

Glossary of Terms  
For  
English as a Second Language Programs

**Accommodations:** Changes to spoken or written language to make it comprehensible for ELLs.

**Active vocabulary:** Vocabulary words that students use when speaking or writing as opposed to receptive vocabulary which are the words that students understand when used by others.

**Adaptations:** Modifications in materials and instruction made for ELLs.

**Additive bilingualism:** Bilingual program that promotes the development and retention of students' first language as they learn a second language.

**Affective filter:** Also known as the emotional state, the affective filter may interfere with language acquisition because it involves public practice and speaking in front of others. The risk involved in public practice can produce anxiety that blocks the learner's ability to process new information. To counteract the affective filter, teachers can create an effective learning environment for ELLs that helps them integrate into their new school environment (e.g., provide a nonthreatening classroom experience and demonstrate to ELLs that their needs are understood.)

**Background knowledge:** Also called prior knowledge, this term refers to the background experience and knowledge that students bring to the classroom.

**BICS:** Basic interpersonal communication skills. The language ability required for verbal face-to-face communication.

**Biculturalism:** Near native-like knowledge of two cultures. Includes the ability to respond effectively in two cultures.

**Bilingual paraprofessional** (Associate Educator, Aide): ESL staff who collaborate with licensed staff, support ESL students with minimal supervision, and assists with second language and second culture families as needed.

**Bilingual program assistant** (Community Outreach Liaison): Serves as a communication link to ESL families and communities under the supervision of licensed staff.

**Bilingual teacher:** Instructs in a content area using both English and students' native language. A bilingual endorsement as well as a content area license are required.

**Bilingualism:** The ability to understand and use two languages in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

**Biliteracy:** The ability to read and write in two languages.

**CALP:** Cognitive academic language proficiency. The language ability required for academic achievement.

**CALLA - Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach:** A program model based on cognitive learning theory, CALLA integrates content-area instruction with language development activities and explicit instruction in learning strategies (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994). CALLA emphasizes active learning, in which students are given the skills and opportunities to take an active role in their own learning. Developed by Anna Uhl Chamot of George Washington University and J. Michael O'Malley, CALLA is being implemented in approximately 30 school districts in the United States and in several other countries. Chamot and O'Malley (1996) report that some studies in certain districts show ELL students in "high implementation CALLA classrooms performed significantly better" (p. 271) than ELL students in low-implementation classrooms on the use of procedures such as problem solving. They do, however, acknowledge that more research and formal program evaluations are needed. (*For more information see [www.gwu.edu/~calla/](http://www.gwu.edu/~calla/)*).

**Chunk:** Several words that are usually used together in fixed expressions, such as, "Hello, how are you?"

**CLD:** Culturally and linguistically diverse. A national-origin-minority student who is limited-English proficient.

**Communicative competence:** The ability to appropriately produce language both orally and in writing.

**Comprehensible input:** Understandable and meaningful language directed at second language learners that includes a range of planned strategies to give linguistic and contextual support.

**Comprehensible Output:** Creating opportunities for ELLs to practice speaking with their classmates at their level of competency.

**Content-based ESL:** 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 the medium of instruction.

**Cooperative learning:** Students from varied backgrounds and abilities work together in small groups.

**Cram school:** An after-school tutoring service that emphasizes skill building through rote memorization.

**Criteria for exit from ESL (Ohio):** Criteria that indicate a student has attained the required level of English proficiency to exit a district's LEP program:

- Achieve at the proficient level (composite score) on the OTELA.
- After achieving at the proficient level on the OTELA, one year of successful classroom performance where the language of instruction is English, OR

- Attainment of proficient or above on the OAT or OGT in reading and writing taken after achieving at the proficient level on the OTELA.

**Culture shock:** A normal stage that all newcomers to the U.S. experience. Being in a strange place and losing the power to communicate can disrupt one's world view, self-identity, thinking system, actions, and feelings. Most ELLs go through stages of culture shock before they are comfortable with the new language:

- Euphoric or Honeymoon Stage: During this stage, newcomers are excited about their new lives.
- Rejection Stage: At this stage, the differences between the new culture and the old one become more apparent to newcomers. They reject their new surroundings because there is so much they do not understand. Students at this stage may refuse to learn the new language. Some students become aggressive and act out their frustrations.
- Regression Stage: At this stage, ELLs are frustrated because they cannot communicate and are bombarded with unfamiliar surroundings, unreadable social signals, and a barrage of new sounds. They are homesick and miss their family, friends, and familiar sights and sounds.
- Integration Stage: In this stage, newcomers start to deal with differences between the old and new cultures. Parents may become alarmed at this stage because they do not want children to lose their L1 and culture.
- Acceptance Stage: Newcomers are now able to enter and prosper in the mainstream culture. They accept both cultures and combine them into their lives.

**Developmental bilingual education:** See Maintenance Bilingual Education

**Dual language program:** Also known as two-way or developmental programs, the goal of these bilingual programs is for students to develop language proficiency in two languages by receiving instruction in English and another language in a classroom that is usually part native English speakers and part native speakers of the other language.

**EFL:** English as a foreign language. A program to teach English to speakers in a non-English speaking setting.

**ELL:** English language learners. A national-origin-minority student who is limited-English proficient. This term is often preferred over limited-English-proficient as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits. English as a Second Language (ESL) and Bilingual are components of ELL.

**English Language Proficiency Levels (Ohio):**

Source of proficiency level descriptions: *Beginning to Advanced: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages* (TESOL), Inc., 1997, pp. 20-21.

Level 1, Emergent or Pre-functional

Students at this level may understand isolated words, some high-frequency social conventions, and simple directions, commands, and questions. They rely on nonverbal cues such as gestures and facial expressions, and frequent repetition and rephrasing to understand spoken language. In conversation, they may be able to provide basic information in response to requests and questions. They can ask one-or two-word questions without regard to structure and intonation.

Regarding reading and prereading skills, students at this level may demonstrate an understanding of concepts of print and begin to track print. They may be able to distinguish letters from other symbols. They can imitate the act of reading (holding a book and turning pages), however, they get meaning mainly through pictures. Students at this level participate in writing activities by drawing pictures. They may be able to copy letters or form them from memory and may be able to copy some words. They can imitate the act of writing but their text does not transmit a message. They may attempt to apply writing conventions but do so inappropriately or correctly only when copying.

### Level 2, Beginning

As LEP students' oral comprehension increases, they begin to imitate verbalizations by using single words or simple phrases and begin to use English spontaneously. They gradually construct more meaning from the words themselves but the construction is often incomplete. They are able to generate simple texts that reflect their knowledge level of syntax. These texts may include a significant amount of nonconventional features such as invented spelling, grammatical inaccuracies, pictorial representations, surface features and rhetorical patterns of native language.

### Level 3, Intermediate

At this level, students understand more complex speech, but still may require repetition. They acquire a vocabulary of stock words and phrases covering daily situations. They use English spontaneously, but may have difficulty expressing all their thoughts due to a restricted vocabulary and a limited command of language structure. Students at this level speak in simple sentences, which are comprehensible and appropriate but which often have grammatical errors. They may have some trouble comprehending and producing complex structures and academic language.

Proficiency in reading may vary considerably depending upon the learners' familiarity and prior experience with themes, concepts, genre, characters, and so on. They are most successful constructing meaning from texts for which they have background upon which to build. They are able to generate more complex text, a wider variety of text, and more coherent text than beginners.

### Level 4, Advanced

At this level, students' language skills are adequate for most day-to-day communication needs. Occasional structural and lexical errors occur. Students may have difficulty understanding and using some idioms, figures of speech and words with multiple meanings. They communicate in English in new or unfamiliar settings but have occasional difficulty with complex structures and abstract academic concepts.

Students at this level may read with considerable fluency and are able to locate and identify the specific facts within the text. However, they may not understand text in which the concepts are presented in a decontextualized manner, the sentence structure is complex, or the vocabulary is abstract. They can read independently, but may have occasional comprehension problems. They produce text independently for personal and academic purposes. Structure, vocabulary, and overall organization approximate the writing of native speakers of English. However, errors may persist in one or more of these domains.

#### Level 5, Proficient Trial-mainstreamed

At this final stage, students usually can participate in academic topical conversations without difficulty. In most cases, they can follow complex and multi-level directions without assistance, and they can understand oral information provided via electronic audio and video media. Students at this level usually speak English fluently in social and grade-level academic settings, and they control age-appropriate syntax and vocabulary in speech.

Generally, students read and understand factual information in non-technical prose as well as discussions on concrete topics related to special events. They comprehend standard newspaper items addressed to the general reader, correspondence reports and technical materials. At this level they can write short papers and clearly express statements of position, points of view and arguments. In their writing, they usually show control of varied sentence structures, spelling and vocabulary, expressing well-developed thoughts.

**ENL:** English as a New Language, the term used by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards in place of ESL or ESOL.

**ESL:** 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 L1.

**ESL teacher:** Develops students' social and academic English language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) using State Standards. Requires a TESOL (Teachers of English to Students of Other Languages) endorsement to existing license.

**ESOL:** English for Speakers of Other Languages.

**FEP:** Fully or fluent English proficient.

**Fossilization:** An error that becomes part of an English language learner's speech pattern.

**Heritage/Home/Primary language:** A student's native language.

**Haptics:** the study of who one is permitted to touch in different cultures.

**Informed parental consent:** The permission or refusal of parents to enroll their child in an ELL program after the parent is provided effective notice of the educational options and the district's educational recommendations.

**Interpreter:** "Interpreter" and "translator" are often used interchangeably, but they have different meanings. An interpreter conveys information from one language to another orally. A translator conveys information in the written form (Weber, 1990).

**L1:** Primary or native language learned and used first by students regardless of later proficiency in that language. Students may have multiple primary languages.

**L2:** Second language that is used in addition to the primary language.

**Language acquisition:** Picking up language through meaningful conversation that is similar to how children learn their first language. There is no formal study of grammar.

**Language dominance:** The measurement of the degree of bilingualism which implies a comparison of the proficiencies in two or more languages.

**LEA:** Language Experience Approach. An approach to reading instruction based on information and stories developed from students' personal experiences. The stories are written collaboratively by the teacher and the students, then the teacher and students read them together. The goal is for the students to associate the written form of English with the spoken form.

**Language minority students:** Students whose primary language is not the dominate language.

**Language proficiency:** The degree to which the student exhibits control over the use of language, including the measurement of expressive and receptive language skills in the areas of phonology, syntax, vocabulary, and semantics and includes the areas of pragmatics or language use within various domains or social circumstances. Proficiency in one language does not imply proficiency in other languages.

**LEP:** Limited-English-Proficient.

**LEP student:** In Ohio, HB 3 defines an LEP student as:

- between the ages of 3 and 21years,
- enrolled in an elementary or secondary school,
- having a language other than English as the native/home language, whether born in the U.S. or another country,
- having such difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English that the student may be unable to perform well enough in class or on state tests to meet expected state standards for achievement.

**Language learning:** In contrast to language acquisition, language learning is not communicative. This type of learning results from direct instruction about the rules of language. Learners have conscious knowledge of the new language and can talk about what they know.

They can memorize the rules of the language and succeed on tests, but may not have strong speaking or writing skills.

**Mainstream:** The placement of ELLs in regular education classes in which the language of instruction is the dominate language.

**Maintenance bilingual education (MBE):** Also late-exit bilingual education. This is a program that uses two languages, L1 and English, as a means of instruction. The instruction builds on the L1 skills and develops and expands the English language skills of each student to enable him/her to achieve proficiency in both languages while providing access to academic content.

**Mentor texts:** Texts that demonstrate different writing traits of writers. Teachers can use such texts to illustrate high-quality writing to students.

**Multilingualism:** The term can refer to an individual speaker who uses two or more languages or a community of speakers in which two or more languages are spoken.

**NEP:** Non-English proficient.

**Newcomer program:** Separate, relatively self-contained educational interventions designed to meet the academic and transitional needs of newly-arrived immigrants. Typically, students attend newcomer programs before they move into more traditional interventions.

**Non-verbal communication:** Physical communication such as gestures, facial expressions, and physical proximity that support oral communication.

**OAT:** Ohio Achievement Test. Administered to all Ohio students in public schools in grades 3-8. ELLs may be eligible for some waivers and accommodations depending on length of time in U.S. schools and level of proficiency in English as measured on a screener recognized by ODE or the OTELA.

**OGT:** Ohio Graduation Test. Administered to all students in public schools in grade 10 and beyond until the test is passed. ELLs may be eligible for some waivers and accommodations depending on length of time in U.S. schools and level of proficiency in English as measured on a screener recognized by ODE or the OTELA. Proficiency on the OGT is required for graduation, but not necessarily for entrance to colleges.

**OAT/OGT accommodations:** Allowances for LEP students on statewide tests (in Ohio) if identified as LEP using a formal assessment. For ALL LEP students, use of a dictionary and extended time (up to a day) to complete a subtest is an accommodation.

- LEP students enrolled in U.S. schools less than 3 years and who are at the intermediate or below level in both reading and writing as measured on the OTELA or an approved screener may receive one of the following accommodations on the OGT and OAT:
  - An English read aloud accommodation of allowable parts of the test (English audio CD),
  - A read aloud accommodation of allowable parts of the test,

- An oral translation of allowable parts of the test (foreign language CD if available in the student's language or a translator may be hired),
- A Spanish bilingual printed form of the test (for the OAT only).

**OTELA:** Ohio Test of English Language Acquisition. Administered to all identified ELLs in Ohio as required by No Child Left Behind. This test determines each student's level of English proficiency and is the basis for exit from an ESL program.

**Parent refusal:** Parents decline ESL services for which children qualify. Students are placed in mainstream programs without ESL support, but, in Ohio, students remain eligible for accommodations on statewide tests and must take the OTELA until exited from the ESL program.

**PEPSI:** the stages of second language acquisition (Krashen and Terrell, 1984): Pre-production, Early Production, Speech emergence, Intermediate and advanced fluency.

**PHLOTE:** Person whose Home Language is Other Than English

### **Program Models and Teacher Endorsement:**

- **Bilingual Education:** Teachers are licensed in a content area with bilingual endorsement. ELL students receive core curriculum instruction in L1, while developing English language skills in other classes.
- **ESL (English as a Second Language):** Teachers are TESOL-endorsed. A program of techniques, methodology, and curriculum designed to teach ELLs. ESL teachers provide instruction that focuses on developing English oral language, reading, and writing skills so that students can effectively meet content standards.
- **Native Language Literacy:** Teachers are licensed with bilingual endorsement or fluency in the language of instruction as determined by a national proficiency test. Language arts instruction focuses on developing oral language, reading and writing skills in the students' first language. Teachers fluent in students' native language provide instruction using instructional techniques, methodology, and curriculum in students' primary language.
- **One-way Dual Immersion:** Teachers are licensed with bilingual endorsement. ELLs are taught content in their first language. English language use is gradually increased until proficiency in both languages is reached.
- **Sheltered English:** Teachers are TESOL and Content licensed. ELLs receive core curriculum instruction through the use of modified English and scaffolding activities to ensure that materials is comprehensible and students have an opportunity to achieve standards at grade level.
- **Structured English immersion program:** The goal of this program is acquisition of English language skills so that the ELLs can succeed in an English-only mainstream classroom. All instruction in an immersion program is in English. Teachers have specialized training in meeting the needs of ELLs, possessing either a bilingual education or TESOL teaching credential and/or training, and strong receptive skills in the students' primary language. Also referred to as foreign/second language immersion.

- Submersion program: A submersion program places ELLs in a regular English-only program with little or no support services on the theory that they will pick up English naturally.
- Transitional Bilingual Education Program. Also known as early-exit bilingual education, this program uses the student's L1 for instruction. The program maintains and develops skills in the primary language and culture while introducing, maintaining, and developing English skills. The primary purpose of a TBE program is to facilitate the ELL's transition to an all English program.
- Two-way Dual Immersion: Also known as two-way bilingual education and dual language immersion. TWI provides integrated language and academic instruction for native English speakers and native speakers of another language with the goals of high academic achievement, first and second language proficiency, and cross-cultural understanding. Teachers are licensed with bilingual endorsement or fluent as determined by a proficiency test.

**Proxemics:** The study of spatial distances allowed between individuals in different cultures and situations.

**Plurilingualism:** Developing a degree of communication in a number of languages over a lifetime, not necessarily in a school setting.

**Realia:** Real-life objects that are used as visuals in language instruction.

**Receptive vocabulary:** Words that students understand when used by others.

**SDAIE:** Specifically Designed Academic Instruction in English. A type of sheltered English instruction that allows ELLs to progress in academic classes as they learn English. The language of instruction is adapted to the learners' English level.

**SIOP:** *Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol:* A program model for teaching grade-level content in a way that is understandable for ELL students while at the same time promoting their English language development. SIOP was developed by researchers at the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence in response to the variability, both in design and delivery, of sheltered instruction methods. It uses a variety of sheltering strategies in a unified, structured way. Research using a control group design has compared ELL students in classes whose teachers had been trained in implementing SIOP to a control group class (taught by teachers not trained in the SIOP model). ELL students in classes whose teachers had been trained in implementing SIOP outperformed control group students. *(See Echevarria & Short, 2003, for more information on the research.)*

**Subtractive bilingualism:** Learning a second language at the expense of the first or native language.

**Target language:** The language that the learner is trying to acquire.

**TESL:** Teaching English as a Second Language. Teacher training programs for teachers of ELLs.

**TESOL:** Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. The international professional organization for educators and administrators concerned with teaching English as a second or foreign language.

**Translator:** “Interpreter” and “translator” are often used interchangeably, but they have different meanings. A translator conveys information in the written form. An interpreter conveys information from one language to another orally (Weber, 1990).

**TPR:** Total physical response. Instruction that provides opportunities for students to develop language and conceptual understanding by physically doing an activity or engaging in the concept being taught.