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A Questionnaire for Incoming High School ELL Students to Better Assist Them in Entering the American Educational System

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EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY CENTER
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INCOMING HIGH SCHOOL ELL STUDENTS TO
BETTER ASSIST THEM IN ENTERING THE AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL
SYSTEM

Project Report

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements of the Degree

Master of Education

By

Narine Balayan

April 21, 2009

ABSTRACT

A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INCOMING ELL STUDENTS TO BETTER ASSIST THEM IN ENTERING THE AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

by

Narine Balayan Robbins

April 2009

This project is designed to help teachers get a better understanding of the incoming ELL students' backgrounds to better assist these students in the education process and make the transition from their native educational system to the American educational system smoother. Teachers must be aware of ELL students' family situations, lives outside the school, diverse background knowledge and how these things affect reading and writing comprehension, and be able to choose the most appropriate assessment and instruction.

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I want to thank my ELL students at Kentridge High School, whom I am proud to teach and watch grow and learn. I wrote this questionnaire especially for them because I want to see them succeed in life, be independent, and have great futures. My students are my inspiration for this project and the work I do every day. Without my family, teachers, colleagues, and students' love, support and guidance, I would not be where I am today.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

When a student enters an English Language Learner (ELL) program, it is critical to recognize that students classified as ELL are hardly a homogenous group. They come to school from different family backgrounds and with varying levels of proficiency in their first language. Some ELL students have significant literacy competency in their first language and families who have strong education backgrounds; these students ultimately tend to do well academically and in the workplace (Sum, Kirsch, & Yamamoto, 2004). Other students have minimal skill in their first language and families who have limited educational backgrounds; these students traditionally have not fared well in attaining literacy in English. There is evidence that a host of socioeconomic and background factors can have an influence on educational and life outcomes for nonnative speakers of English (Blair, Legazpi-Blair, & Madamba, 1999; Kao & Tienda, 1995; Schmid, 2001). Aggregating data on individuals with these very different backgrounds can cause to misleading interpretations of any resulting analyses. ELL students also come to school differing on a number of other important dimensions, including their age and stage of language development in their native language; whether or not their parents are new immigrants to the country; the oral and written characteristics of their native languages; the diversity of languages spoken in their schools and classrooms; the skills and backgrounds of their teachers; and policies and practices in classifying, retaining, and instructing individuals in ELL programs. Despite all the variation among students and programs, most of the reporting related to student outcomes done by states and districts

simply examines the performance of all ELL students as a single group. And yet, research in this area shows quite clearly that the diversity of ELL students and academic programs influences the progress of ELL students. The understanding that we have about the achievement of ELL students is greatly illuminated by slicing the data in ways that help us see what is really happening underneath the averages presented for individuals who differ on important factors (Jerald, 2003).

Although students may have limited or no English-language skills, their own particular language histories do appear to influence how easily they learn English. For example, students come to U.S. schools with different levels of competence in their native languages, and of course, they also have different native languages. Findings include the following:

- Students who have more developed language skills in their native languages tend to acquire English more easily than those whose native language skills are less developed (Cummins & Fillmore, 2000).

- Students whose native language is more similar to English, for example Spanish students, tend to acquire English more easily than those whose native language is less similar to English. (Chiswick & Miller, 1997; Dornyei & Skehan, 2003).

There have been a number of inquiries into how English-language proficiency is acquired by students who have been in the United States for different periods of time. Various conclusions have been drawn, including the following:

- One crucial factor in a student's native-language development would seem to be his or her age of arrival in the United States. The younger the age of arrival, the more

likely that the student would have had his or her native-language development interrupted (Dornyei & Skehan, 2003).

- Butler and Stevens (1997) suggest that length of time in the United States may be related to English-language acquisition. For some students, length of time may be related to more contact with the English language and culture on a consistent basis.

However, for other students, who are living in a fairly language-segregated setting, schools may be the only opportunity for contact with the English language.

Often, ELL students have lower social economic status and are also categorized as members of an ethnic or racial subgroup reported by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements. This means that one student may be included in adequate yearly progress (AYP) reporting for NCLB in multiple categories. It is also true that ELL students vary in social economic status and race/ethnicity. In fact, Terwilliger and Magnuson (2005) found that differences in social economic status and race/ethnicity were related to English-language performance. Conversely, because low-social economic status populations in general, as well as Hispanic and Asian populations (to name only two examples), tend to include disproportionately high numbers of ELL students, policymakers concerned with low aggregate achievement scores for those populations should be aware that low levels of English acquisition may be involved.

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

There has been and will continue to be a dramatic increase in the number of K–12 students who come to U.S. schools without proficiency in English due to many immigration programs sponsored by U.S. government. This dramatic increase, along with the NCLB Act, raises instructional and corresponding research questions (e.g., August &

Hakuta, 1997). The educational system is responsible for ensuring that students who come to school without proficiency in English not only learn the English language but also achieve across the entire curriculum. There are various placement programs and options available for ELL students such as Language Instructional Education Programs, Bilingual Education Programs, Content-based English as a Second Language (CBESL) Programs, English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs, Maintenance Bilingual Education Programs, Newcomer Programs, One-way Bilingual Educations, Pull-Out Programs, Sheltered English Immersion Programs, Structured English Immersion Programs, Submersion Programs, Transitional Bilingual Education Programs, and Two-way Bilingual Education Programs (McKeon, 1987).

The goal of this project is to create a questionnaire for incoming high school ELL students to assist them in entering the American educational system. Teachers must be aware of ELL students' diverse background knowledge and how background affects their students' reading and writing comprehension, and choose the most appropriate assessment and instruction.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Determining if a student was born outside the United States and if that student uses a native language other than English is fairly straightforward due to a placement test that student takes to get admitted for the first time to a U.S. school and ELL program. It is, however, more complex and challenging to try to standardize a process that effectively assesses each student's proficiency in English as well as the student's abilities to use English in performing academic tasks. Although Title III of the NCLB Act mandates that the English oral language, reading, and writing skills of all ELL students should be

evaluated (*No Child Left Behind Act*, 2002), it does not specify how each state ought to measure these skills. Classification into ELL programs and the kinds of accommodations provided for academic testing are quite variable (Abedi, 2004; Koenig & Bachman, 2004).

Teachers of English language learners may find themselves in a complex instructional environment. First, there may be conflicting educational goals. English language learners are often very interested in learning about the United States (e.g., customs, history, geography). Many students who are English language learners may want to learn acculturation information, while their teachers may need to emphasize language skills and curriculum-related content. Second, teachers may work with students of various ages and skills. When teaching English language learners who recently immigrated to the United States, teachers may have an instructional situation with students of mixed ages--sometimes at the same time--with no to low English language ability. Third, there may be problems in assessing special needs of English language learners as educators often confuse the language acquisition process with behaviors associated with learning disabilities (Saunders & Christian, 2005).

The NCLB Operational Definition of an ELL Student is as Follows:

“An individual—

- (A) who is aged 3 through 21;
- (B) who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school;
- (C)(i) who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English;

(C)(ii)(I) who is a Native American or Alaska Native, or native resident of the outlying areas; and

(C)(ii)(II) who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency; or

(C)(iii) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and

(D) whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual—

(i) the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments described in Section 111(b)(3);

(ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or

(iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society.” (NCLB, 2001).

By gathering comprehension background information on an ELL student, a teacher can get a variety of useful data, such as educational and language history, social background, strengths, and perception on the nature of the suspected problem. Next, a teacher should carefully review what he/she has learned and then look for factors that could be impeding the student's ability to satisfactorily progress in the classroom. Some of the information that a teacher needs to consider in assisting an ELL student is listed below:

- The teachers need to know the limits of an ELL student educational background.

- The interference of a student's native language, particularly if the learner is used to a non-Roman alphabet (e.g., speakers of Chinese, Arabic, Khmer, etc.).
- Stresses or traumas that refugees and other immigrants have may have experienced causing difficulties in concentration and memory dysfunction.
- Socio-cultural factors such as physical health, social identity, and even diet.
- The lack of opportunity or confidence to practice English outside the classroom (Saunders & Christians, 2005).

Teachers should learn about the cultural environments of the students they are serving. A student's adherence to certain customs and cultures may be impeding his/her progress or the staff's ability to properly instruct and assist him/her. The teacher should be sensitive to these cultural differences.

Not knowing all this information about ELL students leads teachers to a great risk of providing inappropriate assessments and instruction.

Standardized Tests Commonly Used to Assess ELL Proficiency

Some state educational agencies have taken the initiative to use various measures to assess the English proficiency of ELL students. In a recent survey project, state education agencies reported using home language surveys, parent information, teacher observations, student records, teacher interviews, referrals, and student grades to identify ELL students (Kindler, 2002). Various standardized tests are also used to assess ELL proficiency (Kindler, 2002; Mahoney & MacSwan, 2005).

Common Standardized Tests used to assist ELL proficiency are:

- Language Assessment Scales (LAS) - The various forms of the LAS are designed to generate measures of oral proficiency and reading and writing ability for students in grades K through 12. The oral measure must be individually administered, but the reading and writing tests can be administered in small groups. In general, the tests can be described as discrete-point and holistic, measuring content such as vocabulary, minimal pairs, listening comprehension and story retelling (Abedi, 2004).

- IDEA Language Proficiency Tests (IPT) - The IDEA proficiency tests were designed to evaluate proficiency in English for children from the age of 3 years through the 12th grade. The Reading/Writing test may be given independently of the Oral test, but both tests would be needed for an overall assessment of language ability. The Oral Proficiency tests of English were designed to determine the proficiency level of students who are native speakers of other languages and who are being considered for placement in Limited English Proficient programs. These tests are administered individually using an easel-style book with pictures that correspond to test questions. The domains tested are Syntax, Morphological Structure, Lexical Items, Phonological Structure, Comprehension, and Oral Production. Examinees continue progressing through levels of difficulty until they reach their proficiency ceiling. The resulting classifications are Non-, Limited, or Fluent English-Speaking (Abedi, 2004).

- Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey - The Language Survey is designed to generate measures of cognitive aspects of language proficiency for oral language as well as reading and writing for individuals 48 months and older. All parts of this test must be individually administered. The test is discrete-point in nature and measures content such

as vocabulary, verbal analogies, and letter-word identification. The Language Survey is available in Spanish and English (Abedi, 2004).

- Basic Inventory of Natural Languages (BINL) - The BINL is used to generate a measure of the K-12 student's oral language proficiency. The test must be administered individually and uses large photographs to elicit unstructured, spontaneous language samples from the student, which must be tape-recorded for scoring purposes. The student's language sample is scored based on fluency, level of complexity and average sentence length (Abedi, 2004).

- WLPT-II - Currently, this is the only assessment of reading, writing, speaking, and listening knowledge and skills used in Washington State for English language proficiency for English language learners(ELLs). The WLPT-II test consists of two tests:

- The Placement Test is used to determine initial English language levels and student eligibility for ELL services.

- The Annual Test is given to all students who qualify for services with the Placement Test and to determine whether the student is eligible to continue to receive ELL services.

All students eligible for language services according to the WLPT-II Placement Test (Levels 1, 2, or 3) must be given the annual WLPT-II test until they reach the Level 4 (Transitional) on the Annual Test. Once a student reaches Level 4 (Transitional) on the WLPT-II Annual Test, they no longer qualify for language support services (OSPI, 2009).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT

As the number of students in the United States with non-English speaking backgrounds surpasses two million, pressures increase on schools to serve this population more effectively (Ascher, 1990). Teachers of English Language Learners (ELL), general education teachers, and special education teachers continually assess students while they teach language acquisition and support curricular instruction. Their key decisions about assessment involve how to assess accurately, what to teach, and how to teach so that students can obtain a meaningful education. Having a well developed questionnaire for incoming high school ELL students will help teachers build bridges to learning. Language and cultural differences may cause learners to be undiagnosed, over diagnosed, or incorrectly diagnosed regarding their need for special education and related services (Garcia, 1991).

With federal, state, and local testing mandates, teachers of students with limited English proficiency need a way to bridge required and necessary assessment measures for ELL students. The ELL assessment process needs to give the teacher information to facilitate successful instruction while satisfying school and government mandates.

ELL students are subject to tests of language proficiency, required under NCLB Title III and to achievement tests, required under NCLB Title I. Appropriate instruction for the ELL students requires the development of an individualized systematic course of action. Determining an appropriate course of instruction requires a careful evaluation of each student's background and educational history, paying particular attention to cultural issues, language barriers, and educational experiences that may be negatively impacting

or impeding current performance. These techniques and strategies are generally effective with ELL students as long as the techniques match the needs.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Language Instructional Education Programs:

In school districts where many languages are spoken, students typically receive “pull out” ELL classes, classes with ELL students only, for a few hours a week. The rest of the time they are in regular classes where they may or may not understand the instruction. Districts that have very large enrollments of ELL students often have self-contained classes (usually grades K-2). These classes consist entirely of ELL students and are taught by a teacher who is certified in elementary education and has been trained in ELL (McKeon, 1987).

According to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs (NCELA), ELL students need language instruction educational programs that allow them to progress academically while they are acquiring English language skills. There are several different program models; however, all include both academic content and English language development components. The specific model a school district implements will depend on the composition of the student population, resources available, and the community’s preferences (U.S. Department of Education, 2005)

The following is a brief description of programs commonly found in schools that have ELL students:

Bilingual Education Programs:

It is an education program that teaches children two languages. Children are taught for some portion of the day in one language, and the other portion of the day in another language. One of the languages is English. Typically, these programs develop initial literacy in the native language and include an ESL component. When possible, a certified teacher who is bilingual provides native language instruction, but many programs utilize bilingual teaching assistants. Although these programs are referred to as bilingual, observers have noted that English is the medium of instruction for majority of the time. In some Mississippi school districts, volunteer bilingual tutors have been used successfully to instruct students in math so that students will not fall behind due to language proficiency (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Content-Based English as a Second Language (CBESL) Programs:

This approach makes use of instructional materials, learning tasks, and classroom techniques from academic content areas as the vehicle for developing language, content, cognitive, and study skills. English is used as the medium of instruction (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs:

This is a program of techniques, methodology and special curriculum designed to teach ELL students English language skills, which may include listening, speaking, reading, writing, study skills, content vocabulary, and cultural orientation. ESL instruction is usually in English with little use of native languages (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Maintenance Bilingual Education Programs:

Also referred to as late-exit bilingual education, this program uses two languages, the student's primary language and English, as a means of instruction. The instruction builds upon the student's primary language skills and develops and expands the English language skills of each student to enable him or her to achieve proficiency in both languages, while providing access to the content areas (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Newcomer Programs:

Newcomer programs are separate, relatively self-contained educational interventions designed to meet the academic and transitional needs of newly arrived students. Usually found in large school districts or in districts with unusually large numbers of ELL students, newcomer programs provide ELL students with intensive ESL instruction and an introduction to U.S. cultural and educational practices. ELL students remain in the newcomer program one or two semesters before they enter more traditional interventions (e.g., English language development programs or mainstream classrooms with supplemental ESL instruction) (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

One-way Bilingual Education:

This is a bilingual program in which students who are all speakers of the same primary language are schooled in two languages. This model shares many of the features of the dual language or two-way bilingual education approach (US department of Education, 2005).

Pull-Out Programs:

This is a program model in which paraprofessionals or tutors pull students from their classes for small group or individual work. A paraprofessional or tutor may also serve students in a small group within the regular classroom setting. Children who need remedial work in learning the English language may be served through such a program (McKeon, 1987).

Sheltered English Immersion Programs:

A sheltered English immersion program is an instructional approach used to make academic instruction in English understandable to ELL students. Students in these classes are “sheltered” in that they do not attend classes with their English speaking peers; therefore, they do not compete academically with students in the mainstream. These students study the same curriculum as their English-speaking peers, but the teacher employs ESL methods to make instruction comprehensible. In the sheltered classroom, teachers use physical activities, visual aids, and the environment to teach vocabulary for concept development in mathematics, science, social studies, and other subjects. Sheltered English principles and methodologies can be used quite successfully in regular classrooms as well (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Structured English Immersion Programs:

The goal of this program is acquisition of English language skills so that the ELL student can succeed in an English-only mainstream classroom. Instruction is entirely in English. Students may be thrown into the general education classroom and therefore “immersed” in English, or they may be placed in a sheltered immersion class where they are taught content through simplified English. Teachers have specialized training in

meeting the needs of ELL students, possessing either a bilingual education or ESL teaching credential and/or training and strong receptive skills in the students' primary language (McKeon, 1987).

Submersion Programs:

A submersion program places ELL students in a regular English-only program with little or no support services on the theory that they will pick up English naturally (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Transitional Bilingual Education Programs:

This program, also known as early-exit bilingual education, utilizes a student's primary language in instruction. The program maintains and develops skills in the primary language and culture while introducing, maintaining, and developing skills in English. The primary purpose of this program is to facilitate the ELL student's transition to an all English instructional program while he or she receives academic subject instruction in the native language to the extent necessary. Classes are made up of students who share the same native language (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Two-way Bilingual Education Programs:

Often referred to as a dual language program, the goal of this model is for students to develop language proficiency in two languages by receiving instruction in English and another language. This program teaches native English speakers side-by-side with children who are learning English. Teachers usually team-teach, with each one responsible for teaching in only one of the languages. This approach is sometimes called dual immersion (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

No Child Left Behind Act:

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110) is a United States law that was passed in the House of Representatives on May 23, 2001 and signed on January 8, 2002, which reauthorized a number of federal programs aiming to improve the performance of U.S. primary and secondary education by increasing the standards of accountability for states, school districts and schools, as well as providing parents more flexibility in choosing which schools their children will attend (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 2005).

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF CURRENT RESEARCH

Selected Sources

Learning a second language is difficult—either for an adult or a child—and it can take up to six years to learn a second language to academic proficiency (Chiswick & Miller, 1998.). Research indicates that the way students learn a second language is largely dependent on their native language patterns and their level of proficiency in that language. How a student initially learns a language is also a factor: “The more technologically advanced the culture [of the first language], the more likely children are taught through language. Children from lower socioeconomic levels, different cultures, or where technology is not a factor, usually learn through non-verbal means such as observation or practice” (Dornyei & Skehan, 2003).

The prior education of ELL students plays another important role in the way ELL students learn. Some students entering ELL programs already have substantial academic experience in their own languages. They have “attended school in their own country, have learned to read and write well in their first language, and are at comparable (or better) levels in such content areas as mathematics” (McKeon, 1987, section 2, para. 3). Others have little or no academic preparation, either because it was unavailable to them or because social or political factors interfered with their education (McKeon, 1987). In short, the learning process for each type of ELL student can vary based on a number of factors including the cognitive level and literacy skills in the first language, and the length of time of instruction in the new language. The needs of these different types of students make implementing a successful ELL program more complicated.

Educational decision making for English language learners requires procedures for identification, assessment, and proper program placement. Collaborative planning among teachers, administrators, counselors, and parents to determine the processes and timelines for identification and assessment, placement, program implementation and evaluation, and the reclassification and/or exit status is essential for the success of English language learners (Dornyei & Skehan, 2003).

Educators must always remember that the first rule for placing ELL students in an educational program is that they should be placed at the age-appropriate grade level. The most important reason for age-appropriate placement is socio-cultural. Students progress faster and work harder when they are with their peers. In addition, classroom teachers are organized to teach students of a certain age and will have educational expectations for students of that age group. There are some situations that allow for exceptions to the general rule. If a student is not much older than six and has not been in a school before, it is often best to place the student in kindergarten. If an ELL student is developmentally delayed, which can be determined by specialists or has suffered serious deprivation, then the ELL student may need to be placed at a lower grade level (Garcia, 1991).

Placement in Grades K-3:

The key to success in grades K-3 is to place the student with teachers who understand cross-cultural difficulties and who are trained in dealing with language and cultural problems in the mainstream class (Zehler, 1994).

Placement in Grades 4-8:

Consideration of educational background becomes more important at this level. Assessment of the student's knowledge of course material must be designed so that the

student can demonstrate mastery of the material, regardless of English skills. Special considerations of cultural factors in course assignments should be given to the following:

- in many cultures, it is unacceptable for boys and girls to be engaged in physical education activities together at any age; and
- there may be cultural, gender-based biases against certain courses (e.g., home economics for boys or shop class for girls) (Zehler, 1994).

Placement in Grades 9-12:

At the high school level, differences in background knowledge may be as much of a hurdle for ELL students as lack of language skills. Teachers should keep in mind that topics students in the United States have heard about for years in school, at home, and on television (e.g., Columbus, the Civil War, the presidents) may be completely new to students from other countries and cultures. In addition, courses at this level can be very language-intensive, requiring advanced skills in reading and writing (Zehler, 1994).

Academic classes that may be extremely difficult to ELL students include:

- American, European, or Washington history classes. These classes are difficult for ELLs because of lack of background knowledge and high-level reading skills and reading requirements;
- Civics. This class is difficult for the same reasons as history; and
- Literature-based English classes. Literature classes are especially difficult for ELLs if literature choices are predominantly British; these courses require high-level writing skills, as well.

Advisable courses include:

- Math – although students may need help with math terminology in English, if their educational backgrounds include prerequisite courses in math, they can usually make the transition in math readily;
- Music – does not require advanced reading and writing skills. Most of the lyrics for the songs are in foreign languages. In addition, Learning English through the music is fun and easy for ELL students.
- Art – many ELL students are very artistic and have good skills for art. Art classes do not require much of reading and writing skills and are very enjoyable for students (Ascher, 1990).

Students who are allowed to complete graduation requirements in these advisable courses during their first year of adjustment to the new school system and a new language will generally do better and will be more prepared for other classes in their second year (Ascher, 1990).

It is very important to get as much background information on a student as possible to make the right placement, to know exactly how to assess him/her in educational process and to design an educational plan to improve the student's English proficiency (Terwillinger & Magnuson, 2005).

What is the Difference Between Social and Academic English?

ELLs' social English may start developing within a few months. However, it will likely take a couple of years before ELLs fully develop social English skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Chiswick & Miller, 1998).

Social English is the language of everyday communication in oral and written forms.

Examples include:

- when students are talking to their friends on the playground or on the school bus
- when teachers and students are having an informal face-to-face conversation
- when students go to the grocery store and read a shopping list (Cummins and Fillmore, 2000).

Academic English and social English are not two separate languages. However, academic English is more demanding and complex than social English. An ELL student with social English proficiency may not necessarily have academic English proficiency. It is important for the teacher to make this distinction. Academic English is the language necessary for success in school. It is related to a standards-based curriculum, including the content areas of math, science, social studies, and English language arts (Cummins & Wong, 2000).

ELLs come to school not only to learn how to communicate socially, but to become academically proficient in English. Learning social English is just the tip of the iceberg. Just because they can speak on the playground, talk to peers, and use everyday English does not mean that they are up to speed in academic English. On the contrary, many ELLs are not yet proficient enough to handle the standards-based curriculum. They lack the academic vocabulary necessary to develop the content knowledge in English that they will need to succeed in future schooling. By recognizing these two types of proficiencies, the teacher can help expedite ELLs' academic English (Eastern Stream, 2003).

Learning both social English and academic English are demanding tasks. One is needed to communicate and the other to succeed in academics at school. Learning both

types of English well may take at least four years. However, it is important to note that students will learn at different rates, depending on a variety of variables, including students' existing English proficiency, primary language literacy level, and the quality of the instruction they receive (Saunders & Christian, 2005).

Since the ELLs in the classroom probably have different levels of language proficiency, challenges will be unique with each student. An important first step is identifying students' levels of English language development. Most ELLs are at the beginning or intermediate levels of English proficiency. The following descriptions of the stages of English language development may help recognize ELLs' level of English proficiency (Saunders & Christian, 2005).

Beginning stage:

ELLs at the beginning stage demonstrate comprehension of simplified language, speak a few English words, answer simple questions, and use common social greetings and repetitive phrases. They make common/regular mistakes; for example, incorrect use of verb tenses, singular vs. plural nouns, pronouns (Cummins & Wong, 2000).

Intermediate stage:

ELLs at the intermediate stage speak using standard grammar and pronunciation, but some rules are still missing. Their level of comprehension is high and they can ask or answer instructional questions. They can actively participate in conversations, retell stories, and use expanded vocabulary and paraphrasing.

Advanced stage:

ELLs at the advanced stage use consistent standard English vocabulary, grammar, idioms, and oral/written strategies similar to those of English-speaking peers. They have

good pronunciation and intonation. Advanced ELLs initiate social conversations. They use idiomatic expressions and appropriate ways of speaking according to their audience (Cummins & Wong, 2000).

No Child Left Behind and English Language Learners

Title III of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act requires that all English language learners (ELLs) receive quality instruction for learning both English and grade-level academic content. NCLB allows local flexibility for choosing programs of instructions, while demanding greater accountability for ELLs' English language and academic progress. Under Title III, states are required to develop standards for English Language Proficiency and to link those standards to the state's Academic Content Standards.

Schools must make sure that ELLs are part of their state's accountability system and that ELLs' academic progress is followed over time (Reed & Railback, 2003).

Here are some of the NCLB requirements concerning ELLs:

- All ELL students' English language proficiency must be tested at least once a year.
- All ELLs have to take state academic achievement tests in language arts and math, except that ELL students who have been in the United States for less than one year do not have to take the language arts test for that first year.
- ELL students who have been in U.S. schools for three consecutive years must be tested in reading/language arts using a test written in English, although on a case-by-case basis, this period can be extended up to five years.
- ELL students as a group must meet specific annual targets of Adequate Yearly

Progress (AYP). Schools, districts, and states will be held accountable for ensuring that they meet these targets.

- Teachers must be certified as English language proficient. School districts are to certify that all teachers in a language instruction education program for ELL students are fluent in English and any other language used by the program, including written and oral communication skills.

- Curricula must be demonstrated to be effective. Language instruction curricula used to teach ELL children are to be tied to scientifically based research and demonstrated to be effective.

- Local entities have the flexibility to choose the method of instruction to teach ELLs.

- States must establish standards and benchmarks for raising the level of English proficiency and meeting challenging state academic standards for ELL students that are aligned with state standards.

- Annual achievement objectives for ELL students must relate to gains in English proficiency and meet challenging state academic standards that are aligned with Title I achievement standards.

- Parents must be notified by the local education agency concerning why their child needs a specialized language instruction program. Parents have the right to choose among instructional programs if more than one type of program is offered and have the right to remove their child from a program for ELL children.

Note: Different states may have different interpretations of some of these points. Teachers should check to see if the state law supersedes any of the above requirements (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

With this increased focus on setting higher expectations and accountability for ELL students, it is even more important for mainstream teachers to ensure quality instruction for ELLs by assessing and placing ELLs with the goal of achieving adequate yearly progress; using effective strategies for teaching reading and teaching content areas; and learning more about ELL theories, issues, and state standards (Butler & Stevens, 1997).

CHAPTER THREE

PROCEDURES

Questionnaire Goals

Educators must understand each student's language needs, so they can get students into the right ELL program while moving ELLs forward to also meet NCLB requirements.

Literacy development entails cumulative, hierarchical processes in dynamic relationships, and these relationships change over time with age, learning, instruction, motivation, etc. For ELL students, there are additional intervening influences relating to first-language proficiency and first-language literacy, and the nature of the first and second languages. Another important factor influencing language and literacy development in ELLs is the sociocultural context created by families, neighborhoods, classrooms and schools, and societies. For many language-minority students, sociocultural context also includes poverty, attendance in under-funded schools, low social status accorded to certain ethnic and immigrant groups, familial stress, and incompatibility between home and school environments (e.g., language differences). The design and development of curricula and instructional programs should be important considerations. Finally, developing literacy in a second language depends heavily on the amount and quality of the schooling provided, which are a function of what is taught, the methods used to teach it, the intensity of instruction, how well and appropriately learning is monitored, and the level of teacher preparation (Blair & Madamba, 1999).

What to Consider While Writing a Questionnaire for New Coming High School ELL Students

There are many aspects that ELL High School teachers have to consider in order to better assist students in their classrooms. Several of them are listed below:

Students live outside school:

- Family life: family makeup, immigration history, language use, mobility, educational history, child-rearing philosophy and practices, major activities, labor history, skills, and knowledge used regularly, gender issues related to religion/culture
- Social life: use of leisure time, favorite activities, language use, what students excel at, interest, hobbies, concerns (Blair & Madamba, 1999).

Students' perceptions of school knowledge and belief in the potential of schooling to improve their lives in the future:

- Past experiences in school with subject matter and impressions of school knowledge derived from these experiences (e.g., interesting/boring; relevant/irrelevant; meaningful/meaningless).
- Trust that schools will improve their adult lives (Blair & Madamba, 1999).

Community Life:

- Demographic profile: economic makeup, racial/ethnic/gender composition, linguistic makeup, patterns of language use, patterns of segregation
- Formal and informal holders of power and influence
- Available recourses: businesses, institutions, agencies, people

Perceptions of school and school knowledge and participation in schools (Blair & Madamba, 1999).

Students' relationships to subject matter:

- Experience of subject matter knowledge outside school
- Preexisting knowledge and beliefs about specific instructional topics
- Areas of potential conflict between students' cultural values and the cultural

demands built into the various school subjects (Blair & Madamba, 1999).

Questionnaire Design Procedures

Most problems with questionnaire analysis can be traced back to the design phase of it. Having a well-defined goal is the best way to assure a good questionnaire design (Slavin & Cheung, 2005). I was trying to develop the questionnaire that would directly address the goals of the project.

As a general rule, with only a few exceptions, long questionnaires get less accurate response than short questionnaires. I wanted to keep my questionnaire short. For the elimination round, I read each question and asked myself, "How am I going to use this information?" If the information is used in a decision-making process, then I would keep the question; it's important. If not, I would throw it out.

One important way to ensure the development of a successful questionnaire is to include other experts and relevant decision-makers in the questionnaire design process. I asked several of my respected colleagues and administration team members as well as my ELL students for suggestions to improve the questionnaire. I tried to include clear and concise instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. The goal was to make it easy to understand. I used short sentences and basic vocabulary as well as simple and direct language, so the questions would be clearly understood by the respondents. The wording of each question was simple and to the point. I avoided using uncommon words or long

sentences, making items as brief as possible. One way to eliminate misunderstandings was to emphasize crucial words in each item by using bold, italics or underlining.

I left adequate space for respondents to make comments. Leaving space for comments should provide valuable answers not captured by the specific response categories. Leaving white space also made the questionnaire look easier and which increases response.

I placed the most important items in the first half of the questionnaire. Respondents often send back partially completed questionnaires. By putting the most important items near the beginning, the partially completed questionnaires would still contain important information. In case of accidental separation of a questionnaire that has more than a few pages and is held by a staple, I included some identifying data on each page (such as first and last name or an ID number if that available).

To insure that the questionnaire will work, I will test it on some of my current ELL students first. If there are problems with the questionnaire, students almost always tell me right away. I will tell students that it is okay to ask for clarification of any item. The questions a student might ask are indicative of problems in the questionnaire. Based on the student level of English proficiency, the ELL questionnaire can be completed in writing as well as verbally.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT

Introduction

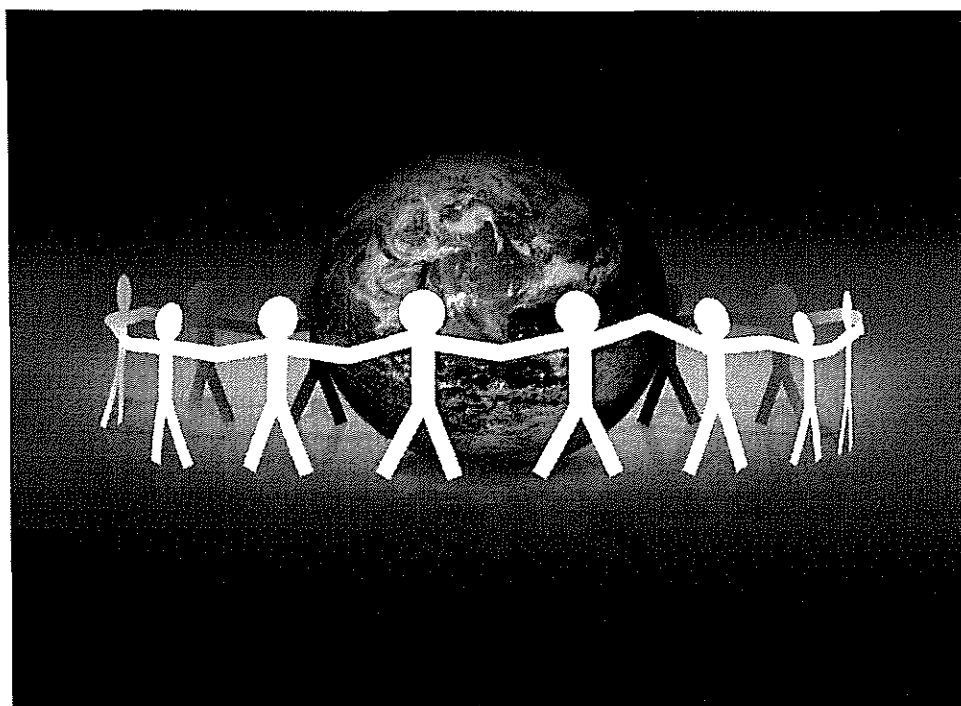
The purpose of this project is to better assist incoming high school ELL students in entering the American educational system.

Educators must understand each student's language needs so the educators can get the students into the right ELL program while moving them forward to also meet NCLB requirements.

Literacy development entails cumulative, hierarchical processes in dynamic relationships, and these relationships change over time with age, learning, instruction, motivation, etc. For ELL students, there are additional intervening influences relating to first-language proficiency and first-language literacy, and the nature of the first and second languages. Another important factor influencing language and literacy development in ELLs is the sociocultural context created by families, neighborhoods, classrooms and schools, and societies. For many language-minority students, the sociocultural context also includes poverty, attendance in under-funded schools, low social status accorded to certain ethnic and immigrant groups, familial stress, and incompatibility between home and school environments (e.g., language differences). The design and development of curricula and instructional programs should be important considerations. Finally, developing literacy in a second language depends heavily on the amount and quality of the schooling provided, which are a function of what is taught, the methods used to teach, the intensity of instruction, how well and appropriately learning is monitored, and the level of teacher preparation.

With all of this information provided by the questionnaire, the teacher's next step will be to make appropriate recommendations for placing ELL students in the best program of instruction.

A Questionnaire for Incoming High School ELL Students



KENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Successfully Prepare All Students For Their Future

WELCOME!

I designed this questionnaire to help high school teachers better assist incoming ELL students in entering the American educational system. This questionnaire should be conducted in addition to an ELL placement test that is mandatory in a school district.

As we know, there are additional intervening influences relating to first-language proficiency and first-language literacy for ELL students. Another important factor influencing language and literacy development in ELL students is the sociocultural context created by families, neighborhoods, classrooms and schools, and societies. The design and development of curricula and instructional programs should be important considerations. Finally, developing literacy in a second language depends heavily on the amount and quality of the schooling provided, which are a function of what is taught, the methods used to teach, the intensity of instruction, how well and appropriately learning is monitored, and the level of teacher preparation.

With ELL placement test scores and information provided by the questionnaire, your next step as a teacher will be to make appropriate recommendations for placing your ELL students into the best program of instruction.

How to Administer the Questionnaire:

A Questionnaire for incoming ELL Students is to be completed by an incoming ELL student or if possible by the instructor providing ELL services in the first week after an ELL student enrolls a U.S. public school and already been tested for proper placement in ELL program.

The questionnaire should be completed by a student in writing if the ELL student is of advanced or higher levels. All questions are in short-answer format. ELL students supply the answer, which may be in the form of words, numbers and/or pictures/diagrams. The questionnaire must be treated like a test; a student should work independently and quietly. It is permissible for an ELL teacher to help a student, if necessary, to understand and respond to the questionnaire questions.

If an ELL student is of beginning or intermediate level ELL, a questionnaire should be completed one-on-one with the teacher. ELL students of beginning or intermediate levels should answer questions verbally while the teacher writes down the responses.

If an ELL student speaks no English at all, the ELL program should request an interpreter of the student's native language.

The time for completing the questionnaire is flexible.

If possible, a teacher should provide a translated version in a student's native language.

Questionnaire for Incoming High School

ELL Students

First and Last Name:	Native Language:	Date of Birth:
Country of Birth:	Date of Entry in U.S.:	Date First Enrolled in Any U.S. Schools:

Educational background

- How many years of school have you attended in your native country? In the United States?
- What grade were you in at the last school you attended?
- Can you read in your native language? How well?

- Can you write in your native language? How well?
- How much help do you need to learn English? (On scale 0-10, 0-no help, 10 lots of help)
- Where do you need the most help with? Speaking? Listening? Reading? Writing?

Academic Content Knowledge

- What subjects did you study in your previous school(s)? In what language(s) did you study?
- In what language(s) were the books written?

Social Life

- What do you like to do for fun?

-
- Do your friends mostly speak your native language or English?

- How many languages can you speak? List.

- In how many languages can you read and write? List.

Life Outside the School

- Have you ever worked before? If yes, where and what did you do?

- Do you watch TV? If yes, in what language?

- Do you read books? If yes, in what language?

- Did you have a computer at home in your native country? Do you have computer at home now?

Family Background

- With whom do you live?

- What is the level of your parents/guardians' education? Elementary/middle/high schools or college?

- What is the native language of each of your parents/guardians?

- How many siblings do you have? How old are they? Do they speak English?

- How many languages are spoken in your house? List.

How to Interpret the Results:

ELL students are subject to tests of language proficiency, required under NCLB Title III and to achievement tests, required under NCLB Title I. Appropriate instruction for the ELL students requires the development of an individualized systematic course of action. Determining an appropriate course of instruction requires a careful evaluation of each student's background and educational history, paying particular attention to cultural issues, language barriers, and educational experiences that may be negatively impacting or impeding current performance.

Educational decision making for English language learners requires procedures for identification, assessment, and proper program placement. Since the ELLs in the classroom probably have different levels of language proficiency, challenges will be unique with each student. An important first step is identifying students' levels of English language development. Most ELLs are at the beginning or intermediate levels of English proficiency. The following descriptions of the stages of English language development may help you recognize your ELLs' level of English proficiency.

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY LEVELS GRADES 9-12

9-12	Listening/Speaking	Reading	Writing
Beginning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited understanding of English • Learns to distinguish and produce English phonemes • Uses words, gestures, and actions • Practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses self using words, drawings, gestures, and actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sequences simple text Answers literal questions Makes simple 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draws, labels • Writes familiar words, sight words, and unfamiliar words • Writes to name, describe, or complete a list • Begins to use invented spelling, capital letters,

9-12	Listening/Speaking	Reading	Writing
	repetitive social greetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imitates verbalizations of others to communicate Basic needs	predictions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of familiar and unfamiliar sounds • Recognizes and produces rhyming words containing familiar sounds 	participates in group editing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience may be self, teacher, or known person • Sequences pictures to assist with organization
	Participate in discussions and activities Respond to simple directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses and comprehends highly contextualized vocabulary • Follows multi-step written directions (e.g., circle, underline, match) • Reads short phrases and sentences • Begins to understand concepts of print 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses graphic organizers to convey main ideas and details • Participates in group writing process
Advanced Beginning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses words and/or phrases • Uses appropriate social greetings • Participates in social discussions on familiar topics and in academic discussions • Develops correct word order in phrases • Begins to use content-related vocabulary • Retells simple stories and identifies the main points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses self using words and/or phrases to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characters Setting Main idea and details Compare and contrast Cause and effect Draws conclusions • Aware of familiar and unfamiliar sounds • Employs word-meaning strategies • Applies inflectional endings to words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writes unfamiliar words and phrases • Begins to write a song or poem based on a model • Demonstrates inconsistent use of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitals Punctuation Correct spelling • Records and gives directions • Writes for unfamiliar audience • Participates in group brainstorming • Writes rough draft, revises, and edits work

9-12	Listening/Speaking	Reading	Writing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases sight-word and content-area vocabulary • Distinguishes between genres • Reads highly contextualized paragraph-length text composed of simple sentences • Applies concepts of print 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers feedback on others' writing
Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses simple sentences with inconsistent use of syntax, tense, plurals, and subject/verb agreement • Tells a story, informs, explains, entertains, and participates in social and academic discussions • Begins to use root words, affixes, and cognates to determine the meaning of new words • Begins to support main ideas with details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses self using simple sentences • Understands roots and affixes • Produces unfamiliar sounds • Decodes multi-syllabic words • Employs word-meaning strategies • Begins to read new text fluently • Increases vocabulary through reading across content areas • Uses text features to gain meaning, monitors for comprehension, visualizes and describes images from text, connects text to prior knowledge • Distinguishes between fact/opinion and fantasy/reality, infers and makes generalizations from text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writes simple sentences and paragraphs • Demonstrates increasing control of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitals Punctuation Correct spelling Syntax • Uses reference tools to self-edit conventions • Develops own voice in writing • Organizes paragraph using a topic sentence and supporting details • Distinguishes between writing for different audiences and purposes • Uses basic transitions • Chooses and maintains a focus, utilizing a topic sentence and supporting details • Writes individually and in a group

9-12	Listening/Speaking	Reading	Writing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reads text containing compound sentences, yes/no questions, negative, simple past and future tense, and pronoun referents across content areas 	<p>process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writes rough draft independently
Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses descriptive sentences with common grammatical forms with some errors • Participates in academic and social discussions using appropriate ways of speaking based on audience and subject matter • Tells a story, informs, explains, entertains, and persuades • Uses simple figurative language and idiomatic expressions in discussions • Uses root words, affixes, and cognates to determine the meaning of new words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses self using descriptive sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies theme Recognizes literary devices Compares and contrasts • Uses a variety of strategies to monitor comprehension • Recognizes phonemes within multi-syllabic words • Uses word parts to determine word meanings, identifies multiple meaning words across content areas • Reads with increasing fluency, adjusting rate as needed • Independently confirms word meanings • Uses a variety of resources for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses descriptive sentences • Develops a topic in multiple paragraphs using topic sentences and supporting details • Distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant details • Writes for a variety of audiences and purposes • Uses grade level conventions inconsistently • Refines voice in writing • Follows the five step writing process (with assistance in editing and revising)

9-12	Listening/Speaking	Reading	Writing
		research • Text increases in length and complexity	

With the increased focus on setting higher expectations and accountability for ELL students, it is even more important for ELL teachers to ensure quality instruction for ELLs by assessing and placing ELLs with the goal of achieving adequate yearly progress and using effective strategies for teaching reading and teaching content areas. Once the teacher has determined the student's level of proficiency, it is the time for an ELL teacher to develop curriculum in content areas, specifically in ELL conversation (offered only to the beginning level students), ELL reading and writing. Below are some recommendations.

ELL CONVERSATION

KNOWLEDGE COMPONENT	KNOWLEDGE	REASONING	APPLICATION
1.1 Them Units / noun words Family/Greetings School/city Food/Restaurant Clothes / Money Housing Jobs / work Heath / Body Transportation Leisure / Sports	Recognizes new vocabulary in theme units Defines these noun meaning in English and / or native language	Uses new vocabulary in structured setting (classroom) Choose accurate noun words to complete oral and written practices	Applies Knowledge and reasoning to Role Plays, two Person Dialogs, Sentences (written and oral), and Test / Quiz formats
1.2 Grammatical Words	Label parts of speech: verbs, adjectives,	Differentiates between parts of	Applies knowledge and reasoning to

Verbs Adjectives Prepositions	prepositions in given sentences	speech Choose correct form (verb, adjective, or preposition) to use in oral and written sentences	Role Plays, Two Person Dialogs, Sentences (written and oral), and Test / Quiz formats.
2.1 Active Listening Teacher Peer Cassette	Identifies parts of active listening: eye contact leaning forward nodding oral sounds	Develops active listening techniques with pees, teachers, and cassette	Dramatizes active listening techniques through teacher presentation role plays dialogs
2.2 Comprehension Survival Words Community Vocabulary	Memorizes basic survival words and community vocabulary	Paraphrases survival words and community vocabulary in structured setting (classroom) Knows where to locate resources to learn meaning if new vocabulary is heard	Produces survival words and community vocabulary in teacher and peer conversations, dialogs, role plays, and test / quiz formats
3.1 Pronunciation Alphabet Blends Phonyms	Memorize / recognize alphabet forms Recites alphabet letters and sounds phonetically	Decode new words for pronunciation using knowledge of letters, blends, phonyms	Produces accurate pronunciation in role plays, dialogs, and oral practices
3.2 Complete Thought Phrases Sentences	Identifies (words groups) and sentences (subject +verb)	Distinguishes difference between phrases and sentences	Changes phrases to complete sentences in oral and written practices

ELL READING AND WRITING

Basic ELL Reading and Writing

KNOWLEDGE COMPONENT	KNOWLEDGE	REASONING	APPLICATION
1.1 Grammar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nouns-Subjects • Verbs-Predicates • Adjectives • Adverbs • Prepositions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recognizes and defines use of:</i> Nouns-Subjects Verbs-Predicates Adjectives Adverbs Prepositions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Selects correct part of speech for use in sentences</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applies knowledge and reasoning of grammatical sentences in paragraphs, research paper, journal writing, dialog journal, business letters, memos, technical report, and daily assignments</i>
1.2 Sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences Variety/Complex • Simple • Compound • Dependent Clause 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Labels accurately subject and verb in a sentence</i> • <i>Recognizes simple, compound, and complex sentence structures</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Creates a variety of complete sentence structures in writing assignments</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applies knowledge and reasoning of grammatical sentences in paragraphs, research paper, journal writing, dialog journal, business letters, memos, technical report, and daily assignments</i>

<p>1.3 Paragraphs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic Sentences • Supporting Detail Sentences • Transitions • Conclusion Sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Locates and describes: topic sentence, details, transitions, conclusion</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develops sentences into paragraphs using knowledge of purpose for topic sentences, details, transitions, and conclusions</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applies knowledge and reasoning to write single and multiple paragraph papers on topics: personal narratives, descriptive paper, informative paper, fiction writing, and biography research</i>
<p>1.4 Technical Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memo • Business Letter • Technical Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes three different technical writing formats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select writing to fit technical writing purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produces memos, business letters, and technical reports in correct format

Intermediate ELL Reading & Writing

KNOWLEDGE COMPONENT	<i>KNOWLEDGE</i>	<i>REASONING</i>	<i>APPLICATION</i>
<p>2.1 Prewrite</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm • Organize <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -idea Map/Webbing -Categories -Outline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identifies and defines two key organizational techniques</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Selects appropriate writing process step for the given task</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applies the writing process steps to papers and written assignments: Personal narrative paper, Fiction Writing, and Biography Research paper</i>

<p>2.2 Draft</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write from organized ideas • Paragraphs/ Essays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Select from pre-writing ideas to plan multiple paragraph draft</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develops draft from writing process steps completed</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Same as above</i>
<p>2.3 Revise / Edit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas / Content • Organization • Conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Restates evaluative criteria categories in the areas</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Revises content of draft to clarify ideas</i> • <i>Evaluates draft for improvement using peer edits, teacher feedback, and self-analysis</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Same as above</i>
<p>2.4 Final Draft</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets specific criteria of assignment • Typed and Double-spaced • Title Page / Heading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Check final draft for specific criteria and word processing requirements</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Modifies final draft as needed to meet given final criteria</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Same as above</i>
<p>2.5 Publish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral presentations • Typed Papers • Props / visual Aids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Locates appropriate props/ visual aids for oral presentation</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Organizes oral presentation to meet audience needs and time constraints</i> • <i>Creates effective props/ Visual aids for topic presentation</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Performs oral presentation of written paper using appropriate visual aids</i> • <i>Produces aesthetically effective final products noted in Goal 3</i>

<p>3.1 Personal Narrative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning Night (A) • Scary/Funny Experience (A) • Family member (B) • Hero (B) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Define the purpose of personal narrative writing</i> • Identifies personal experience that relate to topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Plans & organizes paper from pre-write ideas</i> • Explains personal story with topic sentence and supporting details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applies knowledge and reasoning to write personal Narrative with appropriate elements of preset criteria</i>
<p>3.2 Descriptive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holiday (A) • Love-Favorite Place(B) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Defines the purpose of descriptive writing</i> • Labels sensory words • Names 5 sense and some associated words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Plans & organizes description from pre-write ideas</i> • Creates a clear picture of topic using all 5 senses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applies knowledge and reasoning to write a descriptive paper with clear sensory language on Holiday or Favorite place</i>
<p>3.3 Informational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idea Spouse (A) • School Pamphlet (B) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Define the purpose of informational writing</i> • Name key ideas for topic with adjective vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Explains essential elements of topic with two details each</i> • Revises sentences to include a variety of simple, compound and complex structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applies knowledge and reasoning to inform the audience on a given topic in letter or pamphlet format</i>
<p>3.4 Fiction Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfinished Mystery (A) • Unfinished Pamphlet(B) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Describe 5 elements of literature and recognizes how these work together to create a</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develop the plot of given situation and creates character clarity with specific</i> 	<p><i>Applies knowledge and reasoning to write a fictional ending to a story starter</i></p>

	<p><i>fiction story</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paraphrase story opening for comprehension 	<p><i>detail of setting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Points out moral/theme of the story 	
<p>3.5 American Biography Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Index/Dictionary Encyclopedia Bibliography Outline Format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defines biography and biographical research Recognizes appropriate resource to use to look up information Locates information needed in text Labels bibliography examples correctly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects information from non-fiction resources for biography Paraphrases ideas from text to outline person Combines information from five separate resources into main topic areas Organizes bibliography to sources following given format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applies knowledge and reasoning to produce American Biography Research paper with Bibliography of five resources

Advanced ELL Reading & Writing

KNOWLEDGE COMPONENT	KNOWLEDGE	REASONING	APPLICATION
<p>4.1 Decoding Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocab-in-Context Fact and Opinion Cause and Effect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognized process of guessing unknown word in a sentence Defines and Identifies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infers meaning of new vocabulary word for comprehension Classifies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applies knowledge and reasoning in reading comprehension of non-fiction texts,

	<p>Fact and Opinion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines and identifies cause and Effect 	<p>information into Fact and Opinion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguish cause and any subsequent effects 	<p><i>independent novels, and fictional short-stories</i></p>
<p>4.2 Comprehension Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Idea • Supporting Details • Summarizing • Note-Talking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recognizes and defines main idea and details in reading</i> • Identifies definition and key parts of summary • Defines process of note-taking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Restates / paraphrases main idea and details</i> • Selects important points of reading • Rewrites main ideas and details of given reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applies knowledge and reasoning to show main ideas and details, write a summary, and produce notes of non-fiction reading</i>
<p>4.3 Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dictionary • Thesaurus • Encyclopedia • Index 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identifies parts of entry in dictionary and thesaurus</i> • Recognizes what information is found in reference sources: Encyclopedia, Index, and Newspaper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Distinguishes difference between dictionary and thesaurus use</i> • Selects appropriate reference material for given assignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applies knowledge and reasoning to choose appropriate tool to help in reading comprehension</i>
<p>5.1 Genres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Stories • Plays • Poetry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recognizes a variety of genres: short story, play, poetry</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Distinguishes genre in given writing assignments</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Applies knowledge and reasoning of genres and elements through given projects and writing assignments:</i> - Reading <p>Journal -Folk Tale</p>

			-Unfinished Mystery -Holiday -Favorite Place -Chapter Questions
5.2 Terms / Elements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character • Plot • Setting • Point of view • Theme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Names and identifies five main Elements of Literature:</i> Character Plot Setting Point of view Theme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Explains / Interprets characters, plot, setting point of view, and theme in specific short stories</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Same as above</i>
5.3 Comprehension/ Interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literal Understanding • Analyzing Meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Restates story events</i> • <i>Selects story events to answer comprehension questions</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Predicts future events / ending of story given context clues</i> • <i>Relates story / character to personal experiences in oral and written forms</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Same as above</i>

An additional data gathered from the following questionnaire can help ELL teachers assist the high school students better in the American educational system.

General Recommendations on How to Read the Results from the Questionnaire

- Students who have more developed language skills in their native languages tend to acquire English more easily than those whose native language skills are less developed.
- Students whose native language is more similar to English, for example Hispanic students, tend to acquire English more easily than those whose native language is less similar to English.
- One crucial factor in a student's native language development is his or her age of arrival into the United States. The younger the age of arrival, the more likely that the student would have had his or her native-language development interrupted.
- A teacher should carefully review what he/she has learned from the questionnaire and then look for factors that could be impeding the student's ability to satisfactorily progress in the classroom. Some of the information that can help a teacher needs to consider in assisting an ELL student is listed below:
 - The student received limited or no education and/or has limited academic skills in his/her native language.
 - The interference of a student's native language, particularly if the learner is used to a non-Roman alphabet (e.g., speakers of Chinese, Arabic, Khmer, etc.).
 - Stresses or traumas that refugees and other immigrants have may have experienced causing difficulties in concentration and memory dysfunction.

- Socio-cultural factors such as physical health, social identity, and even diet.
 - No prior instruction or insufficient instruction in previous ELL learning environments.
 - The lack of opportunity or confidence to practice outside the classroom.
-
- The more technologically advanced the culture of the first language, the more likely children are taught through language. Children from lower socioeconomic levels, different cultures, or where technology is not a factor, usually learn through non-verbal means such as observation or practice.
 - An ELL student with social English proficiency may not necessarily have the academic English proficiency. It is important for the teacher to make this distinction. Academic English is the language necessary for success in school. It is related to a standards-based curriculum, including the content areas of math, science, social studies, and English language arts.

With all of this understanding and information in hand, the questionnaire becomes a great tool for ELL teachers in assisting high school ELL students in entering the American Educational System.

Examples of Students' Complete Questionnaires and suggestions on how to interpret them.

EXAMPLE #1:

Questionnaire for Incoming High School

ELL Students

First and Last Name: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Native Language: <i>Vietnamese</i>	Date of Birth: [REDACTED]
Country of Birth: <i>Vietnam</i>	Date of Entry in U.S.: [REDACTED]	Date First Enrolled in Any U.S. Schools: [REDACTED]

Educational background

- How many years were you in school in your native country? In the United States?

16 years in my native country and five months in school in United States.

- What grade were you in at the last school you attended?

In grade 10

Please note:

Personal data has been redacted due to privacy concerns.

- Can you read in your native language? How well?

Yes, I can. Very good.

-
- Can you write in your native language? How well?

Yes, I can. Very good.

- How much help do you need to learn English? (On scale 0-10, 0-no help, 10 lots of help)

5

- Where do you need the most help with? Speaking? Listening? Reading? Writing?

I need the most help with reading and writing.

Academic Content Knowledge

- What subjects did you study in your previous school(s)? In what language(s) did you study?

In my previous school, I study many different subjects such as math, literature, physics, science, English, [physical education, chemistry, Biology, geography, etc.

I studied them in Vietnamese.

- In what language(s) were the books written?

Vietnamese

Social Life

- What do you like to do for fun?

I like dancing, go to the movies and hang out with my friends.

- Do your friends mostly speak your native language or English?

They speak English and Vietnamese

- How many languages can you speak? List.

2 language. English and Vietnamese

- In how many languages can you read and write? List.

2 language. English and Vietnamese

Life Outside the School

- Have you ever worked before? If yes, where and what did you do?

No, I haven't work before.

- Do you watch TV? If yes, in what language?

Yes, in English

- Do you read books? If yes, in what language?

Yes, both Vietnamese and English

- Did you have a computer at home in your native country? Do you have computer at home now?

Yes, I did. Yes, I do have it now too.

Family Background

- With whom do you live?

I live with my parents and my sister

- What is the level of your parents/guardians' education? Elementary/middle/high schools or college?

High school

- What is the native language of each of your parents/guardians?

Vietnamese

- How many siblings do you have? How old are they? Do they speak English?

I have one, she's 20 years old. Yes, she does

- How many languages are spoken in your house? List.

Just one. Vietnamese

Suggested Interpretation:

Please carefully review what you have learned from the questionnaire and then look for factors that could be impeding the student's ability to satisfactorily progress in the classroom.

Although the student who completed this questionnaire enrolled in the U.S. school less than a year ago, she has a strong educational background from the school she attended in Vietnam. Students who have more developed language skills in their native language tend to acquire English more easily than those whose native language skills are less developed.

In addition, we can see that the student is very social. She likes to watch TV and read books. She has friends that speak both English and Vietnamese. This is a good indicator for teachers that a student will progress in learning social English quickly.

The student is from Vietnam, a technologically advanced country. The more technologically advanced the culture of the first language, the more likely children are taught through language and technology.

The student never worked before. This factor tells us that the student's family, both parents are educated, was well enough in Vietnam that allowed a student focused on school to succeed.

With all of this information in hand, the teacher should understand that this student will progress quickly in the ELL classroom. Please use the tables from *the How to Interpret the Results section* to make appropriate recommendations for placing ELL

students in the best program of instruction and help her succeed in the American educational system.

EXAMPLE #2:

Questionnaire for Incoming High School ELL Students

(Filled out by ELL Paraeducator)

First and Last Name: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	Native Language: <i>Somali</i>	Date of Birth: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>
Country of Birth: <i>Somalia</i>	Date of Entry in U.S.: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>	Date First Enrolled in Any U.S. Schools: <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 15px; margin-top: 5px;"></div>

Educational background

- How many years were you in school in your native country? In the United States?

3 years in Native Country and 1.5 years in the United States

- What grade were you in at the last school you attended?

3rd grade

Please note:
Personal data has been redacted due to privacy concerns.

- Can you read in your native language? How well?

Yes, I can read in my first language. Not very well.

- Can you write in your native language? How well?

Yes, I can not write well in my native language

- How much help do you need to learn English? (On scale 0-10, 0-no help, 10 lots of help)

A lot. On a scale 0-10, the number is 10!

- Where do you need the most help with? Speaking? Listening? Reading? Writing?

I need help writing, listening, and a little bit of reading.

Academic Content Knowledge

- What subjects did you study in your previous school(s)? In what language(s) did you study?

I studied Somali language and Religion only. In Somali language.

- In what language(s) were the books written?

Somali

Social Life

- What do you like to do for fun?

Play soccer, play computer games, and play tennis

- Do your friends mostly speak your native language or English?

Most of my friends speak Somali and some speak both English and Somali at school

- How many languages can you speak? List.

3: Somali, Kiswahili, English

- In how many languages can you read and write? List.

3: Somali, Kiswahili, English

Life Outside the School

- Have you ever worked before? If yes, where and what did you do?

Yes, I worked in Africa but never in America. I used to organize and sort packages.

- Do you watch TV? If yes, in what language?

Yes, in Somali, English and Arabic

- Do you read books? If yes, in what language?

Yes, in English and Somali

- Did you have a computer at home in your native country? Do you have computer at home now?

NO, I didn't. Yes, I do now.

Family Background

- With whom do you live?

I live with my mom

- What is the level of your parents/guardians' education? Elementary/middle/high schools or college?

My mom never went to school

- What is the native language of each of your parents/guardians?

My mom speaks Somali and Maay

- How many siblings do you have? How old are they? Do they speak English?

I have 3 sisters of age 17, 20, and 25. They speak English a little bit.

- How many languages are spoken in your house? List.

3 languages: Somali, Maay, and little English.

Suggested Interpretation:

Please carefully review what you have learned from the questionnaire and then look for factors that could be impeding the student's ability to satisfactorily progress in the classroom.

The student received very limited to no education and has limited academic skills in his language. Student who have less developed language and academic skills in their native language tend to acquire English more slowly than those whose native language skills are more developed.

However, the student seems to have social skills. He likes watching TV and read books in both English and Somali. In addition, his friends speak both languages as well. This is a good sign for teacher that a student will develop social English proficiency quickly.

The student is from Somalia which is not yet a technologically advanced culture. His mother never went to school. As a child he had to work to help her make a living. Students from lower socioeconomic levels or where technology is not a factor, usually learn through non-verbal means such as observation or practice.

Many Somali students lived in refugee camps before arriving to America. Stresses or traumas that refugees have may have experienced including physical health, social identity and even diet cause difficulties in concentration and memory dysfunction.

With all this information in hand, the teacher should understand that this student will take some time to progress in the ELL classroom. Please use the tables from *the How to Interpret the Results section* to make appropriate recommendations for placing ELL

students in the best program of instruction and make him succeed in American educational system.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Just because a student is not proficient in English does not mean that he or she is incapable of thinking, learning the grade-level curriculum, and mastering content areas. ELLs who are beginning English speakers may arrive in the class with an equal or even above grade-level background from their first language. When placing ELLs, educators must consider a variety of factors. Here are a few questions to ask:

- How much previous education does this student have in the United States and/or the home country?
- What are his or her language and literacy proficiency levels in English and in the native language?
- How much support is there at home for first language literacy and/or English development?

In addition to knowing what language an ELL student speaks at home, the teacher will need to find out about his or her education, literacy skills, and need to learn English. It helps immensely if ELL students know how to read in their native language and have content area knowledge native languages can easily transfer from one language to the other. Research tells us that when ELL students are fully literate in native language, they will learn how to read in English more quickly and will transfer some of their literacy skills from their first language to English.

ELLs do this particularly at the beginning stages of English proficiency; they lean on their first language knowledge to analyze patterns in English. It is very important to

allow ELLs to transfer these skills and express themselves in the language they know best. They will rely less on this transfer as they become proficient and comfortable in English.

It is also important to find out what ELL's oral communication and literacy levels are. First, the teacher needs to determine the student's ability to both speak and understand oral English. Can she or he carry on a social conversation and/or discuss academic content? If the student can communicate orally, can he or she read and write in English at grade level?

Again, an ELL teacher should take into account the differences between social English and academic English. Students who can understand and respond orally in English in a face-to-face conversation may not be proficient in academic written English or literate enough to be placed in a grade-level English classroom. It is one thing to have a conversation in English with classmates. But it is another thing to read in academic English and understand textbook presentations of content material in science, math, social studies, and language arts.

Once the teacher has assessed the student's level of language proficiency, it is time to assess his or her knowledge of content areas in English. Knowing the ELL's level of content area knowledge is another important part of determining the best placement for this student.

With all of this information in hand, the teacher's next step is making recommendations for placing ELLs in the best program of instruction.

Personal Experience:

I used “A Questionnaire for Incoming High School ELL Students” several times with my intermediate level ELL students. I asked them to answer questions in writing on their own and found out that most of them had hard time answering the questions and were confused. Next, I decided to conduct the same questionnaire one-on-one with each student, where I would ask the question and he or she would respond to it verbally. This time there was no confusion and the process of completing the questionnaire was easy.

I interpreted the results of each questionnaire and began to design lesson plans with these results in mind. A key goal is to understand the development of reading and writing in a second language (English), its precursors in early childhood, how we measure progress and what factors influence it, and to design, develop, and test instructional strategies.

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