Preparing the Way

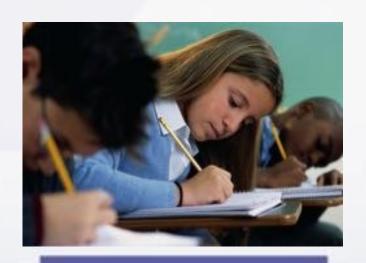## Teaching ELs in the Pre-K-12 Classroom

fourth edition

Edited by Jane M. Govoni, PhD & Cindy Lovell, PhD

Kendall Hunt Publishing

Chapter Nine
Using Proficiency Testing to Improve Instruction: WIDA Access for ELs

[ESSA](#) requires annual state-wide assessments.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), 2015

Research shows that testing ELs is more problematic than testing any other group of students.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, 2001

The primary goal of proficiency testing in U.S. mainstream classrooms is to determine at what level an EL can listen, speak, read, and write in English.

ESOL

Proficiency Testing

- **Discrete Point:**
  Language measured in small bits such as, multiple-choice or fill-in type questions
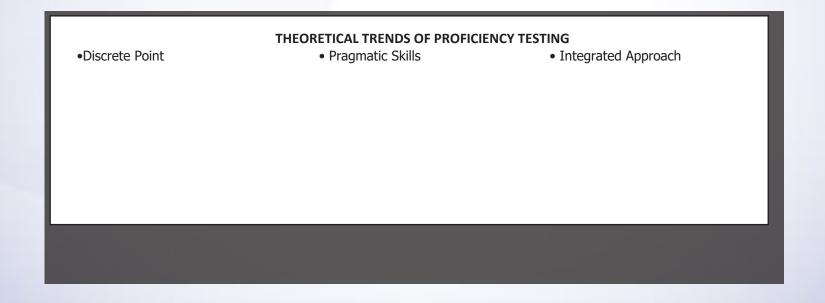
- **Integrated Approach:**
  Language viewed as an immediate use of skills such as, learning new vocabulary words by listening to a story and retelling it

- **Pragmatic Skill:**
  Language viewed as tasks that seek more 'real life' experiences, such as making inferences in story retell

ESOL

- Define proficiency testing and its three theoretical approaches in your own words.

THEORETICAL TRENDS OF PROFICIENCY TESTING

•Discrete Point • Pragmatic Skills • Integrated Approach

While many tests are used as both **proficiency** and **achievement**, this practice does not always result in an accurate measurement for both purposes.
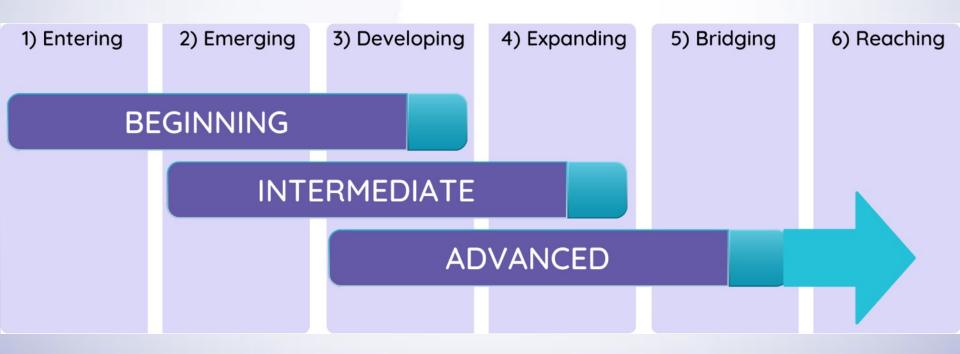
The ESOL population tends to be unstable, with ELs moving in and out of schools at a significant pace, either through improvements in their English proficiency or physical movements across states.

As a result, more and more states felt the impact of assessment and joined the **WIDA Consortium.**

WIDA provides language development resources, language standards, assessments, and professional learning opportunities to support the academic success of multilingual learners. WIDA proficiency levels are defined as:

1) Entering	2) Emerging	3) Developing	4) Expanding	5) Bridging	6) Reaching

BEGINNING

INTERMEDIATE

ADVANCED

WIDA Levels of Proficiency

ESOL

6 – Reaching	• specialized or technical language reflective of the content areas at grade level • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse as required by the specified grade level • oral or written communication in English comparable to English-proficient peers
5 – Bridging	• specialized or technical language of the content areas • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse, including stories, essays or reports • oral or written language approaching comparability to that of English-proficient peers when presented with grade level material
4 – Expanding	• specific and some technical language of the content areas • a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral discourse or multiple, related sentences or paragraphs • oral or written language with minimal phonological, syntactic or semantic errors that do not impede the overall meaning of the communication when presented with oral or written connected discourse with sensory, graphic or interactive support
3 – Developing	• general and some specific language of the content areas • expanded sentences in oral interaction or written paragraphs • oral or written language with phonological, syntactic or semantic errors that may impede the communication, but retain much of its meaning, when presented with oral or written, narrative or expository descriptions with sensory, graphic or interactive support
2 – Emerging	• general language related to the content areas • phrases or short sentences • oral or written language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that often impede the meaning of the communication when presented with one- to multiple-step commands, directions, questions, or a series of statements with sensory, graphic or interactive support
1 – Entering	• pictorial or graphic representation of the language of the content areas • words, phrases or chunks of language when presented with one-step commands, directions, WH-, choice or yes/no questions, or statements with sensory, graphic or interactive support • oral language with phonological, syntactic, or semantic errors that often impede meaning when presented with basic oral commands, direct questions, or simple statements with sensory, graphic or interactive support

Within sociocultural contexts for processing language...

Discourse Dimension	Sentence Dimension	Word/Phrase Dimension
Linguistic Complexity	**Language Forms and Conventions**	**Vocabulary Usage**

Level 6 - Reaching

English language learners will process a range of grade-appropriate oral or written language for a variety of academic purposes and audiences. Automaticity in language processing is reflected in the ability to identify and act on significant information from a variety of genres and registers. English language learners' strategic competence in processing academic language facilitates their access to content area concepts and ideas.

At each grade, toward the end of a given level of English language proficiency, and with instructional support, English language learners will process...

Level 5 Bridging	• Rich descriptive discourse with complex sentences • Cohesive and organized, related ideas across content areas	• A variety of complex grammatical structures • Sentence patterns characteristic of particular content areas	• Technical and abstract content-area language • Words and expressions with shades of meaning across content areas
Level 4 Expanding	• Connected discourse with a variety of sentences • Expanded related ideas characteristic of particular content areas	• Complex grammatical structures • A broad range of sentence patterns characteristic of particular content areas	• Specific and some technical content-area language • Words or expressions with multiple meanings across content areas
Level 3 Developing	• Discourse with a series of extended sentences • Related ideas specific to particular content areas	• Compound and some complex grammatical constructions • Sentence patterns across content areas	• Specific content-area language and expressions • Words and expressions with common collocations and idioms across content areas
Level 2 Emerging	• Multiple related simple sentences • An idea with details	• Compound grammatical structures • Repetitive phrasal and sentence patterns across content areas	• General content words and expressions, including cognates • Social and instructional words and expressions across content areas
Level 1 Entering	• Single statements or questions • An idea within words, phrases, or chunks of language	• Simple grammatical constructions (e.g., commands, Wh- questions, declaratives) • Common social and instructional forms and patterns	• General content-related words • Everyday social, instructional and some content-related words and phrases

ESOL

The WIDA levels of language proficiency are a continuation of a process based on Krashen's (1981) theory of second language acquisition, which includes **five hypotheses**.

1. Acquisition vs. Learning

2. Monitor Hypothesis

3. Natural Order

4. Input Hypothesis

5. Affective Filter

ACQUISITION vs. LEARNING

Acquired is a *subconscious* process similar to the way children acquire their first language.

Learned is the *conscious* knowledge about a language, i.e., knowing the grammar rules of a language.

ESOL

An internal set of explicit grammar rules ELs may use when they have **time to focus** on the accuracy of their utterances (e.g., when they write in English)

According to Krashen (2007), the monitor acts in planning, editing, and correcting when second language learners have met **3 specific conditions**:
(1) have sufficient time
(2) focus on form or think about correctness
(3) know the rules

[Krashen's Theory of SLA](#)

Grammatical structures follow a **natural order**. Some grammatical structures are acquired early, others later. This is independent of the learner's age, background, and conditions of exposure (Krashen, 2007).

Krashen's Theory of SLA
http://www.sk.com.br/sk-krash.html

(*i* + 1) HYPOTHESIS

Comprehensible Input (*i* +1)

A condition of language acquisition that takes place with a structure a bit beyond ELs' current level of language competence.

Progress along a 'natural order' when receive 'input' (*i*) that is **one step** beyond current stage of linguistic competence

ELs should be challenged through high expectations and varied opportunities to enhance their English skills and academic knowledge.

According to [Krashen]…

- Affective variables such as **motivation**, **self-confidence**, and **anxiety** play a role in classroom learning.

- Low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety can 'raise' the affective filter and form a 'mental' block.

- Acquisition best takes place in environments where anxiety levels are low.

9C
Activity!

PROFICIENCY

Name: _____

WIDA provides guides to understand ACCESS for ELLs scores. Visit this link on the WIDA website: https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/access/scores-reports. Review the 3 types of score reports. Identify their intended audience, and briefly describe them here in a "user-friendly" way that you would share with parents/families of ELs, administrators, etc.

Individual Student Report

Audience:

Description:

Student Roster Report

Audience:

Description:

Frequency Report

Audience:

Description:

WIDA ACCESS

ESOL

Every teacher must be able to effectively integrate assessment of content area knowledge with the development of English language proficiency.

Review these resources:

ESSA

WIDA Resources

www.esolinhighered.org