.
 - Disadvantage: Districts might need to participate in outcome assessments.

Beyond recognizing SELs, The Panel recommended that language variety awareness instruction be provided to all students. This recommendation included a suggestion that

Recommended Practices for SELs

changes be made in knowledge and skills defined in the recently revised and adopted Social Studies TEKS, which are set for the next six years. Therefore, it will be important to consider other, less formal ways in which language variety awareness instruction can be introduced. For example, language variety awareness instruction strategies might be included in a statewide PD provided to all teachers. The state could also work with individual professional education associations in considering these same strategies. Other ways to introduce language variety awareness instruction might also be used. Implementing instruction in one or more of these ways could allow pilot data about student and educator outcomes to be collected before a decision about statewide implementation is made.

It is important that any new initiative be evaluated in ways that assure that all outcomes that ensue, both intended and unintended, are examined. Recognizing the needs of SELs is no exception. For example, Panelists expressed concerns that identifying students as SELs might result in some of the same negative impacts that have been associated with other forms of educational labeling, such as misidentification or isolation of the student group, negative teacher attitudes or lowered educator expectations. While these possibilities do exist, The Panel made specific recommendations to assist in avoiding them, including:

- Encouraging implementation of a language variety awareness curriculum in local school districts
- PD which includes strategies that allow for the development of teacher knowledge of language varieties, and
- Working with schools to inform parents and other stakeholders about the goals and objectives of instruction and curriculum for SELs

Finally, any efforts to recognize the needs of SELs must be considered in a context of competing priorities for limited resources. Policymakers will need to fully evaluate the costs and benefits of any efforts to recognize and serve the SEL population.

Clearly, recognizing the SEL population in Texas, and developing the capacity of Texas educators to begin addressing its needs is an ambitious undertaking, and to do so, many important resource and policy decisions must be thoughtfully made. However, it is important to recognize that there are a number of potential benefits to be gained from these efforts. At a minimum, the skills of Texas educators, and their understanding of the students that they serve will be increased, and their ability to assist students in acquiring a critical skill, the appropriate use of standard English, will be enhanced. At best, all Texas students will leave school with an understanding of the state's language varieties and with the ability to use standard English effectively when they need and choose to do so.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Texas Demographics

In this section, we use demographic and other data about Texas public school students to suggest the race/ethnic makeup of Texas SELs. The services which are provided to SELs under current education statutes and regulations are also explored. All of these are important considerations in determining whether changes are needed to achieve best practices for this group.

State Description

The Texas Education system serves the second largest student population in the United States, with only California serving a larger number of students. In the 2009-10 school year, Texas served over 4.8 million students in both urban and rural settings (TEA, 2010). Texas' large school population is the result of steady growth in all parts of the state. In the past decade alone, the number of Texas students in grades from pre-kindergarten to 12 has increased by over 21%, more than three times the national average growth (TEA, 2010).

Texas is also serving a progressively more diverse population. The Texas Education Agency reported that, for the 2009-10 school year, the ethnic composition of Texas schools was:

- 48.6% Hispanic (Latino),
- 33.3% White,
- 14% African American,
- 3.7% Asian/Pacific Islander, and
- 0.4% Native American (AEIS, 2010).

Starting in the 2001-02 school year, the Texas student population has included a majority of students from ethnic groups that are traditionally considered minority. This shift represents a decline in the percentage of White students and rise in the percentage of Latino students attending Texas schools over time (TEA, 2010). The growth in the Texas student population has also led to a rise in the percentage of students who are labeled economically disadvantaged. Comprising 58.9% of students for 2009-10, economically disadvantaged students are those who qualified for free or reduced lunch prices under the federal free lunch program or who received some other means of public assistance (AEIS, 2010). In all, Texas serves a population that is both large and diverse and will continue to be so. These students often need additional focus, monitoring, and support to achieve curricular goals.

Discussion surrounding students with educational needs often focuses on minority or economically disadvantaged students, but there are also other students who may need

Recommended Practices for SELs

additional instructional support, including those who need assistance with language acquisition. Currently Texas identifies these students using information from a home language survey which, along with language proficiency assessment results. This identification process can lead to classification as Limited English Proficient (LEP). While the legal term used to refer to these students is LEP, they are often called ELLs; these terms are used interchangeably here. Students who are found to be LEP receive bilingual and/or ESL programs and services. Currently, 16.9% of the total Texas student population is classified as LEP (AEIS, 2010). While ELL students receive monitoring and support, there may be other students who have language acquisition needs who are not identified, including students who speak varieties of English other than standard English (SELs).

Texas does not identify SELs. Given this, it is impossible to accurately provide the number of students who may be included in this category. In lieu of a precise number, we can suggest who such students might be based on what we know about language variety in Texas and how it might intersect with the diverse Texas student population. Extant research has identified several language varieties and influences across the state. The Atlas of North American English (Labov, Ash & Boberg, 2005) identifies two regional language variations which are used in Texas. These are labeled “South” and “Texas South”. South is the variation used across much of the Southeastern United States, while Texas South is a combination of the variations brought by settlers from the Lower South (Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana) and settlers from the Upper South (Tennessee, Kentucky and North Carolina). In addition, there are a number of areas, especially in the eastern portions of the state, which serve large percentages of African American students who may speak African American English (AAE). Estimates suggest that more than half of African American children entering urban schools speak AAE fluently and that the majority of African American students speak AAE to some extent (Terry, N., 2006). Lastly, language use in Texas has also been strongly influenced by the fact that Texas was a part of Mexico and includes a number of citizens who immigrated to Texas both before and after Texas’ independence from that nation (MacNeil & Cran, 2005).

While the ethnic population breakdowns are imperfect measures of students who are SELs, they can serve as a starting place for inference. For instance, as has been described above, it seems likely that some Texas students speak AAE. These students would be likely to be situated in areas with large numbers of African American students including the areas surrounding Dallas/Fort Worth and other parts of east Texas. It is further likely that many Hispanic students live in homes and/or communities where both Spanish and English are spoken, and therefore may use language varieties which draw upon both of those languages. This seems most likely to occur in the areas of Texas which have longstanding Hispanic settlement such as San Antonio, west Texas, or the Rio Grande Valley region at the south most tip of Texas. Lastly, it is also logical that there could be a number of language varieties which are particular to a certain region or settlement pattern in Texas which are not identified above. While these varieties may not appear in the existing body of study surrounding language varieties and schooling, it

Recommended Practices for SELs

is possible that students who use these language varieties would also benefit from the curricular suggestions suggested in the research.

Texas Standards and Assessments

State Curriculum/Standards

While we cannot identify SELs in Texas with specificity, we can conclude that these students currently exist and are taught and assessed under the state curriculum standards. This section will give a brief introduction to these standards. A more complete description can be found on the TEA website (<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/>). This information in this section was used to inform The Panel about the Texas context and to situate recommendations made by them into the current workings of Texas schools.

The TEA is dedicated to structuring leadership, resources and guidance so that schools can meet all students' educational needs. TEA and the elected SBOE work together to organize and oversee education at the campus, district, and state levels. Their task is the management and distribution of state education standards to schools and districts. Texas organizes instruction using a set of state curriculum standards for instruction and its accompanying state accountability tests which measure competency on those standards. These standards and assessments are used by all Texas districts, schools, and teachers to focus course content and to assess student learning. Below is a brief description of both the curriculum standards and assessments.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) is a set of curricular standards for each grade level and subject. TEKS are designed in clusters around each core subject area including: English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health and physical education, fine arts, and technology. In addition, there are sets of TEKS which are designed for specific populations including ESL, and Spanish language arts. Aligned with these specific TEKS, there is a set of English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) which outline student expectations for ELLs.

TEKS exist for each grade from kindergarten through 8. For high school, there is a differentiated set of subject-driven standards for each core class. For example, while there is a set of standards covering third grade math, when the grade level rises to high school, the standards separate into standards for Algebra I, Algebra II, and so forth. There is a similar pattern for all subject areas. While the TEKS are reviewed and edited on a regular basis by the SBOE, they also look somewhat similar to curricular standards established by national organizations for each subject. For example, the social studies TEKS contain thematic strands, or organizational structures, similar to those set forth by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS, 2010), but they are also based in the Texas context and contain information specific to the state.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Each set of grade-level or subject-level TEKS is organized using a set structure. The first section includes an introduction which briefly states the focus of instruction and expected learning outcomes for the year. The introduction might also include an explicit example of content knowledge and/or a skill learned. The second (and larger) portion of the TEKS is a knowledge and skills section where specific student expectations are described. The second section also provides several specific actions which indicate how students will show mastery of the expectation. For example, in the Grade 6 mathematics TEKS, the following is the third knowledge strand, accompanied by the specific skill set as a sub-section.

(3) Patterns, relationships, and algebraic thinking. The student solves problems involving direct proportional relationships. The student is expected to:

(A) use ratios to describe proportional situations;

(B) represent ratios and percents with concrete models, fractions, and decimals; and

(C) use ratios to make predictions in proportional situations (Section §111.22 of the Texas Administrative Code).

The ELPS differ slightly in organization, as they set expectations for students who are learning English as their second language rather than setting expectations for a grade level or subject area. The ELPS also include an introduction, but do not have a prescribed knowledge and skills section. The introduction defines two types of language proficiency (social and academic) and mandates that classroom instruction should address both types:

In order for ELLs to be successful, they must acquire both social and academic language proficiency in English. Social language proficiency in English consists of the English needed for daily social interactions. Academic language proficiency consists of the English needed to think critically, understand and learn new concepts, process complex academic material, and interact and communicate in English academic settings (Section §74.4 of the Texas Administrative Code).

Following the introduction there is an explicit segment which outlines district responsibilities for ensuring implementation. This segment is followed by a section which outlines cross-curricular second language acquisition essential knowledge and skills. This section outlines expectations, as well as modifications and accommodations, for students as they:

(1) Develop awareness of their learning process,

(2) Develop listening skills for a variety of speakers,

Recommended Practices for SELs

- (3) Differentiate between formal and informal registers,
- (4) Read a variety of texts with increasing comprehension, and
- (5) Write in a variety of forms with increasing accuracy.

The final section of the ELPS includes proficiency descriptors for beginning, intermediate, advanced, and highly advanced students in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)

The TEKS are methods-free curricular standards which do not stipulate specific books, lesson plans, or teaching strategies. This allows districts, campuses, and teachers flexibility when creating and delivering instruction. The state does not mandate that any particular set of curricular materials must be purchased or used; rather it holds schools and districts accountable for achieving specific achievement expectations by examining scores from state accountability testing. The test which measures performance of the TEKS standards is known as the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). TAKS is given at a variety of grade levels and includes different subjects at different grade levels. Below is a listing of subject areas assessed at each grade level:

Grade	Mathematics	Reading/ELA	Writing	Science	Social Studies
3	X	X			
4	X	X	X		
5	X	X		X	
6	X	X			
7	X	X	X		
8	X	X		X	X
9	X	X			
10	X	X		X	X
11 (Exit Level)	X	X		X	X

Each test is aligned directly with the corresponding knowledge and skills portions of the TEKS. Schools and districts are rated, in part, based on the percentages of students who meet proficiency standards as measured by this test.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS)

For students who are ELLs, there is a second, concurrent state assessment, the Texas English Language Assessment Program (TELPAS). This assessment addresses ELPS objectives, and measures progress in achieving English proficiency. Students who are classified as ELLs complete the TELPAS annually, whether or not they receive special instruction or services. The TELPAS measures English listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Teachers use an oral language rubric to evaluate students' oral language proficiency and collect and rate a set of writing samples to assess written proficiency. Based on TELPAS performance, students who are ELLs are classified as either beginner, intermediate, early advanced, or advanced in English proficiency in each of the four areas assessed.

Texas' Approach to Language Varieties

As has been mentioned, SELs are not identified or counted in any way in Texas. Since SELs speak English at home, they will not meet the criteria required for classification as an ELL. Classification as an ELL depends in part on scores on a language proficiency assessment; such an assessment is administered only when a home language survey indicates that a language other than English is spoken. As a result, the definitions of social and academic language from the ELPS and the curriculum objectives which accompany them will not typically be used to guide instruction for SELs, and they will not be assessed using the TELPAS assessment of English proficiency. Students' progress in achieving English proficiency will be assessed using the TAKS, with test objectives being drawn from the English Language Arts objectives of the TEKS. Given the lack of standards and assessments targeting students who speak non-standard varieties of English, potential opportunities to better serve these students may lie in altering TEKS rather than the ELP standards for ELL learners.

APPENDIX B

Methodology

Literature Review Methodology

We designed our literature search to identify literature investigating best practices in curriculum and instruction for speakers of varieties of English. We also searched for articles that would inform best practices PD for teachers of this population.

To identify relevant literature, we initially searched the educational databases *PsychInfo* and *ERIC* through the EBSCOHost database using the broad keyword search: *dialect** or *“language variation.”* We used database filters to limit results to publications reporting an empirical study in a peer-reviewed journal published in English since 2000. This search yielded 175 articles. The titles and abstracts of these studies were then reviewed to determine whether they would qualify for inclusion in the review. Consistent with other reviews investigating educational practices with language minority youth (e.g. August & Shannahan, 2006; Slavin & Cheung, 2005), we limited initial inclusion to empirical studies (a) published in peer-reviewed journals, (b) that included participants described as speaking a dialect or variation of English that was not the result of speaking a different first language, and (c) that analyzed novel data (thought pieces and reviews were excluded).

We identified 16 articles meeting these strict criteria, necessitating broader inclusion criteria and further research. We modified our inclusion criteria to allow any article that addressed or included participants described as speaking a dialect or variety of English other than standard English that was not the result of speaking a different first language. We then tracked citations from previously qualifying articles to identify articles that would address our three areas of focus: curriculum, instruction, and PD. At each stage, titles and abstracts were reviewed to identify promising articles.

We systematically coded each identified article. A member of the research team read each article and entered relevant information into an open-ended spreadsheet. Because of the multiple methodologies and topics of the articles included, an open-ended spreadsheet proved the most efficient and practical method to extract information from the articles. For each article, the coder documented the author(s), journal and article title, and any information regarding four categories related to SELs: (a) their academic characteristics, (b) recommendations for curricular modifications and adjustments, (c) promising instructional strategies, and (d) recommendations to meet the PD needs of teachers working with this group. Additional columns allowed the coder to make notes and comments, as well as log promising citations.

When all articles were coded, we met to outline and identify emergent themes from the literature. We developed an outline that followed the structure of our coding spreadsheet. Individual sections were distributed to members of the research team and

Recommended Practices for SELs

each member wrote a detailed draft or outline of that section. Our team met to edit and revise each section. Team members each evaluated every section to ensure that all relevant information was included and adequately reflected the literature base reviewed. We then performed a final editing process to produce a draft for presentation to The Panel.

Professional Development Priorities Methodology

As has been mentioned, CAL was contracted with to assist us in developing the PD portion of the study. CAL agreed to write a discussion of the issues and recommendations for PD for SELs. The CAL report (See Appendix C) addressed the following topics:

- PD priorities for teaching SELs
- PD themes or concepts for teaching SELs
- The vocabulary that should be used to address the issues surrounding student who speak variations of English
- First steps a state might take to create statewide PD for educators who serve SELs
- What capacities a state needs to implement statewide PD for educators who serve SELs
- Variations in the recommended PD depending on the population being addressed (e.g. AAE, Spanish-English dialects)
- How the Texas Education Agency might develop statewide PD for educators who serve SELs.

CAL based its report on research regarding effective PD, the authors' own experiences in providing PD on language variety, the authors' own knowledge of language variety-related PD efforts, and research on teachers' implementation of a language variety awareness curriculum conducted by one author.

Expert Panel Review Methodology

In the second phase of research, we convened The Panel to critique the literature review and assist in developing recommendations for this report.

We identified potential members of The Panel through a review of prominent literature on SELs and in consultation with scholars interested in this population. Senator Royce West (Texas Senate District 23), the sponsor of the rider creating this research project, also provided a list of six experts to us. Including his nominees, we identified 19 potential panelists. This list of potential panelists was approved by TEA.

We contacted all potential Panel members to notify them of the project and asked them to share any information they might have that would assist us in preparing our report or

Recommended Practices for SELs

recommendations. Responses that we received are incorporated into this report as appropriate.

We invited specific Panelists to convene in Austin for a 2-day meeting. We selected members from our approved list of potential Panelists to ensure broad expertise across disciplines. We sought to create a Panel composed of members representing expertise in: (a) socio-linguistics, (b) curriculum and instruction, (c) PD, and (d) educational policy. Drs. Lisa Green, Elena Izquierdo, William Labov, Noma Le Moine, Rebecca Wheeler and Robert Williams all served on The Panel. A brief biography of each panelist appears in Appendix D.

We provided a draft of our literature review to each Panelist on November 1, 2010 (one week prior to The Panel meeting). The discussion section of the draft included our findings and a list of questions generated by each finding that we hoped Panelists could help us to answer. This version of our discussion is included in Attachment B1 below.

The Panel met as a group on November 8 and 9, 2010. The agenda for the meeting is shown in Attachment B2. For purposes of the meeting, the questions generated by the literature review were organized by topic and used to create a facilitator's guide (Attachment B3). The guide was used throughout the meeting to assure that Panelists addressed all TERC questions. The meeting agenda and facilitator's guide were also designed to encourage Panelists to formulate recommendations as discussion of each topic concluded.

TERC staff audio- and videotaped The Panel meeting. They also took notes, with an emphasis on identifying suggestions for changes to the literature review and on recording recommendations as they were made. Suggested changes to the literature review have been incorporated into this report.

At several points during the meeting, recommendations were read back to Panel members, and they were asked to comment on them and/or revise them as needed. TERC staff also prepared a summary of best practices suggested by Panel members and Panelists reviewed and modified it as a group. Finally, TERC staff showed Panelists portions of the Texas Administrative Code and Texas Education Code so that they could collaboratively develop wordings for changes needed to implement the recommendations for best practice that they had made.

Following the meeting, a summary of all Panel decisions and recommendations was prepared and sent to each Panelist. Each Panelist was asked to make comments, suggestions or changes as he/she saw fit. Comments were received from all Panelists and incorporated into this report.

Attachment B1: Discussion of Initial Findings as Sent to Expert Panel

Discussion

We learned much from our review of literature and state policy. Rather than using a traditional discussion format, we have chosen to summarize our major findings and to present the questions that these findings have raised for us as we consider making recommendations to “determine best practices in curriculum adjustments, instructional strategies, and PD for teachers related to second dialects of English speakers” (Senate Bill No. 1, Rider 42, Section (I)). We ask that you, as our Expert Panel, help us to address these questions, and guide us to other issues that we should consider.

Finding 1: There is a paucity of research that addresses language variation in the educational context. However, there are some consistent trends in findings about the relationship of language variation to academic achievement and some best practices for instruction.

- How cautious would you advise us to be as we develop recommendations?

Finding 2: The majority of existing research focuses on AAE.

- How applicable is this research to groups who use other language variations?
- How can we present recommendations so that they are literature-based, but do not inappropriately target this group?

Finding 3: The specific relationship between the use of a language variation and academic achievement is not well understood.

- Is there a sufficient basis for recommendations in this area?
- What should we tell policymakers, teachers and administrators that will help them to understand why language variation-related instruction is important?

Finding 4: Instruction for students who use language variations addresses two main goals: acquisition of academic English and increased academic achievement. Academic English instruction is most often carried out using contrastive analysis/code-switching; strategies for increasing academic achievement use features of the student’s language variation in literacy instruction.

- Is one of strategies more appropriate for students who use language variations than the other?
- Contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction seems to be offered to students who use language variations, while instruction about language variation is offered to all students. What are the advantages and disadvantages of defining a target group as opposed to including all students?
- Many strategies other than contrastive analysis/code-switching are used when teaching academic English to ELLs. What other academic English strategies are appropriate for students who use language variations? Are adaptations in these strategies needed?

Recommended Practices for SELs

- Should language variation-related instruction be something that is given at one point in time, or should there be goals and objectives for different grade levels? In which grade(s) should instruction be presented?
- What recommendations should we make about research/program evaluation for language variation-related instruction?
 - In general?
 - To districts that implement language-variation related instruction?
 - What guidance can we offer teachers about monitoring the progress of individual students?
 - At what point should instruction be considered successful and terminated?

Finding 5: There is little guidance about how language variation should be incorporated into content area instruction.

- Is this because there is not a need to do so, or is this an artifact of the research?

Finding 6: The affective context in which instruction about language variation occurs (e.g., teacher attitudes and beliefs about language variations, whether students perceive instruction as adding to what they know and can do or as a demand to stop using their home language variation, etc.) is critical to its success.

- How much about culturally responsive pedagogy do teachers need to understand and implement to deliver language variation-related instruction successfully?
- Are some understandings and practices more important than others?
- Can all teachers successfully create an appropriate environment? If not, how should this impact the recommendations we make?

Finding 7: There are few curricula that can be used to deliver instruction to students who use language variations.

- Is the use of a prepackaged curriculum a good approach to use to deliver instruction?
- If so, how should a curriculum be structured? For example, should it vary by grade level? By geographical region? By level of proficiency in academic English?
- How should proficiency in academic English be determined?

Finding 8: PD for teachers should address teacher resistance/beliefs, issues of language, identity and power and practical strategies (Godley, Sweetland, Wheeler, Minnici, & Carpenter, 2006).

- Should PD be differentiated for elementary and secondary teachers? Are there other groups for whom differentiation should be considered (regional)?
- How should school and district administrators be included in PD?
- What competencies do the individuals who will deliver PD need, and how should these be assured or developed?

Finding 9: We found no state policies or practices that directly address language variation.

Recommended Practices for SELs

- Have there been attempts to formulate such policies which have been unsuccessful?
- Is such policy advisable?
- If so, what areas should it address (e.g., curriculum goals, student identification, student assessment) and how?
- Texas' state curriculum standards describe expected student outcomes, without prescribing instructional methods. Are there ways in which student outcomes can be described that make them compatible with language variation-related instruction? Are there specific outcomes that should be included?

Recommended Practices for SELs

Attachment B2: Panel Meeting Agenda

Monday, November 8, 2010

8:00-8:30: Continental Breakfast

8:30-9:00: Welcome and Introduction

9:30-10:00: Panel Member Introductions

10:00-10:30: Comments on Draft Reports

10:30-10:45: Break

10:45-11:15: Overview of the Texas Context

11:15-12:00: Block One [Terminology and Instructional Goals]

12:00-1:00: Lunch

1:00-2:00: Block One [Terminology and Instructional Goals] Continued

2:00-4:00: Block Two [Curriculum and Instruction]*

4:00-5:00: Block Three [Professional Development]

*Break as Needed

Tuesday, November 9, 2010

8:00-8:30: Continental Breakfast

8:30-9:15: Blocks Three and Four [Professional Development Continued; Policy]

9:15-10:15: Wrap Up

10:15-10:30: Break

10:30-12:00: Presentation of Recommendations

12:00-1:00: Lunch

1:00-2:00: Finalize Recommendations/Conclude Session

Attachment B3: Panel Facilitation Guide

Note: Questions in italics will be directed to The Panel. Subquestions are prompts to be used as needed to assure a complete discussion of the topic before recommendations are formulated. Each block will end with the drafting of recommendations in the area it addresses. All recommendations will begin with the stem:

“The Panel of Experts on Best Practice for Students who Speak Variations of English recommends that the state should...”

The full set of recommendations will be reviewed and prioritized during the last two sessions on Tuesday.

Block 1: Terminology and Instructional Goals

Monday, 11:30-12:15; 1:15-2:00

Question 1: *What terms should we use to refer to the major concepts central to the discussions of this Panel meeting and the subsequent report?*

1. Dialects, language variations, home or community language
2. Standard English, academic English
3. African American English, African American Vernacular English
4. English-Spanish combinations
5. Other?

Question 2: *There is a lack of literature addressing best practices in the education of students speaking variations of English. Our literature review rapidly narrowed to a focus on academic English.*

A) *Should the focus and goal of working with these students be limited to a concentration on academic English?*

B) *If not, what are other instructional needs of this group that our recommendations should address?*

1. What are the most important instructional needs of this group?

Question 3: *What do you recommend we propose to policymakers as a rationale for considering the importance of taking into account language variation in instruction?*

1. Cultural Competency
2. Metalinguistic Awareness
3. Student Outcomes
4. Societal Benefits

Question 4: *Most research and instructional methods center on AAE (or agreed-upon term), while the Texas population includes many other groups. Should our recommendations address this? If yes, how?*

1. How cautious do we need to be?
2. How might we address limitations in the research base, including the small amount of research available at this time?

Block 2: Curriculum and Instruction

Monday, 2:00-4:00; BREAK between questions where it fits

Question 1: *Should our recommendations include the use of instruction in contrastive analysis and code switching? If yes, how?*

1. What should the scope and sequence of instruction be?
 - a. Does it occur at all grade levels? If not, which?
 - b. What objectives when?
 - c. What objectives must be achieved for instruction to be “complete?”
2. How do we evaluate the success of this approach at the student, classroom, and district levels?
- 3.

Question 2: *Should our recommendations include instruction that focuses on developing awareness of language variations, such as that in the “Voices of Carolina” curriculum? If yes, how?*

1. What would be its place in the present curriculum?
2. How might the scope and sequence of instruction be determined?
 - a. Does it occur at all grade levels? If not, which?
 - b. What objectives when?
 - c. What objectives must be achieved for instruction to be “complete?”
3. What are the benefits and limitations of this instructional approach?

Question 3: *Many educators have theorized that language variation has an impact on students’ achievement in content areas such as reading. What, if any, modifications or adaptations should we recommend regarding reading instruction or instruction in other content areas?*

Question 4: *Some of the research we have encountered describes strategies for academic English development used with second language learners. Should any of these (beyond contrastive analysis/code-switching) be included in our recommendations?*

1. What are the benefits and limitations applying this set of strategies to students that are not second language learners, but speak variations of English?
2. How do we evaluate the success of this approach at the student, classroom, and district levels?

(Stretch Break)

Block 3: Professional Development

Monday, 4:00 to 5:00, Tuesday, 8:30 to 9:15

Question 1: *What are your comments on the CAL report?*

1. Is the plan feasible?
2. Appropriate?

Question 2: *What (other) specific recommendations should be offered regarding the PD needed to support the recommendations formulated thus far? As a beginning, what groups of teachers should receive PD? General educators? Bilingual educators? Special educators?*

Recommended Practices for SELs

1. What should they be taught?
2. What should be differentiated for elementary and secondary teachers?
 - a. Are there other groups that need differentiated PD?

Question 3: *How should our recommendations address the need for language variation-related instruction to be culturally responsive?*

Question 4: *What recommendations for including school and district administrators in PD may be needed to support PD efforts?*

Question 5: *Should recommendations regarding the evaluation of PD and implementation of instruction be offered? If so, what?*

Block 4: Policy Recommendations and Wrap-Up

Tuesday, 9:15-10:15

Question 1: *What recommendations regarding state policy are needed to support the recommendations formulated thus far?*

- A) *Should students who use language variations be systematically identified? If so, how?*
- B) *Should our recommendations address teacher certification requirements? If so, how?*
- C) *Should we make recommendations for changes in curriculum standards (TEKS)? If so, what?*
 - a. Should modifications be made to general standards or are standards similar to the ELPS needed?
 - b. Both?
 - c. Why or why not?

Question 2: *What have we not asked you that we should have? What else do we need to know or do to make effective recommendations?*

It may help to reference the needs of speakers of language variations that were defined yesterday as this question is addressed.

APPENDIX C

Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) Report on Professional Development

Professional Development of Educators in Texas: Addressing the Needs of Students Who Speak Vernacular Dialects of English Prepared for the Texas Education Research Center by Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL)

How can the educational establishment in Texas better support language development for students who speak vernacular dialects of English? What can be done to help these students add standard English to their sociolinguistic repertoires and, more generally, acquire academic English? What do teachers need to know and be able to do to assist them? Answering these questions depends on state policy regarding what students need to know about language variation and be able to do with language, since designing PD for teachers must be guided ultimately by sociolinguistic performance goals for students. The existence of learning goals--standards--for students and for teachers has implications for teacher learning, but that does not lead in a straightforward way to formulating PD. In this report, we discuss issues and offer some recommendations regarding PD for teachers of students who speak vernacular dialects of English.

In preparing this report, we have assumed that the literature review being undertaken by another team will identify PD efforts that enable teachers to implement instructional programs and practices regarding language variation in the classroom. We assume that these programs include some combination of dialect awareness for all students, not only vernacular dialect speakers; instruction on standard English, involving contrastive analysis; and instruction geared toward enhancing students' proficiency in academic English across the content areas.

We assume too that the goal of PD and related support is enabling teachers to help vernacular dialect speakers become proficient in a variety of written (and spoken?) English that is generally seen as appropriate or advantageous in academic contexts. Such a language variety can be referred to by many names, each with potential problems in denotation or connotation: standard English, mainstream English, classroom English, school English, formal English, academic English, and Edited Academic English. The difficulty in naming the targeted variety reflects the fluidity of ideas about what students really need to be successful, which ought to inform curricular priorities. For example, there is disagreement over the extent to which schools should attempt to conduct programs for writing and speaking versus concentrating resources on writing instruction. We note that there is no single, fixed, documented, standard spoken variety of English. Thus any program that seeks to formally teach students "spoken standard English" should acknowledge that no oral language variety is

Recommended Practices for SELs

appropriate to all contexts and should recognize that the targeted variety represents a social/political choice--one that typically reflects current and historical privilege (White, middle class, non-regional, etc.) (see Adger, Wolfram, and Christian [2007: 98-112] for a discussion on oral language instruction).

The term edited academic English denotes a variety that is defined, in part, by the fact that it is carefully written. Although there are generally fewer difficulties in defining a standard for written English than there are with oral forms of the language, there is no single, universally agreed upon correct way to write English. The fact that different style guides (AP, APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.) exist demonstrates the fact that there is not an ideal or "most logical" written code. Many schools enact policies that endorse one set of prescriptions for the language (often MLA), but the enforcement of this policy is often restricted to the language arts classroom, sending confusing messages to students about what type(s) of written language is(are) acceptable. Further, even in language arts classrooms, enforcement may be inconsistent, such that what is privileged is not a "standard code," and certainly not standard English. For example, rarely are language usages such as the distinction between who and whom enforced in classrooms. The prohibitions on splitting infinitives and sentence adverbials (such as hopefully) seem to be waning. Many such prescriptions are dropped so long as they do not cloud meaning. In fact, the U.S. has undergone a shift in something as seemingly common as comma usage (see one columnist's take on this phenomenon:

<http://www.newsweek.com/2007/07/22/the-sad-fate-of-the-comma.html>). It is well documented that not all writing "errors" elicit the same response. In fact, anecdotally, we have seen quite often that prescribed standard forms may elicit very negative responses even in formal writing. All of this suggests that while it is simple to suggest that schools ensure that all students are proficient in a standard language code, it is ultimately difficult or even impossible to define every component of that code. No policy can replace the judgment of the classroom teacher in determining which features of a child's language use (oral and written) should be targeted for instruction and/or remediation.

However, it is essential that the teacher's judgments reflect a linguistically informed perspective, and that such instruction not denigrate the students' existing language varieties in any way. As such, we propose purposefully differentiating between policy related to oral and policy related to written language usage. Further, we suggest that a name such as edited academic English be adopted to describe the written code, with the understanding that such a name implies a written code that is not distracting to the audience; that conforms to the most important prescriptions of standard written English, especially those that are needed to reduce or eliminate ambiguity; and that writers arrive at after a process of composing, editing, and proofreading; and that may not be appropriate for contexts such as personal correspondence or creative writing.

There is very limited research on professional developing regarding dialect-related instruction. Uccelli and Snow (2008) point out that in general educational research has not contributed sufficiently to improving educational practice, and this is true especially for research on language in educational settings. But there is a robust body of research regarding effective PD (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2008) and sociolinguistic research into

Recommended Practices for SELs

language variation and other aspects of language use (e.g., Wolfram & Schilling Estes, 2006). There has been attention to PD regarding academic English instruction for English learners (Schleppergrell, 2004), although none that we know on academic English for speakers of English dialects. The discussion that follows is based on this research base, our own experience in providing PD on dialects, our knowledge of dialect-related PD efforts, and Dr. Reaser's research on teachers' implementation of a dialect curriculum.

1. PD priorities for teaching students who speak vernacular varieties of English.

- Acquaint teachers with findings from sociolinguistic research on the nature of language variation through a dialect awareness program.
- Help teachers learn how to teach a dialect awareness curriculum to their students.
- Help teachers learn about Edited Academic English and how to help students develop proficiency in this register.
- Involve gatekeepers in PD on dialect--curriculum coordinators, principals and assistant principals, counselors, speech/language pathologists, and others—so that schools present a unified stance on dialect and so that these influential individuals can support teachers' development and practice.

The approach to PD that we recommend involves several general kinds of information:

- Awareness that the phonological, syntactic, and lexical systems of English vary naturally according to social constructs (e.g., ethnicity, social class) and geographic region, and that this variation is systematic.
- Knowledge of some specific contrasts between vernacular and standard English that are useful for reading and writing, especially at the revising and editing stage; and the ability to use this knowledge.
- Knowledge of and competence in the linguistic register(s) associated with the content areas, including syntax, vocabulary, pragmatics, and discourse.

2. PD themes or concepts for teaching students who speak vernacular varieties of English.

Conceptualizing and planning PD about dialects is challenging. It has to take into account the entrenched language ideology that teachers typically share with the broader society that vernacular dialects are simply careless, incorrect language use. It also has to overcome the fact that there is no established tradition of education about language diversity in the U.S. at any educational level and thus few curricula exist. Instead, curricula for K-12 and for teacher education still tend to approach dialects in terms of replacing vernacular English with standard English, which is considered correct.

Thus before PD can be designed, there is a need to develop curriculum for both students and teachers. As the basis for this undertaking, Wolfram, Reaser, and Vaughn (2008) suggest some foundational principles:

Recommended Practices for SELs

- Language and human interest: Languages differences are inherently interesting. People notice and discuss them.
- Language and personal relevance: Language differences are relevant to people's lives on a personal, interactional level.
- Language and legacy: Language differences are intrinsically connected to sociohistorical, sociocultural, and regional traditions.
- Language and inductive education: Effective education about language variation takes places when learners discover truths for themselves.
- Framing language diversity positively: Positively framed presentations of language variation are more likely to be received than are direct confrontation of language ideologies.
- Flying under the ideological radar: Strategic sequencing of data presentation and analysis; framing linguistic issues within positive cultural representation; avoiding "hot-button" controversies and labels.
- Language and the broader contest: Language differences are embedded in cultural and sociopolitical context; they often serve as a proxy for this broader context.

To address the lack of traditions for learning about dialects, Reaser and Wolfram (2005, revised in 2007), working with colleagues, have developed dialect awareness curriculum components that allow teachers without a background in linguistics to successfully teach about dialects to their students (Reaser 2006). The Voices of North Carolina curriculum is a 450-minute multi-media unit that addresses the North Carolina 8th grade social studies Standard Course of Study. It is motivated by the following:

- A scientific rationale: Examining dialect patterning is a kind of scientific inquiry.
- A cultural rationale: Language is culture.
- A utilitarian rationale: Understanding dialect features enables learning standard English.

The curriculum addresses the following goals:

- Develop a respect for the systematic patterning of all language varieties
- Develop an appreciation for the link between historical development, and language and culture
- Develop an awareness and appreciation for the connection between language and culture
- Gain authentic knowledge about how dialects pattern
- Develop an awareness and appreciation for others' ways of speaking

The curriculum involves deductive, inductive, and reflective activities for learning about dialect patterning, language prejudice, language identity, and style shifting. It presents extensive language data. The curriculum is available at <http://ncsu.edu/linguistics/dialectcurriculum.php>

Recommended Practices for SELs

This curriculum reduces the need for extensive PD for teachers who deliver it (which is not to say that PD cannot enhance the teaching of the curriculum). The curriculum is laid out in such a way that the teacher manual contains most of the information that teachers need to teach it. The accompanying student workbook does not read like a textbook. Instead, it contains exercises, note-taking guides, and so forth. As such, the teachers, not the book, remain the experts on the subject matter. Further, the teacher manual, which includes the student workbook, is laid out to ensure success. Clear instructions are provided for all activities. Teaching tips, answer keys, and background information are clearly marked with shaded bars or in boxes. Answers that are found in paragraphs are underlined. Connections between information within the curriculum, curricular resources (additional readings, media, maps, overheads, etc.), and external resources are copious and clear. Thus, as a teacher prepares for class, he or she can seek out additional information, perspectives, and materials. The curriculum also contains more than 200 minutes of audio-visual resources, some of which introduce professional linguists' perspectives into the classroom (as a virtual guest speaker), while others transport students to other places and cultures (akin to virtual field trips). More information on the pedagogy can be found in Reaser (2006, 2010a, and 2010b) and Wolfram, Reaser, and Vaughn (2008). Curriculum effectiveness is discussed in Reaser (2006).

With regard to teaching standard English, the important concepts are contrastive analysis—focusing on the contrasts between the standard dialect and a vernacular dialect—and code-switching. Students learn dialect contrasts so that they can switch appropriately at the point of dialect contrast. We are aware of two well-developed programs for teaching standard English to speakers of minority dialects by way of contrastive analysis, both of which are supported by PD for teachers. That developed by Rebecca Wheeler (Wheeler & Swords, 2006 and 2010) focuses on the writing of African American English (AAE) speakers in elementary school. The program targets inflectional morphological features (possessive –s, plural –s, etc.) that may be deleted in AAE, as well as several other highly stigmatized items. A similar approach is used by the Academic English Mastery Program in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LeMoine, 2001). Children are taught some of the intricacies of vernacular patterns and strategies to help them switch to the equivalent Academic English feature. For example, vernacular speakers sometimes mark possession through proximity as opposed to an inflectional morpheme (e.g., that is the dog_ bowl). Students learn to apply the “formal” or “academic” English rule, owner + ‘s + owned, to produce the standard English sentence, that is the dog’s bowl. Although the curricula can guide teacher practice to some extent, teachers benefit from PD that provides a deeper understanding of the concepts they will be presenting to their students, as well as the ability to contextualize the information in the local setting. It can be difficult for teachers to overcome the belief that the standard English feature is correct and the vernacular equivalent is incorrect. This stance is antithetical to contrastive analysis.

3. What type of vocabulary should be used to address the issues surrounding students who speak varieties of English.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Because dialects are subject to language prejudice, terminology is an important issue. Scientific terms should be adopted, although in some cases there is not one agreed-upon term. Terms that characterize dialects in terms of deficiency should be avoided. This is the primary reason for using the term vernacular English rather than nonstandard English. Since all dialects of English are regular and systematic in their structure, adopting a particular dialect as standard is a matter of social preference, rather than any inherent linguistic value.

The term dialect is sometimes used pejoratively to contrast one language with another, suggesting that one of them does not qualify as a full-fledged language. Linguists use the term dialect to refer to a variety of a language that is associated with a social group or a geographic region. Standard English is a dialect of English; AAE is a dialect of English; and so forth. Dialects are also sometimes referred to as language varieties, a term that acknowledges implicitly that designation of a standard tends to be based on political rather than linguistic criteria.

The varieties of English sometimes spoken by those from Hispanic backgrounds may be referred to as Hispanicized English, Hispanic English, Latino American English, Chicano English, or Spanglish. The last term, while used occasionally by speakers of this language variety, is generally considered derogatory or at least problematic, and should be avoided. Terms for the dialect of African Americans have shifted with changing terms for referring to group members and other considerations: Nonstandard Negro English, Black English, African American Vernacular English, AAE, and African American Language.

As with the various terms for the targeted academic variety discussed in the introduction to this document, it is important to note that these terms for ethnic varieties are not clear cut; indeed, each term carries with it some problematic connotation. When employing a single term for any collective group, concerns arise related to individual and group identity. We suggest that the question of terminology be resolved in discussion between state education officials and the advisory panel. Certain items are obviously not contenders, such as Nonstandard Negro English.

4. First steps a state might take to create statewide PD around this topic.

- Plan adjustments to pre-service teacher education regarding dialects, if necessary
- Examine the state curriculum for K12 and plan modifications regarding dialect knowledge, if necessary
- Identify appropriate curriculum materials for students and materials for use in teacher PD. Plan to fill any gaps, and identify experts to help with materials development as needed
- Plan PD on academic English.
- Plan delivery models—summer institutes, workshops, professional learning communities, and so forth.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Preliminary to creating statewide PD for practicing teachers is examining teacher preparation programs: All teacher education programs, regardless of academic level or discipline, should address the topics listed under point one above so that novice teachers will be prepared to respond appropriately to all language varieties and so that those teachers involved with language instruction will be able to teach edited academic English in ways that acknowledge children's language skills while helping them expand their repertoires. This may well mean training for some teacher educators and/or program revision. We offer the targeted competency goals from the 2003 NCATE/NCTE program standards as the beginning of a model
(www.ncate.org/ProgramStandards/NCTE/NCTEstandards.doc)

According to these program standard, teacher candidates should:

- a) Show extensive knowledge of how and why language varies and changes in different regions, across different cultural groups, and across different time periods and incorporate that knowledge into classroom instruction and assessment that acknowledge and show consistent respect for language diversity; (3.1.4)
- b) Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the evolution of the English language and historical influences on its forms and how to integrate this knowledge into student learning; (3.1.5)
- c) Incorporate an in-depth knowledge of English grammar into teaching skills that empower students to compose and to respond effectively to written, oral, and other texts; (3.1.6)
- d) Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of semantics, syntax, morphology, and phonology through their own effective use of language and integrate that knowledge into teaching their students to use oral and written language effectively. (3.1.7)

An essential first step in planning PD for teachers is identifying learning outcomes for their students. In this regard, the state will need to examine its curriculum's stance on language varieties: The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills ought to include, as part of the introduction to the curriculum, a statement affirming the CCCC/NCTE Students' right to their own language position statement (<http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Groups/CCCC/NewSRTOL.pdf>). All teachers, regardless of their subject area, have the responsibility to respect these rights. There should also be a statement that the state understands that no language variety in and of itself causes academic difficulty.

Texas' curriculum objectives should specify that students be knowledgeable about dialects. That could be included in the social studies standards, as in North Carolina. English language arts standards should be examined as well to see whether they take a bidialectal approach. That is, the standards should present standard English as a dialect for students to acquire in addition to the home or vernacular dialect, rather than specifying replacement of the vernacular. The program standards set forth by NCTE/IRA (1996: 29) offer a good starting point: "Students develop an understanding of

Recommended Practices for SELs

and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.”

We recommend that the K12 curriculum for English language arts be examined closely to determine where scientifically informed information about language variation would best fit, if it is not already there. We also recommend that the social studies curriculum be examined to assess where information about Texas’ rich linguistic resources--a component of its cultural heritage and historical development--would be taught to students. As an example, in North Carolina, students in the 4th and 8th grades learn about the history and culture of North Carolina. The established curriculum is enriched by including information about the state’s language varieties.

Because state-specific curriculum materials on language and related PD materials will need to be developed, we recommend identifying experts in the state to assist with their preparation. These ought to be constructed with significant input from academic experts on Texas’ history, culture, and language. We are not familiar with experts in other fields, but linguists Guy Bailey (Texas Tech), Patricia Cukor-Avila (University of North Texas), Lisa Green (University of Massachusetts), and Jan Tillery (Texas Tech) are among those who have published on the language varieties of Texas. We note that it would be important to represent non-English languages also, including Native American languages and Spanish, in the description of Texas’ language diversity.

PD on academic English—the register associated with the content areas and with school in general—could be built on the work of linguists such as Mary Schleppegrell (University of Michigan), who has experimented with a multi-year PD program for middle and secondary school history teachers and a two-year project with primary grades reading teachers. The theoretical framework that guides this work is systemic functional linguistics, which offers a means of connecting language form and meaning and of describing the linguistic features of the registers and genres of school. Teachers develop an approach to talking with students about language forms.

The approach we are suggesting entails a substantial investment of time and funds, first to assess the educational policies related to language in the state of Texas, and then to develop a curriculum and teaching materials, as well as related materials for use in PD on working with vernacular dialect speaking students. The elaborateness of this approach is justified by the likelihood that teachers’ educational backgrounds may well not include much information at all on language diversity and may indeed have encouraged negative attitudes and stereotypes that need to be overcome. But with adequate teaching materials and some PD featuring dialect awareness, contrastive analysis, and methods of teaching academic English, teachers should be able to implement dialect curriculum for their students with somewhat limited PD. Some materials are available, but they would need to be nested in the curriculum; additional materials would be required for a curriculum that is specific to Texas.

Is there a short-cut? Could teachers simply engage in a three-hour workshop on standard English and academic English in which they would learn some basic

sociolinguistic background concerning the fact that all dialects are regular and systematic, and thus all are worthy of respect? We believe that such an approach would be wasteful of teacher time and educational funds. We have interacted with educators whose superficial understanding of dialects leads them to make observations like “students’ dialects should be respected even if they are incorrect.” Language prejudice is hard to overcome, like all prejudices, but knowing more about dialects and developing an appreciation of dialects through exposure and analysis has led teachers and students to question and reject the bases for prejudice. This, in turn, provides teachers with the tools to help vernacular dialect speakers add academic English varieties to their linguistic repertoires.

5. Capacities a state needs to implement statewide PD around this topic.

Naturally the expertise and capacity to implement a statewide PD program depends on the curriculum offerings and PD to be implemented. Implementation could involve face-to-face sessions facilitated by trainers from the regional resource centers who are trained by domain experts to use the materials that this initiative develops for teacher training. The state might engage an outside agency, such as the Center for Inspired Teaching, which conducts innovative and teacher-empowering PD on a variety of topics (<http://www.inspiredteaching.org/>) to help with training and coaching these trainers. No doubt the Texas Education Agency has effective models of delivery for statewide training that could be tailored for this effort.

If it is possible to offer a course that would offer PD points or university credit, it could include an introduction to language in society, information about dialect diversity, information about standard English across the school curriculum, and information about academic English. On-line training might be developed as one component. CAL developed materials on the structure of AAE for the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). ASHA used them to develop an online course for speech/language pathologists related to continuing accreditation. Something similar could be done for Texas. Alternatively, a hybrid model of PD might be developed featuring on-line, interactive materials as well as a series of facilitated sessions.

To sustain the program, districts and schools would need to identify and train coaches. Eventually, it might be possible to videotape high implementers of the dialect curriculum to enrich the training. A network of such teachers might be identified to actually conduct the local PD in schools or districts.

6. Variation in the recommended PD depending on the population being addressed (e.g., AAVE, Hispanicized English).

Although to a great extent English is English, dialects of English differ from each other in some particulars. But certain vernacular features appear across vernacular dialects. The use of ain’t is an obvious example. Teachers need to know details about the features of their students’ dialects so that they can use a contrastive analysis approach to teaching standard English and so that they can distinguish predictable dialect

Recommended Practices for SELs

features from language pathology. PD might well focus on frequently occurring and well-researched vernacular features. A list of such features appears in Adger, Wolfram, and Christian (2007) and elsewhere. Other approaches may first examine features that are most highly stigmatized, regardless of their frequency. Lists of common features of AAE and Hispanicized English can be found in Green (2002) and Fought (2003), respectively. Identifying features of their own students' dialects could be a productive endeavor for school-based Professional Learning Communities established after teachers receive PD.

While not directly related to dialects, work by Hairston (1981) is useful. This researcher studied professionals' responses to various writing errors (from "status marking errors" to "minor errors"). Connors and Lunsford (1988) examined the frequency of writing errors at the college level. Similar studies, conducted in Texas, with various groups of students across the educational experience, might help teachers or researchers better understand how teachers and other professionals respond to the current linguistic varieties of Texans, and help shape programs seeking to reduce the usage of the most common and/or most serious errors and dialect influences in edited writing.

7. How the Texas Education Agency would go about piloting statewide PD on teaching students who speak vernacular English.

Clearly, our recommendations would take some time to implement, and thus a pilot is some months off. If there is interest and pressure to begin PD soon, the state might decide to pilot pieces of an emergent dialect awareness curriculum with interested districts and schools. This could involve having interested teachers use the components with their students after they (the teachers) have used the materials in training. Input related to this piloting from districts, schools, and individual teachers could help to shape the final versions of the materials.

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APPENDIX D

Brief Biographies of Expert Panelists

Lisa Green, PhD

Dr. Green is a Professor in the Department of Linguistics, at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Dr. Green directs the Center for the Study of African American Language (CSAAL). The CSAAL is in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, and serves as a center of research on various dimensions of African American language. The Center builds on expertise at the University of Massachusetts and five other colleges on issues related to the study of African American Language varieties. Dr. Green specializes in African American English. She was previously a faculty member at UT Austin and her studies have focused on vernacular English of the South.

Elena Izquierdo, PhD

Dr. Izquierdo is an Associate Professor of Teacher Education at UT El Paso and director of Project Teaching Language Through Content (TLC). TLC provides preservice and inservice secondary teachers in the greater El Paso community with quality academic university coursework. In addition, Project TLC provides several PD sessions throughout the year for teachers who want to become ESL certified. These sessions focus on second language acquisition and sheltered instruction at the secondary level. Teachers are exposed to a combination of academic/language identification procedures, and applicable instructional strategies and pedagogy. Teachers learn strategies that incorporate involvement, validation, and guidance for students who function in a non-standard dialect of English.

William Labov, PhD

Dr. Labov is a Professor of Linguistics at the University of Pennsylvania. He is a linguist and is widely regarded as the founder of the discipline of variationist sociolinguistics. Dr. Labov pursues research in sociolinguistics, language change, and dialectology. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, his studies of the linguistic features of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) were influential. His works include: *The Study of Nonstandard English* (1969), *Language in the Inner City: Studies in Black English Vernacular* (1972), *Sociolinguistic Patterns* (1972), *Principles of Linguistic Change* (Vol. I Internal Factors, 1994; Vol. II Social Factors, 2001), and, together with Sharon Ash and Charles Boberg, *The Atlas of North American English* (2006).

Noma LeMoine, PhD--*

Dr. LeMoine is a national consultant, and previously worked for the Los Angeles Unified School District. She developed a comprehensive, research-based program designed to

Recommended Practices for SELs

address the acquisition of school language and literacy learning in students for whom standard English is not native. Dr. LeMoine's work with LA school teachers and principals focused on the following topics: Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy, Linguistically Responsive Instruction for Standard English Learners and Instructional Strategies for Facilitating Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching.

Rebecca Wheeler, PhD

Dr. Wheeler is an Associate Professor of English Language and Literacy at Christopher Newport University in Virginia. While her work currently focuses on helping teachers respond to African American student writers, the practical, affirming (and research-based) strategies she brings extend to any group of students who speak and write an everyday English differing from school English (e.g., Cajun English, Native American English, Appalachian English, Southern English, Bronx English, International English). Dr. Wheeler shows teachers how to build on what students do know—community English—as they add standard English to their linguistic repertoires.

Robert Williams, PhD--*

Dr. Williams is Professor Emeritus at Washington University in St. Louis. He earned his PhD in clinical psychology from Washington University. Dr. Williams' areas of expertise include Black psychology, cultural diversity, race relations, Black language and program evaluation. He is credited with coining the term Ebonics in his edited book, *Ebonics: The True Language of Black Folk*. In addition to this seminal work, Dr. Williams has published over 60 professional articles and two other books: *The Collective Black Mind: Toward an Afrocentric Theory of the Black Personality and Racism at an Early Age through Racial Scripting*. He was a founding member of the Association of Black Psychologists and served as its second president.

Notes:

A "*" following a Panelist's name indicates that the Panelist was nominated by Senator Royce West.

APPENDIX E

Literature Review

Language Varieties and Academic Achievement

How using a language variety other than standard English specifically influences academic achievement is not well understood. In this section, we summarize research investigating the academic achievement of students who enter school speaking varieties of English which differ from standard English. We note that all of the research that we found which described the academic achievement of SELs was conducted in the United States and that most focused on speakers of AAE.

Many researchers believe that race/ethnicity can be used as a proxy for SEL status as patterns of achievement are examined (see, for example, National Research Council, 2010; Wheeler & Swords, 2010; Labov & Hudley, 2009; Craig et al., 2009). While these researchers acknowledge that many diverse factors can influence academic achievement, they assert that national data which document persistent achievement gaps between minority students and their White peers in reading and mathematics are evidence of the impact of speaking a language variety other than standard English. Further information on the reading achievement gap between African American and White students and Hispanic and White students can be found in the section of this report titled “The Achievement Gap.”

Race/ethnicity has also been used as a proxy for SEL status in examining writing skills, and is again found to have a significant relationship to achievement. Wheeler and Swords (2010) describe results of several studies of writing development which document that students who enter school using a language variety other than standard English use the grammar of that language variety in their writing, and will continue to do so, even at the community college level. Labov and Hudley (2009, p. 8) state, “In students’ writing, the appearance of nonstandard forms is apparent and overt.”

Studies which have directly addressed the relationship between speaking a language variety other than standard English and academic achievement are limited, and mainly focus on the literacy skills of students who speak AAE. Results are complex, and suggest that the effects of speaking AAE on achievement vary with the target literacy skill (e.g., see Kohler et al., 2007). However, several studies suggest that AAE speakers have reading difficulties which reflect their use of this language variety:

- Charity, Scarborough and Griffin (2004) found that AAE speakers’ early reading achievement significantly correlated with their familiarity with standard English, with students in kindergarten through Grade 2 who were more familiar with standard English achieving higher reading scores.
- Craig et al. (2009) reported that students in Grade 1 through Grade 5, the rate of production of AAE features negatively correlated with scores on standardized tests of reading achievement. They also found that students who were able to

Recommended Practices for SELs

shift more effectively between AAE and standard English achieved higher reading scores than their peers who were not able to shift between language varieties. (Ability to shift was measured using the percentage of difference in the use of AAE features between an oral and a written narrative task.)

We found only one study which directly addressed mathematics achievement (Terry et al., 2009). This study examined the relationship between “density” of AAE use and scores on a standardized test, taking into account language features of each problem, problem difficulty, and overall student ability. While not all language features had an impact on math performance, those that did (possessive –s and verbal –s) were associated with lower math scores for students who spoke AAE.

Likewise, we found only one study which addressed the effects of speaking LAE (Labov & Baker, in press, cited in Labov & Hudley, 2009). Using a group of struggling readers, the study examined the probability that an LAE-based reading error would be followed by further reading errors. The same procedure was used for a group of struggling readers who spoke AAE. Different patterns were found for the two groups, with more types of errors being significant for students who spoke LAE. Labov and Hudley (p. 13) describe implications of these results as follows: “The consequences for an intervention strategy are clear: Latino readers need more assistance than African American readers, particularly in the case of the past tense suffix.”

This research demonstrates a negative relationship between use of language features not found in standard English and academic development, but a full understanding of the mechanisms underlying this relationship remains elusive. In the following sections, we present an overview of hypotheses explaining this relationship and then discuss the evidence for each hypothesis found in present literature.

Overview of hypotheses relating language varieties and academic achievement

Three common hypotheses have been put forth to explain a potential causal relationship between speaking a language variety and diminished academic outcomes. It is important to note that the three hypotheses are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, we feel that the nuanced, occasionally contradictory evidence we found suggests a dynamic interplay of multiple factors influencing the reading development of SELs.

The first hypothesis focuses on teacher bias against language varieties other than standard English, particularly AAE (Goodman & Buck, 1973; Labov, 1995; Connor, 2008). This hypothesis argues that teachers often hold language varieties other than standard English in low regard. They therefore have diminished expectations for SELs and provide them lower quality instruction.

A second hypothesis focuses on the linguistic mismatch between language varieties other than standard English and standard English (Cecil, 1988; Labov, 1995). This mismatch can occur across all components in language including: (a) phonology, which is “the way the sounds of language operate” (Snow, Burns, Griffin, 1998, p. 46), (b) morphology, which governs “the ways words are formed and are related to each other”

Recommended Practices for SELs

(Snow et al., p. 46), (c) semantics, which refers to “the ways that language conveys meaning (Snow et al., p. 46), (d) pragmatics, which “refers to the ways members of the speech community achieve their goals using language (Snow et al., p. 46), and (e) lexicon, commonly called vocabulary. Differences between language varieties in all five components create additional barriers in learning to read for SELs (Connor, 2008).

The third hypothesis shifts focus away from the linguistic mismatch between the student’s language variety and standard English and moves it to the student’s awareness of this linguistic difference. This ability to perceive linguistic difference, called linguistic flexibility, dialectical awareness, or metalinguistic awareness is thought to explain differences in student achievement. Students who are more aware of differences are better able to make adjustments between language varieties and to select the one that is needed to show their knowledge in a given situation.

Evidence regarding the teacher bias hypothesis

We found no studies directly investigating the teacher bias hypothesis directly, and therefore can neither confirm nor disconfirm it. Teacher bias against speaking a language variety other than standard English is frequently mentioned as a possible explanation for the documented negative relationship between speaking a language variety other than English and academic achievement (e.g. Charity, Scarborough, & Griffin, 2004; Kohler et al., 2007; Terry, N., 2006). However, none of these studies, or any other study included in this review, directly investigated teacher bias. Any theorized link is purely speculative and does not exclude other possible hypotheses.

Evidence regarding the linguistic mismatch hypothesis

Kohler et al. (2007) investigated the relationship between AAE and performance on spelling and phonological awareness tasks among speakers of AAE in grades 1 and 3. Phonological awareness describes a student’s ability to hear the individual sounds, or phonemes, in words, typically demonstrated by segmenting words into distinct sound units or by combining phonemes to create words. Features of AAE in children’s speech explained few differences in performance on phonological awareness tasks. There was a negative relationship, however, between features of AAE in students’ speech and non-word spelling, a task that asks students to spell non-existent, but phonetically regular words. This suggests that increased features of a language variety may complicate the integration of sound (phonological) and spelling (orthographic) systems for young speakers of AAE (Kohler et al. 2007 p. 166,). N. Terry (2006) also investigated the relationship between the number of AAE features in students’ spontaneous speech and proficiency in spelling and oral reproduction tasks. Participants in this study had error patterns on spelling tasks that followed patterns of variation between standard English and AAE, suggesting that the mismatch between students’ first language variety and standard English may be influencing the development of spelling (orthographic) skills.

Charity, Scarborough, and Griffin (2004) investigated the relationship between AAE speaking students’ knowledge of the grammatical and phonological features of standard English and reading development across early elementary grades. They found wide

Recommended Practices for SELs

variability in participants' familiarity with grammatical and phonological features of standard English. The relationship between standard English knowledge and reading achievement was statistically significant, indicating that students with greater familiarity with the features of standard English performed better on reading tasks. Specifically, this study found that students that are able to reproduce features of standard English with greater frequency scored better on measures of decoding, comprehension, and story recall (Charity et al., 2004, p.1345).

Further evidence for the linguistic mismatch hypothesis is found in a recent study investigating the relationship between AAE usage and mathematical reasoning by J. Terry et al. (2010). This research finds a significant, negative relationship between student production of features of AAE and student performance on mathematical reasoning tasks. The authors hypothesize that the cognitive demands associated with shifting between AAE and standard English unduly burden students' working memories and result in fewer available cognitive resources for mathematical reasoning. This study, the only one that we reviewed that did not investigate reading, provides evidence for the way in which the linguistic mismatch between standard English and AAE may impact student achievement across the curriculum.

These studies, taken in their entirety, are evidence of a negative association between student production of AAE features and early reading and math skills. The mismatch hypothesis cannot, however, explain all of the variation in this relationship. For example, the significant effect of school context above and beyond the effects of AAE production is not explained (Terry, N., Connor, et al., 2010). Additionally, the mismatch hypothesis fails to explain nonlinear findings in other studies (Terry, N., Connor, et al., 2010), demonstrating that students with high levels of AAE feature production can and do develop early reading skills at a level commensurate with students that produce lower levels of AAE features.

Evidence regarding the metalinguistic awareness hypothesis

Craig, Zhang, Hansel, and Quinn (2009) examined the relationship between features of AAE in students' oral and written language and their reading achievement. Production of features of AAE in speech was not related to reading achievement, while production of AAE features in writing was associated with lower reading achievement. This result suggests that students vary their language usage according to context and that the ability to manipulate their own language use is related to reading development.

N. Terry, Connor, et al. (2010) examined the relationship between use of language varieties other than standard English and emergent literacy skills among grade 1 students. Their findings present a more complicated relationship. The results of this study indicated that the relationship between reading and language variety was dependent on the literacy skill tested, the age and grade of the student, and the school the student attended. Additionally, the authors found that speakers with high and low levels of variation from standard English in speech performed similarly in word reading tasks. The authors hypothesize that the amount of variability in spoken production may

Recommended Practices for SELs

assess metalinguistic awareness, as students choose appropriate language varieties for specific contexts.

Craig and Washington (2004) documented positive effects associated with shifting patterns of language variety use as students advance in school. Students that shifted, and produced fewer non-standard language features in school over time, performed better on measures of reading achievement. The authors hypothesize that a shift away from the use of first language variety features is an indicator of developing metalinguistic awareness, and interpret their findings as providing evidence for the metalinguistic awareness hypothesis.

The metalinguistic hypothesis is also consistent with the results of studies that demonstrate a positive relationship between students' level of proficiency in standard English (rather than proficiency in AAE) and reading achievement. Measuring students' ability to reproduce features of standard English may assess metalinguistic awareness, because it also assesses the student's ability to use appropriate language forms as task demands and contexts change (Charity et al. 2004). The positive relationship between production and reproduction of standard English forms and reading achievement, then, is interpreted as evidence for the metalinguistic awareness hypothesis.

Summary of Hypotheses Evidence

Our review suggests that all three hypotheses maintain some plausible explanatory power for the achievement patterns of students who use language varieties other than standard English. It is, however, outside the scope of the available evidence to draw conclusions regarding which hypothesis is correct, or how the hypotheses may work together. While the instructional strategies, curricular modifications, and PD recommendations that will be made through this study are not necessarily dependent on a firm operational understanding of the relationship between language variety and reading achievement, we note that they cannot be informed by such understanding at this time. This is important to our study, in that it limits our (and the education field's) ability to judge whether current instruction and curricula for SELs truly address the root cause of any academic difficulties that they experience.

It is also important to note the limitations of research in this area. We found only one empirical study investigating the relationship between language varieties and academic achievement in areas other than reading and spelling. Given the centrality of language to all academic enterprises, these relationships are worthy of further study. Additionally, we found no empirical study investigating the relationship between language variety use and reading among older students. The reading task changes in middle elementary school, as students are expected to read for understanding and future learning. How use of language varieties other than standard English may interact with this change is not known. Finally, and perhaps most critical, these studies have examined academic achievement of students who speak AAE. Of necessity, we have used this research to provide guidance about relationships between use of a language variety other than standard English and academic achievement, but whether the same relationships in fact

Recommended Practices for SELs

exist for other groups of SELs or for SELs in general has not been established empirically.

Instruction for SELs

While it is important to understand SELs' achievement patterns, it is perhaps more important to understand how those achievement patterns can be improved. This section of the report will review instructional strategies for SELs, and, to the degree possible, identify best practices.

One way in which instruction has been differentiated for SELs is through the use of the student's own language variety. Three types of programs were initially defined. In "instrumental" programs, the student's first language variety is used as the medium for teaching literacy and other content subjects. In "accommodation" programs, the students' first language variety is always accepted and sometimes encouraged in the classroom (e.g., for use in writing), but is not used as the medium of instruction, as it would be in an instrumental program. Finally, "awareness" programs use the language variety itself as a focus of study. This may be done as a part of studying literature, by studying the topic of language varieties, or by using contrastive approaches. Based on a review of the literature, Siegel (1999) reports that all three types of programs have been used with success.

More recently, a fourth program type, "integrated instruction" has also been suggested. An integrated program combines general instruction in language variety with instruction in standard English. The only available research (Sweetland, 2006; cited in National Research Council, 2010) reports that an integrated program was more effective than either standard English or language variety instruction alone in teaching standard English spelling and inflectional morphemes.

We found features of all program types represented in the literature that we reviewed. Instrumental programs were least represented, and were found only in a curriculum package for reading. Accommodation and awareness program features were often combined, and this frequently resulted in an integrated approach. However, this did not always occur. What was common across the studies that we reviewed was the purpose of instruction. In all cases, the goal was either to teach standard English or to enhance academic achievement. We have, therefore, chosen to organize our review by instructional goal.

Instructional Goal 1: Acquisition of Standard English

Helping students master standard English is a goal shared by schools and families. In reviewing discussions of the Ebonics issue, Rickford (1999) points out that it is the only goal "shared by most detractors and aficionados of AAE alike" (p. 12). Three major approaches have been used to address the presence of language varieties other than standard English in the classroom: 1) eradication of features of home language varieties, 2) no intervention at all (immersion), and 3) contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction (Harris-Wright, 1999; Rickford, 1999).

Recommended Practices for SELs

Eradication of First Language Variety

The first two approaches are often described as “traditional” and have been largely unsuccessful. Eradication approaches (i.e., elimination of any language features that are not a part of standard English through constant correction) not only fail to increase standard English proficiency (Adger, Wolfram & Christian, in Wheeler, 2008), but also often result in unintended effects such as students giving up their attempts to talk with their teacher. Some students actually use more first language variety features after being exposed to this approach (Wheeler, 2006; Taylor, quoted in Wheeler, 2006).

Immersion/No Intervention

In immersion, or what some term “no intervention,” educators model standard English, while recognizing that some language features that differ from it are a product of students’ cultures and language learning experiences. Thus, teachers do not correct these features, as they believe that such feedback will be offensive to students. This approach is the one most often used by schools (Rickford, 1999).

Some research supports the no intervention approach, in that it suggests that students’ use of features that differ from standard English decreases with time in school. A gradual shift toward standard English is usually seen by the time students are seven or eight years old (Thompson, Craig & Washington, 2004).

However, this shift does not occur for all students (Craig & Washington, 2004). Charity, Scarborough and Griffin (2004) examined phonological and grammatical scores from a sentence imitation task for a group of African American students in grades kindergarten through 2 and found that variability in scores was similar across grades. They suggest that the “experience of schooling” did not change existing differences in students’ familiarity with standard English. Had there been changes in the frequency of use of AAE features across grade levels, this would have produced different score distributions.

Use of the no intervention model may make teachers reluctant to expect the use of standard English. Since educators see students’ language patterns as a part of their culture, and do not believe that students’ cultures are likely to change, they may also believe that there is nothing that can be done to alter language patterns (Harris-Wright, 1999).

The no intervention model may fail to assist students in mastering standard English because the task with which students are presented is simply too difficult. No intervention first assumes that students will recognize that some of their language features differ from those being used in the classroom; there is also an assumption that they will be able to identify the exact features of their English that differ from standard English. Using a no intervention model further assumes that students will make these distinctions without assistance (Fogel & Ehri, 2000; Rickford, 1999). Preston (cited in MacNeil & Cran, 2005, p. 140) suggests that doing so, and then going on to change those language features to those of standard English, may be more difficult than learning a new language. Overall, in evaluating the no intervention/immersion approach,

Recommended Practices for SELs

Rickford (1999) comments, “If it’s so promising, why hasn’t it produced better results?” (p.12).

Contrastive Analysis/Code-Switching

The third and final approach to assisting students in acquiring standard English, contrastive analysis/code-switching, is the only approach for which we found evidence of success. This approach is also consistent with standards put forward by the International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English (Hill, 2009). Therefore, it will be reviewed in greater depth than the traditional approaches were.

Definition and Goals

“In Contrastive Analysis, the practitioner contrasts the grammatical structure of one variety with the grammatical structure of another variety (presumably the Standard) in order to add the Standard dialect to the students’ linguistic toolbox” (Wheeler, 2006, p.17). Contrastive analysis has often been used as a part of teaching ESL; here, it is modified to highlight the contrasts between varieties of English rather than the contrasts between the structures of two languages.

As would be the case with two languages, the two varieties of English that are being compared are considered to be equally valid. What makes the use of each variety either appropriate or inappropriate is the context in which it is used.

Contrastive analysis instruction is often paired with instruction about language varieties and/or with instruction about what variety of language is expected in a given situation (Wheeler, 2006, 2008; Baker, 2002). The student should learn to identify language varieties (including standard English) and choose among them based on the situation in which communication is occurring. Contrastive analysis instruction is also paired with instruction and practice in code-switching, that is, changing a sentence or passage presented in one variety of English to another (Wheeler, 2008; MacNeil & Cran, 2005). Instruction that assists students in recognizing different varieties of English has been advocated for SELs for over 30 years (Rickford, 1999).

Sample Instructional Plans

Contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction can be incorporated into classroom teaching in a number of ways. To illustrate some of them, we present descriptions of how two teachers incorporated standard English instruction into their classrooms. The first, drawn from Wheeler (2006), describes the use of contrastive analysis/code-switching in an elementary classroom; the second, drawn from Baker (2002) describes its use in a secondary English class.

Contrastive Analysis in an Elementary School

Wheeler (2008) notes that implementation of instruction in contrastive analysis/code-switching requires “one linguistic insight and three strategies” (p.54). Teachers must first

Recommended Practices for SELs

understand that the language that they hear in their classroom is not incorrect use of standard English. Instead, it reflects the structured language varieties of students' homes and community(ies). At the elementary level, the teacher must use observation and analysis of students' work to identify grammatical differences between standard English and community patterns. These differences are used to build sets of sentences (which may be labeled "formal" and "informal" English) that express the same idea in each variety of English, and target a specific grammatical structure. Teachers and students examine the sentences and form hypotheses about how meaning is conveyed, first for one form of English, then for the next (Strategy 1, "Scientific Inquiry"). For example, in standard English, an -'s at the end of a noun is used to indicate possession. In AAE, the name of the owner, or a pronoun used in its place precedes the description of whatever is owned. Hypotheses about grammatical structures are tested using several sentences. As the students find rules, the teacher records them.

Once students have developed rules that describe how each language variety "works," the teacher implements the "Compare and Contrast" strategy (Strategy 2). Students look at similarities and differences between standard English and their home language variety and between the rules that govern them. They learn to describe differences between standard English and the language variety that they use.

Finally, students learn to code-switch by changing sentences from one variety of English to the other. The students and their teacher also discuss how to assess a communication context (time, place, audience, and purpose) to decide which variety they will use (Strategy 3; "Code-switching as metacognition").

Wheeler (2006) describes some of the activities that one teacher used to implement these strategies in her 2nd- and 3rd- grade classrooms in a Virginia elementary school:

- The teacher asked students to define "formal" and "informal" and to generate ideas about places, clothing, behavior, etc. that fit each definition. Their examples were recorded on large charts.
- The class expanded their definitions to language and examined a number of formal and informal grammatical forms using hypothesis testing.
- Students practiced using different forms and code-switching. For example, the teacher read the story, "Flossie and the Fox," in which some characters use AAE (the predominant language variety for the students in this classroom) and others use standard English. Students spoke as either the fox (who uses standard English) or Flossie (who uses AAE), correcting each other if the wrong language variety was used.

Before using activities like these, the teacher had noticed a large achievement gap between her African-American and White students on year-end state achievement tests, with African-American students achieving lower scores. After a year of using contrastive analysis/code-switching strategies, reading and writing scores were equal for both groups, and math and science scores were higher for African-American students.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Reading scores for both groups were also equal after implementation of contrastive analysis/code-switching strategies during a second year with a different class.

Contrastive Analysis in a Vocational High School

Baker (2002) describes her students in a large technical/vocational high school in Boston as “fairly representative of urban American teenagers, diverse in background, low to moderate in income levels...castigated for having low test scores and poor formal English skills” (p. 51). She implemented the following unit to begin teaching this group academic English.

- Students studied the language varieties represented in the class to identify patterns of speech, rules of grammar, vocabulary and emotional characteristics. Students worked in small groups, which were formed on the basis of common background whenever possible. Each group was required to give a name to the language variety(ies) that the group members spoke and to define specific features. Students were given a list of possible ways in which features of language might vary, and about two hours of class time to work on the project.
- Each group presented its results to the whole class. Requirements for the presentation included: (1) a group discussion (that included all group members) demonstrating the language variety(ies) the group had identified, and (2) descriptions of specific language features along with examples of their use. Students were instructed to select topics for the group discussion that were likely to elicit numerous examples of the language variety(ies) that the discussion illustrated.
- After debriefing the group presentations, students discussed language choice in the context of situations such as job interviews, college classes, with family, etc. The discussion centered on what variety they would use in each context and why.

Baker notes that this process allowed the students to consider differences in opinions about which language variety is appropriate in a given context, along with their perceptions of the potential outcomes of differing language choices within the same context. Students came to see that they control their choice of language variety.

Baker describes several other outcomes of her home language unit. First, she, as a teacher, gained a greater understanding of the language varieties present in her classroom and this helped her to plan instruction. Additionally, she found that this approach was more successful than her “previous error-correction model of grammar study” (p.56) in assisting students in acquiring and using standard English. Studying and validating students’ language varieties made them more comfortable with the study of language in general. Baker concludes, “The study of grammar is very much a personal issue, a racial issue and a class issue, a political issue—and doing it backward like this, motivation first, rules last, examining the dialects before the formal language, is something with which my students will cooperate” (p. 59).

Results from other Contrastive Analysis/Code-Switching Programs

We found descriptions of two other programs which incorporated contrastive analysis/code-switching strategies, and one study which compared code-switching instruction to other instructional strategies. Results are summarized here:

- Sixty schools in the Los Angeles area (mainly Watts) began using an experimental program called “Academic English Mastery” in 1991. Students learn code-switching skills, and have shown significant gains in written English (MacNeil & Cran, 2005).
- Using Title I funds, the De Kalb County, Georgia School System has offered a bidialectal program to students in seven schools in grades 5, 6, 7 and 8. Students include SELs and students who have exited from ESL programs. The program emphasized explicit instruction in code-switching and use of language in context. Program participants made greater gains on the reading comprehension section of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills than did comparable Title I students who did not participate in the program (Harris-Wright, 1999).
- Fogel and Ehri (2000) compared the effects of three instructional strategies on third- and fourth-grade students’ scores on a sentence code-switching task and on the number of features from their home language variety used in a story written in response to a prompt. Strategies were: (a) exposure to standard English via story reading, with instructions to listen carefully, (b) story exposure plus explanation of standard English rules, and (c) story exposure, rule explanation and guided practice in code-switching. The code-switching with guided practice strategy had the greatest effect on posttest scores, with the group that received it being the most proficient in the use of standard English.

Wheeler and Swords (2010) summarize the “efficacy research” regarding contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction by examining studies conducted at the elementary school, middle school and college levels. In all cases, SELs use more standard English features in their writing after such instruction than they do after traditional instruction.

Key Elements in Contrastive Analysis/Code-switching Instruction

In addition to the instructional strategies presented above, the descriptions of all four contrastive analysis/code-switching programs included suggestions regarding contextual and implementation elements that each program’s personnel believed were crucial to its success. These included:

- The idea that that instruction must not be allowed to fall into a corrective model. Contrastive analysis should not become a method for delivering feedback to students that the features of their home language variety are “wrong,” while the features of standard English are “right.” Baker (2002) mentions the need for instruction to begin with “respect” for language varieties, while Wheeler (2008) describes the starting point for instruction as the “linguistic insight” that language varieties represent patterns, not errors. Wheeler (2006) describes the need to unseat deficit views about language varieties and SELs, while Harris-Wright

Recommended Practices for SELs

(1999) describes a major goal of the bidialectal program as creating “an awareness and acceptance of more than one way of communicating” (p.55). Beyond being an instructional philosophy, respect for language varieties must be reflected in classroom activities; for example, code-switching exercises must go in both directions, so that students change their own language variety to standard English, but also change standard English to the language variety that they use (Hill, 2009).

- The need to monitor students’ responses to language instruction. If students feel devalued or denigrated by contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction, they will not only fail to acquire standard English, but they may also be “turned off” to education as well (LeMoine, quoted in MacNeil & Cran, 2005, p.139). It is crucial that a student’s own language variety and his/her self-esteem “survive” the acquisition of standard English (Baker, 2002).
- The need for analysis of the language varieties actually in use in the classroom. Wheeler (2008) accomplishes this through the Scientific Inquiry strategy, while Baker (2002) uses student presentations to obtain this information. Harris-Wright (1999) notes that teachers and students must become aware of each other’s communication patterns and expectations.
- The need to assure that instruction is pedagogically sound. Teachers should use established instructional principles such as explicit teaching (Harris-Wright, 1999) and guided practice (Fogel & Ehri, 2000).

Wolfram and Christian (1989; cited in Christian, 1997) add other guidelines to the teaching of standard English:

- Teachers must understand that students will more willingly learn the language features of a group that they wish to be a member of; they will be less willing to learn the language features of a group that they are neutral toward or dislike.
- Standard English instruction that is combined with instruction about language varieties can provide a basis for respect for all forms of language. Teachers and materials developers must understand the differences between standard English and other language varieties to be able to assist students in learning them.
- Instruction in standard English should go beyond a focus on learning grammar and language structures to include information about norms for language use.

Finally, Rickford and Wolfram (2009) point out it is unlikely, and probably unnecessary, that every feature of language that differs between standard English and students’ home language varieties will be a focus for instruction. They offer the following to guide the selection of instructional goals and sequence:

- There should be a focus on the areas most likely to have an impact on achievement.
- General language forms that are used across the U.S. should be prioritized above local forms.
- Instruction in standard English grammar should be prioritized above instruction in standard English phonology.

Recommended Practices for SELs

- Instruction should therefore begin in elementary school, but be continued into later grades. This final recommendation is based on research which shows that SELs increase their use of standard English between grades 1 and 4, but may choose to return to their home language variety in middle school.

Instructional Goal 2: Enhancing academic achievement for SELs

We found five empirical studies that examined instructional strategies intended to combine use of home language varieties and teaching of academic content. The final goal of each strategy was to increase academic achievement. Two studies focused on teaching literary analysis and interpretation skills, two focused on writing instruction, and the final study focused on science and math.

Literary Analysis

Students' knowledge of language varieties can provide a basis for teaching literary interpretation skills to high school students. Students may command complex linguistic skills within their own language variety (e.g., satire, irony, symbolism), but not recognize these devices or the academic terms for them. In the Cultural Modeling Framework (Lee; 2006; Lee 1995), students are first introduced to literary devices as they occur in familiar texts or in language that the teacher has seen in use in the school or community. This introduction serves as a scaffold to applying the literary device to other texts. Urban African-American high school seniors who were taught to analyze the literary devices used in signifying, a form of social discourse in AAE, made improvements between pre- and posttesting on a literary passage, and also showed increased understanding of literary devices during class discussion (Lee, 1995). The instruction the students received also included small group work and literary works which used AAE, as content which is matched to students' background knowledge is a part of the Cultural Modeling Framework.

Writing

Use of students' home language varieties can also assist in developing students' writing. A group of five struggling first-grade students, each of whom spoke a second language and/or was a SEL, showed improved writing skills after being encouraged to use "speaking onto the page" strategies while writing. These strategies include language hybridity, defined as using both words from the home language and/or language variety along with standard English in compositions, and using a "natural" voice (Kennedy, 2006). Kennedy suggests that using these strategies allowed students to find a bridge between the language that they knew and standard English. She also notes that, when interviewed, the two students in her group who would be considered SELs (i.e., they did not speak a language other than English at home, but did not use standard English) did not recognize that their language differed from the language used in the classroom.

Writing instruction can also be used to continue to develop students' contrastive analysis and code-switching skills. A qualitative study by Hill (2009) describes how a middle school teacher provided opportunities for use of language varieties in the

Recommended Practices for SELs

classroom. Some books that the students read included language varieties other than standard English, and the teacher encouraged the use of students' home language variety in some writing assignments, while other assignments required the use of standard English. The use of different language varieties in the classroom provided opportunities to scaffold language use for two students who used AAE, and for them to discuss (and in one case, disagree with) the teacher about when standard English was needed. When interviewed, both students were aware of what standard English was, but mentioned that its use sometimes meant making changes in their writing that they felt unwilling to make.

Science and Math

Blake and Van Sickle (2001) combined inquiry-based math and science teaching instruction with code-switching for high school students whose first language variety was that of the Sea Islands of South Carolina. Rather than teaching students to code-switch, however, the researchers attempted to learn enough of the students' language variety to understand answers which the students provided in Sea Islands. They then provided standard English equivalents and vocabulary to the students. This strategy was also used in reading and writing. The two students profiled in their case studies (both of whom were struggling academically and had failed the state accountability assessment), were able to describe math and science concepts more accurately and effectively when using their home language variety. By the end of the study, both students had passed the accountability exam; one, who was a star football player, was able to accept an athletic scholarship and enroll in college.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Descriptions of the emotional impact of instruction in standard English on SELs pervade the articles reviewed here. When instruction does not recognize the importance of the student's language variety, students may resist making changes in their language use (Baker, 2002; Hill, 2009), may increase their use of community language variety features in response to correction (Wheeler, 2006), and may ultimately resist the entire schooling process (Le Moine, quoted in MacNeil & Baker, 2005).

It is clearly critical that instruction in standard English or the use of students' own language varieties in academic instruction does not engender these negative outcomes. To do this, instruction and its context must first recognize the place of the language varieties used at home and/or in the community in the student's life. Delpit (2002) explains:

Our language embraces us long before we are defined by any other medium of identity. In our mother's womb we hear and feel the sound, the rhythms, and the cadences of our 'mother tongue.' We learn to associate contentment with certain qualities of voice and physical disequilibrium with others. Our home language is as viscerally tied to our beings as existence itself... It is no wonder that our first language becomes intimately connected to our identity (p. xvii).

Recommended Practices for SELs

Instruction must create an atmosphere that recognizes the importance of the language that the student brings to school. Ideas about how this can be done are often described using the terms “culturally relevant” or “culturally responsive” pedagogy. “Culturally relevant pedagogy must provide a way for students to maintain their cultural integrity while succeeding academically” (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Culturally responsive teachers seek to create an environment where the background experiences of all students, including language variety, are valued and used in the teaching/learning process. Culturally relevant classrooms include:

- Environmental print that demonstrates valuing of diversity,
- Grouping strategies that enhance student achievement and promote non-like-group interactions,
- Instructional materials that demonstrate valuing of diversity,
- Lesson adaptations that address individual strengths and needs,
- Distribution of attention that shows respect for diverse experiences and abilities,
- Progress monitoring and assessment procedures that all students can understand and carry out, and
- Positive standards for classroom behavior that are consistent and equitable for all students (Sobel & Taylor, 2006).

Curricula for SELs

In this section, we summarize research on curricula designed towards meeting the academic needs of SELs. We define curriculum as the content that is taught, rather than the manner in which it is taught. In our literature search and subsequent coding, our goal was to identify and review extant, ready-for-export, research-based curricula. However, our review found only two programs that prescribed content for instruction, thus meeting our definition for curriculum. We discuss these programs in the context of their differing goals.

Curriculum Goal 1: Programs to build English reading

There are many ways in which a curriculum could be constructed to build standard English proficiency for SELs. One possibility is to incorporate the language variety used by students into the curriculum to facilitate the acquisition of standard, and then academic, English (Taylor, Payne, & Cole, 1983; Labov, 1995). Simpkins, Holt, and Simpkins (1977) applied this idea to reading through what they call “bidialectal” readers. Their program, called Bridge: A Cross-cultural Reading Program, was the only extant program featuring bidialectal readers we found. Student texts in the program are written in three language varieties: AAE, a transition between AAE and academic English, and academic English. The program consists of narratives, cassette recordings of the stories, and comprehension activities.

The effects of the Bridge program were initially evaluated with students in grades 7 and 12. Students that were instructed with the Bridge program showed statistically significant gains in reading in comparison to a control group that received traditional

Recommended Practices for SELs

instruction (Simpkins & Simpkins, 1981). More recently, Rickford and Rickford (1995) conducted three small scale studies investigating the Bridge curriculum with mixed populations. Results were mixed. With limited samples, Rickford and Rickford found that older students preferred the bidialectal readers more than younger students did, and boys preferred them more than girls did. The author reported no treatment results.

Despite some encouraging results, neither the Bridge curriculum, nor other bidialectal readers have been investigated in recent years. One reason may be resistance from parents and teachers (Labov, 1995; Rickford & Rickford, 1995). According to Labov (1995), “the program has not yet been presented in a way that counters the objection that it imposes and teaches a form of bad English that is not generally used by children” (p. 53).

Curriculum Goal 2: Programs that promote awareness of language varieties

Another form of instruction designed for all students develops recognition and appreciation of language varieties in literature and life. Although improved standard English proficiency may be a goal for participating SELs, it is both distal and unmeasured in this type of curriculum.

One extant program designed to improve awareness of language varieties in middle school students was found (*Voices of North Carolina* dialect awareness curriculum, Reaser & Wolfram, 2007). The *Voices of North Carolina* dialect awareness curriculum requires approximately 450 minutes of instructional time. Its goals are:

1. To develop respect for the systematic patterning of all language varieties.
2. To develop an appreciation for the link between historical development and language.
3. To develop an awareness and appreciation for the connection between language and culture.
4. To develop an authentic knowledge about how dialects pattern.
5. To develop an awareness and appreciation of other ways of speaking (Reaser & Wolfram, p. 8).

The multimedia curriculum consists of readings, videos, student activities, and information about external resources. The five-part unit begins with an introduction to linguistic variety and proceeds through a discussion of different dialects in North Carolina. Students watch short videos, complete responses, and discuss attitudes toward language varieties and toward the different varieties present in their home state.

The geographic specificity of the curriculum limits its potential for exportation to other states, but it may serve as a model for curricula designed to increase awareness of language variation. A curriculum like this one might be particularly effective as a precursor to engagement in contrastive analysis (Wheeler, 2006).

Recommended Practices for SELs

Professional Development for Educators who serve SELs

Implementing effective instruction for SELs demands that educators are familiar with best practices in instruction, and are able to effectively implement any available curriculum. In this section, we explore best practices for developing educators' ability to serve SELs.

As we reviewed the professional literature, we did not find any research or program evaluations that centered specifically on the effects of PD, that is, there were no studies which presented follow-up data about instruction or student outcomes collected after teachers had attended a PD session or course which addressed language varieties and/or instruction for SELs. However, we did locate descriptions of PD that accompanied some of the contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction programs that we reviewed, as well as other suggestions in the literature regarding best practices for PD.

Program Professional Development

Based on her experiences in introducing new teachers to the contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction implemented by Rachel Swords in Virginia, Wheeler (2006) offers the following suggestions for conducting PD:

- Begin by explaining to teachers that they will be learning to help students master standard English, rather than telling them that they are learning to offer instruction which addresses a specific language variety or varieties.
- Do not tie the instructional strategies teachers are learning to any specific racial/ethnic or socioeconomic group; the first goal is to assist teachers in dealing with the grammatical structures that they see in student work that differ from standard English.
- Let teachers develop respect for students' home language varieties as they explore them on their own, rather than trying to teach respect directly.

The De Kalb, Georgia bidialectal program brought new teachers into the program using an expanding teams approach. The initial program was designed and refined by a speech-language pathologist, who then provided PD to several "expert" teachers. As new teachers entered the program, they attended PD then teamed with veteran teachers as they began implementation (Harris-Wright, 1999). The "teachers' desire to learn more about their students and their families and communities" was "basic" to the success of the program (Harris-Wright, 1999, p.58).

Baker (2002) shares Harris-Wright's perception that teacher attitudes are important to both PD and program success. She comments, "There is one obvious problem for disseminating this sort of teaching: one cannot *pretend* (emphasis from original) to respect students' home languages" (p.56).

Best Practices in Professional Development

Recommended Practices for SELs

Understanding students' linguistic and cultural characteristics is important to the teaching of standard English, and this understanding must be fostered as a part of PD which addresses instructional strategies. Teachers need an understanding of language varieties and how to teach students who use them (Baugh, 2001). Along with this, there must be a way to assure that pre- and inservice teachers deal with their own feelings about students who do not use standard English, and education as a field must decide to confront what should be done about those who cannot overcome deficit patterns of thinking (Baugh, 2001). Teachers must also understand students' cultures; often, the best way to begin this process is for them to understand their own culture first (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Godley, Sweetland, Wheeler, Minnici, and Carpenter (2006) organize the topics which pre- or inservice programs about teaching standard English should include into three themes: (a) anticipating and overcoming resistance; (b) issues of language, identity and power; and (c) practical instructional implications of research on language varieties. In addressing resistance, those who conduct PDs must realize that negative attitudes toward some language varieties are widespread, and that beliefs are difficult to change. Activities such as analyzing their own speech may help teachers realize that everyone uses different registers of language in different contexts. PD should also prepare teachers for schools' and students' potential reactions to standard English instruction. This involves helping teachers to think critically about the relationship between changing language use and social change, and helping them understand how to discuss these issues with students, families and administrators. Finally, teachers must learn instructional strategies such as contrastive analysis/code-switching instruction.

PD should also teach skills and techniques that allow teachers to understand how they are instructing the SELs in their current classroom, along with understanding what outcomes they are achieving. Reflexivity is necessary; teachers should know how to evaluate their own practice through tools such as reading professional literature, analyzing videotapes of themselves teaching and participating in peer evaluations. Thus, PD should help teachers become action researchers (Rhymes & Anderson, 2004).

While the topics suggested in the literature for PD are complex, there is some suggestion that teachers can learn to implement standard English instruction strategies with ease. Fogel and Ehri (2000) note that teachers in their study easily understood procedures for providing practice and guided feedback in code-switching, and were able to implement them after about 30 minutes of PD (although all materials were provided, and only a few lessons were taught). One teacher told the researchers that after using the procedures during the study, she had decided to keep them as a part of her regular writing instruction.

Findings Regarding Other States' Responses to Language Varieties

We found few state policies that address SELs or their educational needs, although it is possible that states may have taken action on this topic in ways we did not discover due to the difficulty of thoroughly reviewing the educational policies of all fifty states. A major

Recommended Practices for SELs

deterrent to the formulation of such policies may be the difficulties encountered in identifying a student as a SEL. A primary purpose of state education policy is to allocate additional funds to schools and districts serving specific subpopulations, such as low-income students or students with disabilities, but these funds can only be allocated if students are identified. In the case of ELLs, federal law requires that districts identify students that are potentially limited in their English proficiency. Most states require that districts accomplish this task by sending families a home language survey that asks families whether a language other than English is spoken at home, but English varieties are not separate languages; so, respondents would appropriately answer “no.” Language surveys could ask if families speak a “variety of English that differs linguistically from standard English,” but many families may not identify themselves as speakers of a distinct English variety even if they do speak AAE, Gullah, Creole English, Appalachian English, or any other English variety that differs from standard English. The difference between standard English and other varieties of English may not be known outside of linguistic circles and academia.

One reason that language varieties are mentioned in state policy is to exclude those student populations from qualifying for additional state funds for language acquisition, as is the case in California. In the Education Code of California (§30-30.5), the state is explicit in defining eligibility for bilingual programs to only those students whose “primary language is neither English nor derived from English,” and prevents districts from allocating state bilingual funds to the education of SELs. This is not surprising given that varieties of English are not considered separate languages by the research community.

While systematic state policies identifying SELs do not appear to be common, some states have taken a different approach to addressing their educational needs. For example, New York’s State Education Department has adopted guidelines for speech-language pathologists and audiologists working in New York schools. These guidelines state that speech pathologists must be proficient “in the language(s)/dialect(s) spoken by the [student]” and have “sufficient knowledge...in the general linguistic and sociolinguistic issues” in order to “assess or treat [students]” (New York State Education Department, 2009). The guidelines for assessment state that these clinicians must be aware of the “typical development in an individual’s language(s)/dialect(s), including how to determine and identify typical development based upon the norms of the individual’s speech community or communication environment.” However, these guidelines only pertain to speech pathologists and audiologists, and are only for the purpose of identifying, or ensuring the non-identification, of students with perceived language disorders because of the variety of English they speak. Teachers and other educators are not systematically trained in these guidelines, and New York does not seem to have any other formal policies in place for identifying these students and tailoring educational programs to their unique linguistic needs.

California has taken a different curricular approach to meeting the linguistic needs of SELs. In 2008, the California Department of Education (CDOE), led by the California Curriculum Commission and a panel of expert linguists, adopted new criteria for evaluating K-8 reading/language arts/English language arts curriculum materials. In the

Recommended Practices for SELs

introduction to the new criteria, the CDOE clearly states that the purpose of these revisions was to promote “a deeper focus on the instructional needs of English learners, students with disabilities, struggling readers, and *students who use African American vernacular English*” (p. 288, emphasis added). And throughout the report, the CDOE repeatedly makes mention of students who speak this language variety. They recommend instructional materials that provide “comprehensive guidance for teachers and effective, efficient, and explicit instruction for struggling readers (any student experiencing difficulty learning to read; may include students who use African American vernacular English, English learners, and students with disabilities)” and even recommend additional instructional support “for students who use African American vernacular English” (p. 293). Thus, California has acknowledged the unique linguistic needs of speakers of English varieties other than standard English in a formal and statewide manner. While California did not make mention of speakers of any language variety other than AAE, it has taken a promising step in addressing SEL’s linguistic needs.

The area of educational practice that sees the most mention of varieties of English appears to be mandated teacher PD in the form of “cultural competency” training. For example, in 2003 the California legislature passed Assembly Bill 54 (AB 54), which commissioned “a study of the availability and effectiveness of cultural competency training for teachers and administrators.” This bill stated, “California’s educational system continues to fail to meet the needs of its diverse population,” but argued that there is still no “system of accountability that ensures that teacher training in cultural differences and customs is available or effective.” WestEd conducted the study commissioned by the Bill and released its report in 2005. The study focused on ten culturally diverse schools and concluded that many educators did not have access to cultural competency training. When teachers did have access, the trainings were sometimes nothing more than “superficial presentations on multiculturalism,” although other trainings appeared to be more effective (Farr, Sexton, Puckett, Pereira-León & Weismann, 2005, p. 79). WestEd’s report also suggested that educators had a decent understanding of cultural competency but they were less clear as to how to make curricular and pedagogical accommodations for diverse students. While the passage of AB 54 represents a positive step for California in attempting to provide more equitable educational opportunities for all students, it should also be mentioned that the focus of the AB 54 study was not solely or primarily on the speakers of non-standard English varieties. And while “cultural competency” is surely required of all educators teaching a diverse student body, it is not necessarily sufficient for making effective instructional accommodations that facilitate the acquisition of standard English for dialect minority students.

In sum, states have taken several approaches to meeting the academic needs of SELs, but few states, if any, have addressed this topic in a thorough and systematic way. Piecemeal policies and local strategies for educating SELs are more commonly found. And while the complexity and sensitivity of identifying speakers of varieties of English is a significant challenge, states can do more to ensuring the academic and social success of SEL students.

APPENDIX F

Example Changes to Education Definitions in the Texas Education Code

Texas Education Code
Chapter 29 - Educational Programs
Subchapter B – Bilingual Education and Special Language Programs
Section §29.052 – Definitions

Section §29.052, Subchapter B, Chapter 29, Texas Education Code is amended by adding to read as follows:

(1) "Student of limited English proficiency" means a student whose primary language is other than English and whose English language skills are such that the student has difficulty performing ordinary classwork in English.

(2) "Standard English Learner (SEL)" means a student whose primary language is English and who speaks a variety of English that differs from standard English.

(3) "Standard English" is defined as the language variety most often connected with and used in education, media, government, and enterprise. Nonstandard varieties of English include English varieties that are systematic and rule-governed modes of communication and are acquired by students at home. They differ linguistically from standard English. Such varieties include but are not limited to African American English, Appalachian English, and Latino American English.

(4) "Academic English" includes the full range of grammar and vocabulary needed to master the content of the curriculum.

(25) "Parent" includes a legal guardian of a student.

APPENDIX G

Example Changes to English Language Arts TEKS in Texas Administrative Code from Kindergarten to English IV

Texas Administrative Code
Title 19 – Education
Part 2 – Texas Education Agency
Chapter 110 – TEKS for English Language Arts and Reading
Subchapters A-C – Elementary, Middle, and High School
Rules §110.11-§110.16, §110.18-§110.20, and §110.31-§110.34 – ELA TEKS for K-12

Rules §110.11-§110.16, Subchapter A, Chapter 113, Part 2, Title 19, Texas Administrative Code; rules §110.18-§110.20, Subchapter B, Chapter 113, Part 2, Title 19, Texas Administrative Code; and rules §110.31-§110.34, Subchapter C, Chapter 113, Part 2, Title 19, Texas Administrative Code are amended by adding to read as follows:

(2) For students whose first language is not English, the students' native language serves as a foundation for English language acquisition.

(A) English language learners (ELLs) are acquiring English, learning content in English, and learning to read simultaneously. For this reason, it is imperative that reading instruction should be comprehensive and that students receive instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, and word attack skills while simultaneously being taught academic vocabulary and comprehension skills and strategies. Reading instruction that enhances ELL's ability to decode unfamiliar words and to make sense of those words in context will expedite their ability to make sense of what they read and learn from reading. Additionally, developing fluency, spelling, and grammatical conventions of academic language must be done in meaningful contexts and not in isolation.

(B) For ELLs, comprehension of texts requires additional scaffolds to support comprehensible input. ELL students should use the knowledge of their first language (e.g., cognates) to further vocabulary development. Vocabulary needs to be taught in the context of connected discourse so that language is meaningful. ELLs must learn how rhetorical devices in English differ from those in their native language. At the same time English learners are learning in English, the focus is on academic English, concepts, and the language structures specific to the content.

Recommended Practices for SELs

(C) During initial stages of English development, ELLs are expected to meet standards in a second language that many monolingual English speakers find difficult to meet in their native language. However, English language learners' abilities to meet these standards will be influenced by their proficiency in English. While English language learners can analyze, synthesize, and evaluate, their level of English proficiency may impede their ability to demonstrate this knowledge during the initial stages of English language acquisition. It is also critical to understand that ELLs with no previous or with interrupted schooling will require explicit and strategic support as they acquire English and learn to learn in English simultaneously.

(23) For students who speak a non-standard variety of English (SELs), the students' language variety serves as a foundation for standard English language acquisition.

(A) Standard English learners (SELs) are acquiring, learning content in, and learning to read standard English simultaneously with academic English. For this reason, it is imperative that reading instruction should be comprehensive and that students receive instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, and word attack skills while simultaneously being taught academic vocabulary and comprehension skills and strategies. Reading instruction that enhances SEL's ability to decode unfamiliar words and to make sense of those words in context will expedite their ability to make sense of what they read and learn from reading. Additionally, developing fluency, spelling, and grammatical conventions of academic language and standard English must be done in meaningful contexts and not in isolation.

(B) For SELs, comprehension of texts requires additional scaffolds to support comprehensible input. SEL students should use the knowledge of their home English varieties to further vocabulary development in standard English. Vocabulary needs to be taught in the context of connected discourse so that language is meaningful. SELs must learn how rhetorical devices in standard English differ from those in their home English variety.

(C) During initial stages of development, SELs are expected to meet standards in a academic English that many other students find difficult to meet. However, SELs' abilities to meet these standards will be influenced by their proficiency in standard English. While SELs can analyze, synthesize, and evaluate, their level of standard English proficiency may impede their ability to demonstrate this knowledge during the initial stages of standard English acquisition. It is also critical to understand that SELs will require explicit and strategic support as they acquire standard English and learn academic English simultaneously.

APPENDIX H

Example Rider for Further Study of Student Population

The Commissioner shall set aside an amount not to exceed \$500,000 for the 2012-13 biennium to contract with an approved vendor for the purpose of conducting a pilot study in no less than two locations to investigate the potential size and assortment of nonstandard English students in the state of Texas. The study will utilize methods which identify these students within the general school population and link their performance on student assessment outcomes to proficiency in standard English.

APPENDIX I

Example Change to Educator Preparation Curriculum in the Texas Administrative Code

Texas Administrative Code
Title 19 – Education
Part 7 – State Board for Educator Certification
Chapter 228 – Requirements for Educator Preparation Programs
Rule §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum

Rule §228.30, Chapter 228, Part 7, Title 19, Texas Administrative Code is amended by adding to read as follows:

(b) The curriculum for each educator preparation program shall rely on scientifically-based research to ensure teacher effectiveness and align to the TEKS. The following subject matter shall be included in the curriculum for candidates seeking initial certification:

(1) the specified requirements for reading instruction adopted by the SBEC for each certificate;

(2) the code of ethics and standard practices for Texas educators, pursuant to Chapter 247 of this title (relating to Educators' Code of Ethics);

(3) child development;

(4) motivation;

(5) learning theories;

(6) TEKS organization, structure, and skills;

(7) TEKS in the content areas;

(8) state assessment of students;

(9) curriculum development and lesson planning;

(10) classroom assessment for instruction/diagnosing learning needs;

(11) classroom management/developing a positive learning environment;

(12) special populations;

(13) parent conferences/communication skills;

Recommended Practices for SELs

(14) instructional technology;

(15) pedagogy/instructional strategies;

(16) differentiated instruction;

(17) responding to diversity in language and culture, and

(178) certification test preparation.

APPENDIX J

Example Change to Principal Preparation Standards in the Texas Administrative Code

Texas Administrative Code
Title 19 – Education
Part 7 – State Board for Educator Certification
Chapter 241 – Principal Certificate
Rule §241.15 Standards Required for the Principal Certificate

Rule §241.15, Chapter 241, Part 7, Title 19, Texas Administrative Code is amended by adding to read as follows:

(a) **Principal Certificate Standards.** The knowledge and skills identified in this section must be used by an educator preparation program in the development of curricula and coursework and by the State Board for Educator Certification as the basis for developing the examinations required to obtain the standard Principal Certificate. The standards also serve as the foundation for the individual assessment, professional growth plan, and continuing professional education activities required by §241.30 of this title (relating to Requirements to Renew the Standard Principal Certificate).

(b) **Learner-Centered Values and Ethics of Leadership.** A principal is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity and fairness and in an ethical manner. At the campus level, a principal understands, values, and is able to:

(1) model and promote the highest standard of conduct, ethical principles, and integrity in decision making, actions, and behaviors;

(2) implement policies and procedures that encourage all campus personnel to comply with Chapter 247 of this title (relating to Educators' Code of Ethics);

(3) model and promote the continuous and appropriate development of all learners in the campus community;

(4) promote awareness of learning differences, language varieties, multicultural awareness, gender sensitivity, and ethnic appreciation in the campus community; and

(5) articulate the importance of education in a free democratic society.

APPENDIX K

Example Changes for Grade 4 and Grade 7 Social Studies TEKS in Texas Administrative Code

Example Change for Grade 4 Social Studies TEKS in Texas Administrative Code

Texas Administrative Code
Title 19 – Education
Part 2 – Texas Education Agency
Chapter 113 – TEKS for Social Studies
Subchapter A - Elementary
- Social Studies, Grade 4, Beginning with School Year 2011-2012

Rule §113.15, Subchapter A, Chapter 113, Part 2, Title 19, Texas Administrative Code is amended by adding to read as follows:

(19) Culture. The student understands the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to Texas. The student is expected to:

(A) identify the similarities and differences among various racial, ethnic, and religious groups in Texas;

(B) identify customs, languages including varieties of English, celebrations, and traditions of various cultural, regional, and local groups in Texas such as Cinco de Mayo, Oktoberfest, the Strawberry Festival, and Fiesta San Antonio; and

(C) summarize the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups in the development of Texas such as Lydia Mendoza, Chelo Silva, and Julius Lorenzo Cobb Bledsoe.

Recommended Practices for SELs

Example Change for Grade 7 Social Studies TEKS in Texas Administrative Code

Texas Administrative Code
Title 19 – Education
Part 2 – Texas Education Agency
Chapter 113 – TEKS for Social Studies
Subchapter B – Middle School

Rule §113.19 - Social Studies, Grade 7, Beginning with school Year 2011-2012

Rule §113.19, Subchapter B, Chapter 113, Part 2, Title 19, Texas Administrative Code is amended by adding to read as follows:

(19) Culture. The student understands the concept of diversity within unity in Texas. The student is expected to:

(A) explain how the diversity of Texas is reflected in a variety of cultural activities, languages including varieties of English, celebrations, and performances;

(B) describe how people from various racial, ethnic, and religious groups attempt to maintain their cultural heritage while adapting to the larger Texas culture;

(C) identify examples of Spanish influence and the influence of other cultures on Texas such as place names, vocabulary, religion, architecture, food, and the arts; and

(D) identify contributions to the arts by Texans such as Roy Bedichek, Diane Gonzales Bertrand, J. Frank Dobie, Scott Joplin, Elisabet Ney, Amado Peña Jr., Walter Prescott Webb, and Horton Foote.