Opportunities for Policy Advancement for ELLs Created by the New Standards Movement

Delia Pompa and Kenji Hakuta
Rich language is a necessary part of all good classrooms, and it is increasingly so with the new standards.
Creating language-rich classrooms is a complex endeavor that requires a comprehensive approach that reforms all components of the educational system.
Policy Landscape
Administration priorities for waivers:

- College- and career-readiness
- Teacher effectiveness systems that include student performance
- Focus on lowest-performing schools
- Locally-designed school accountability systems
Issues and Opportunities:

- ELLs are at risk of being left behind or taught to lower expectations
- Leveraging Castañoeda to reinforce good theory and practice based on the Common Core could be effective
- Streamline the connection between content instruction and language instruction
Critical Policy Levers

• Ensure alignment of all key components of state systems with CCSS

• Develop and implement valid and reliable assessments for all students

• Move toward an assessment and accountability system that weighs and includes performance on English language proficiency and academic assessments

• Ensure teachers are provided with professional development to effectively teach ELLs

• Implement effective parent and community engagement strategies.
A Nation at Risk (1983)… call for standards.

Figure 1. Members of the National Commission on Excellence in Education with Terrel Bell (Secretary of Education) April 26, 1983.

Back Row: L. to R: Bill Baker, Robert Haderlein, Gerald Holton, Glenn Seaborg, Al Quie, Emeral Crosby, Charles Foster, and Anne Campbell

Front Row: L to R: Norman Francis, Annette Kirk, Margaret Marston, Yvonne Larsen, David Gardner, Terrel Bell, Jay Sommer, Shirley Gordon, and Frank Sanchez
No Child Left Behind: Three important pieces for ELLs

Sec. 1111(a)(3)(ix)(III) the **inclusion** of limited English proficient students, who shall be assessed in a valid and reliable manner and provided reasonable accommodations on assessments administered ... including, to the extent practicable, assessments in the language and form most likely to yield accurate data...

Sec. 1111(a)(3)(xiii) enable results to be **disaggregated** within each State, local educational agency, and school by...English proficiency status.

Sec 3113(b)(2) standards and objectives for raising the level of **English proficiency** that are derived from the four recognized domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, and that are **aligned with** achievement of the challenging State **academic content** and student academic achievement standards described in section 1111(b)(1).
Common Core State Standards
National Geographic:  George Steinmetz
The New Standards...

- raise the bar for content learning and highlight the role of construct-relevant disciplinary language.
- define language not just as in cognitive terms, but in terms of teacher-student and student-student discourse.
What do the New Standards Imply? Focus on Language

• “Students can, without significant scaffolding, comprehend and evaluate complex texts across a range of types and disciplines and they can construct effective arguments and convey intricate and multifaceted information” (ELA student portraits, p. 7)

• Mathematically proficient students understand and use stated assumptions, definitions, and previously established results in constructing arguments. They make conjectures, and build a logical progression of statements to explore the truth of their conjectures” (Math practices, pp. 6-7)
Science Practices focus on Language

Figure 3.1 The three spheres of activity for scientists and engineers (NRC Science Framework p.3-3)
Students are challenged to...

• engage in productive oral and written group work with peers,
• engage in effective oral and written interactions with teachers,
• explain and demonstrate their knowledge using emerging complex language and other communicative strategies in different settings, and
• extract meaning from complex written texts.
Old Paradigm

- Content
- Language

Venn Diagram:
- Content
- Language
- Mostly vocabulary, Grammar
New Paradigm

Content

Language

- Discourse
- Text (complex text)
- Explanation
- Argumentation
- Purpose
- Typical structure of text
- Sentence structures
- ΔVocabulary practices
New Paradigm

Math

Science

Language Arts

Discourse
Text (complex text)
Explanation
Argumentation
Purpose
Typical structure of text
Sentence structures
ΔVocabulary practices

Discourse
Text (complex text)
Explanation
Argumentation
Purpose
Typical structure of text
Sentence structures
ΔVocabulary practices

ΔVocabulary practices
Major Shifts in New Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELA</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Regular practice with complex text and its vocabulary</td>
<td>• Provide opportunities for student access to the different mathematical (discourse) practices described in the CCSS</td>
<td>• Developing and using models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Building knowledge through content-rich informational texts</td>
<td>• Support mathematical discussions and use a variety of participation structures</td>
<td>• Constructing explanations (for science) and developing solutions (for engineering)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emphasis on reading, writing, and speaking that is grounded in evidence from the text</td>
<td>• Focus on students’ mathematical reasoning, NOT on students’ flawed or developing language</td>
<td>• Engaging in argument from evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Systemic Challenges that Require Collaboration at All Levels

- Student
- Teacher
- Site and district leaders
- State leaders
- Preservice and inservice providers
- Testmakers
- Publishers
- Federal leaders
Understanding Language Initiative Launch!
April 11, 2012
We are pleased to announce the launch of our website and online community, Understanding Language.
READ MORE »

Knowledge and Resources Coming Soon!
March 30, 2012
The Understanding Language team is consolidating the knowledge generated from the January conference at Stanford. We will be releasing a series of white papers on this work along with a collection of practice and policy briefs addressing critical issues. We will also host a series of public webinars to engage educators on this work.
READ MORE »

Partnerships with the Council of Great City Schools and New York City Dept of Ed.
February 1, 2012
Understanding Language is pleased to announce partnerships with the Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) and New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) to develop principles of...
• Sharing and creating public dialogue with school districts around ELL-oriented Instructional exemplars and strategies for ELA, math, science;
• Sharing and creating public dialogue with school districts around ELL-oriented Instructional exemplars and strategies for ELA, math, science;

• Engaging with CCSS and ELP assessment consortia to optimize attention to construct-relevant language in the development of assessment systems;
• Sharing and creating public dialogue with school districts around ELL-oriented Instructional exemplars and strategies for ELA, math, science;

• Engaging with CCSS and ELP assessment consortia to optimize attention to construct-relevant language in the development of assessment systems;

• Focusing public policy discourse at national, state and local levels to support instruction and leadership that builds on attention given to the opportunities created by the new standards.