

Tracking and High School English Learners: Limiting Opportunity to Learn

Rebecca M. Callahan
University of Texas, Austin

Programs and policies related to the education of English learners are often based on the belief that fluency in English is the primary, if not sole, requirement for academic success. While English is in fact necessary for academic success in U.S. schools, so is a strong base in content-area academics. This study investigated the effects of track placement and English proficiency on secondary English learners' academic achievement while taking students' previous schooling and length of time enrolled in U.S. schools into account. In the case of a variety of outcomes, track placement was a better predictor of achievement than proficiency in English. Results indicate that track placement is a better predictor of English learners' academic performance than proficiency in English, highlighting the importance of quality instruction for English learners.

KEYWORDS: achievement, high school, limited English proficient, opportunity to learn, tracking.

One of the most significant demographic shifts affecting education in the United States is the burgeoning growth of students who speak a language other than English at home. Nearly one in five of school age youth speaks a language other than English in the home.¹ As of the 2002–2003 academic year, 10.2%² of all U.S. students were considered limited-English-proficient (LEP) students or English learners.³ In Grades K–12, English learner enrollment increased by more than 104% during the 1990s, while overall enrollment increased by only 13%.⁴ The bulk of the growth in the K–12 population can be attributed to students who are either immigrants or the children of immigrants. This demographic shift has been felt more profoundly in some areas of the country than in others. More than 40% of all California K–12

REBECCA M. CALLAHAN is a postdoctoral researcher at the Population Research Center, University of Texas, 1 University Station, G1800, Austin, TX 78712; e-mail: callahan@prc.utexas.edu. Her areas of specialization are the intersection of language and education policy, English learners, immigrant students, and adolescent academic development.

students speak a language other than English at home, and 26% are English learners.⁵ Nearly a third (31%) of California English learners are enrolled in Grades 7 to 12.

These demographic changes have drawn attention to a linguistic achievement gap: the difference in academic performance between English-proficient students and English learners (Thomas & Collier, 2002). English learners typically demonstrate poor academic achievement; for example, LEP students scored an average of 1.2 standard deviations below non-LEP populations in both the 1998 and 2002 eighth-grade National Assessment of Academic Progress reading tests. Whether LEP students' poor performance on these tests was the result of lack of academic preparation, lack of linguistic skills, or a combination of the two is open to debate (Lam, 1993; National Research Council, 1993). English learners enter U.S. schools with two tasks at hand: to learn English and to learn academic subject matter. When English learners achieve at low levels, the question then arises as to whether this is due to linguistic or academic proficiency issues.

Much of the research and theory regarding second-language acquisition involves adult second-language learners (Gass & Selinker, 2001), although the field continues to evolve. The research that does deal with school-aged English learners tends to focus on the elementary grades (Ramírez, 1992; Wong-Fillmore, 1991). This is not entirely untoward given that nearly two thirds of the English learner population is found in Grades K-6 (August & Hakuta, 1997; Kindler, 2002). However, the secondary population is growing (Ruizde-Velasco & Fix, 2000). New immigrants provide a constant influx of new English learners in addition to those students who remain in English learner programs owing to a lack of English and academic proficiency.

While educational policies in some states require only oral proficiency in English, others require that students demonstrate academic proficiency through grades and test scores (Lara, 2001). In California, for example, students must demonstrate academic proficiency through standardized achievement test results.⁶ Overly stringent policies have inadvertently created a class of English learners unable to exit English learner programs (Linguanti, 2001), especially if they do not exit during the elementary grades. Long-term English learners are those who remain designated as LEP after 5 or more years of enrollment in U.S. schools. Sixty-eight percent of the 7th- to 12th-grade students taking the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) in 2003 reported having been in California schools 7 years or more. While confusion between language proficiency and academic readiness poses a danger for English learners prematurely exiting from English learner programs (Cummins, 1984), the opposite also holds true. If the requirements for exit are too stringent, students can become caught in a vicious cycle. English learner programs often place students in modified instruction, which translates to less linguistically and academically rigorous instruction than mainstream instruction. In these classes, English learners fail to acquire the grade-level academic and linguistic competency necessary to exit English learner/LEP programs. Systematic tracking of English learners results in a lack of access

to high-quality content-area instruction, which in turn has linguistic, academic, and programmatic consequences.

Review of the Literature

Tracking and Academic Achievement

Research on K–12 education in U.S. schools has identified tracking as the assignment of students to differentiated coursework with varying levels of academic content. The theory behind tracking posits that low-performing students must be separated from other students and taught a simplified curriculum. This allows high-performing students to move ahead unhampered by their peers (Tyack, 1974). In theory, remedial curriculum and instruction will bring low-performing students up to par with their peers. In reality, low-track placement frequently results in exposure to less rigorous content and fewer learning opportunities than high-track placement. In short, low-track students fall further behind. Perhaps the most visible product of stratified curriculum and instruction is the much discussed achievement gap (Jencks & Phillips, 1998). The contention that course placement is not completely meritocratic (Lucas, 1999; Oakes, 1985) but, rather, the result of social and individual factors gives rise to numerous arguments against stratified instruction.

The issues surrounding tracking can be explored through the use of an input-process-outcome model. Equity issues surface in discussions of input procedures and the meritocracy of placement into tracks. During the input component, individual factors should count the most, yet it is here that the system is most likely to malfunction. As an ongoing process, tracking exposes students to different levels of academic content, academic discourse, and teacher quality. The process component is of most concern to the teachers and educators who develop programs and curricula. Instruction in high- and low-track classrooms produces different student outcomes. Academic outcomes are the most visible component of such a model; the U.S. school system is constantly ranked and evaluated on the basis of student performance. Recognizing tracking as a process model clarifies its social, academic, and linguistic effects on students, teachers, and schools.

Academic Content, Academic Discourse

Tracking persists today as a result of the belief that sorting students by “ability” and assigning curricula accordingly enhances learning; however, a wide range of studies dispute this claim (Gamoran, 1989; Hallinan & Kubitschek, 1999; Oakes, 1982). Academic content is tied directly to the instructional goals of the teacher, and expectations correlate highly with class content. The curricular structure in place in U.S. schools grants access to challenging academic opportunities to some while denying it to others (Lucas, 1999). Both track placement and mobility vary along racial lines (Lucas & Good, 2001), suggesting that placement is not wholly meritocratic.

In an investigation into the complexities of secondary school instruction, Raudenbush, Rowan, and Cheong (1993) found that it is not only the academic content of a class that varies according to track, but also the quality of the language and discourse. In particular, these authors noted a higher incidence of instruction in higher order thinking skills such as problem solving and critical analysis. This indicates that students in the corresponding classes are asked to think critically and question rather than to simply memorize a list of facts. Raudenbush et al. found a significant relationship between track placement and the teaching of higher order objectives across all content areas. If instructional strategies vary according to track, exposure to content-area-specific language will vary as well.

Quality of Student-Teacher Relationships: Attitudes and Expectations

Not only does the frequency of instruction in higher order thinking skills vary according to track, but Raudenbush et al. (1993) also found that teachers varied their attention to these skills depending on the level of the class being taught. This variation in attention suggests variation in attitudes and expectations as well, supporting the argument that students and teachers in low-track classrooms form weak relationships. Oakes (1985) found teachers and students to be much more positive in their appraisal of relationships in high- than in low-track classes. These positive relationships were shown to be part of a formula that results in high student achievement. A relationship with a single teacher is unlikely to determine a student's entire academic trajectory; however, a series of negative relationships cannot help but diminish a student's academic self-concept. Learning occurs most effortlessly in a supportive environment, and Oakes (1985) found that such environments are rare in low-track classrooms. Supporting this position is Valenzuela's (1999) inquiry into the schooling of immigrant and linguistic minority students in a Texas high school. As did Oakes, Valenzuela (1999) cited a lack of respect and understanding in low-track classrooms, a situation that contributes to students' sense of alienation and isolation.

The direct effect of teacher expectations on achievement is difficult to quantify; however, the relationship cannot be left untended. Ferguson (1998) demonstrated the role teachers' perceptions and expectations play in perpetuating the achievement gap. He argued, however, that simply stating that all students are capable learners will do little to improve achievement. Instead, he cited the need for improved instructional quality and pedagogy to maximize student achievement (Ferguson, 1998). The social and institutional constraints placed on teaching and learning within a tracked school system often hinder such developments.

Unequal Outcomes: Growth and Achievement

Perhaps the most unsettling aspect of tracking is the correlation between growth in achievement and track placement. Studying the effectiveness of mathematics intervention for low-achieving students, Gamoran, Porter, Smith-

son, and White (1997) found significantly lower rates of achievement growth among general-track students as opposed to those taking advanced-track classes. They found that the bulk of the growth was due to rigorous content-area coverage in college-preparatory coursework. Stevens (1999) also found that students learned at different rates in different tracks. Research shows that track placement accounts for the bulk of variation in both student growth and achievement, primarily as a result of greater content-area coverage (Carbonaro & Gamoran, 2002; Hallinan, 1994; Hallinan & Kubitschek, 1999; Lucas, 1999). In a review of the research on tracking, Slavin (1990) reported greater achievement among students placed in high as opposed to low academic tracks. This literature demonstrates the disconnection among individual "merit," placement, and eventual academic outcomes.

Access: Is Placement Meritocratic?

That students in high-track classrooms outperform their low-track counterparts is neither surprising nor cause for alarm in and of itself. Concern arises, however, when individual characteristics and school infrastructure, rather than merit, inform student placement (Hallinan, 1992). While a student's academic history is often the strongest predictor of placement, Hallinan (1992) argued that academic histories are the product of earlier background effects, themselves the results of previous placements. Dauber, Alexander, and Entwisle (1996) found that race and socioeconomic status have significant effects on initial middle school course placement, even when previous achievement is controlled. However, by the end of middle school, social background effects are no longer evident. Dauber et al. argued that these effects are displaced by those of initial placement and track immobility. If track placement is not meritocratic, as Lucas (1999) and others have posited, defense of a system that produces inequitable outcomes is problematic. The effect of track placement on academic achievement has yet to be examined for English learners who already experience a scholastic disadvantage owing to their limited English proficiency.

Tracking and English Learners

English learners experience U.S. schools and schooling differently than their native English-speaking counterparts. English learning educators often focus on teaching English to the extent that entry into content-area academics is delayed until "enough" English has been acquired (Minicucci & Olsen, 1992). As a result, English learners often find themselves on the periphery, physically and pedagogically outside of the richest academic discourse (Adger & Peyton, 1999; Katz, 1999). Researchers describe the English-as-a-second-language (ESL) learning environment as substandard, limited to low-level, remedial coursework meant to compensate for students' limited language skills (Harklau, 1999; Olsen, 1997). Outside of mainstream classrooms, English learners have little chance to interact in English with English-dominant students. In these environments, teachers' expectations are low, and negative student-teacher relationships prevail (Valenzuela, 1999). Not only do English learners struggle to

cross linguistic and academic borders, they must also contend with their physical positioning outside of the mainstream. Research has shown that ESL classrooms are often located on the periphery of if not outside the main school building (Katz, 1999; Olsen, 1997).

Academic Content and Academic Discourse

In an attempt to teach English learners content in the most efficient manner, teachers and administrators group them together in classrooms identifiable by the instructional strategies they are meant to implement. The most common classroom designations are sheltered content-area instruction and specially designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE). The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (1998) defines SDAIE as "a set of systematic instructional strategies designed to make grade-level and advanced academic curriculum comprehensible to English learners with intermediate English language proficiency" (p. 2). In theory, instructional strategies in these classes are meant to scaffold content for English learners. Critics argue, however, that they are taught at a slower pace and cover less content than their mainstream counterparts (Minicucci & Olsen, 1992). Covering less material and simplifying the content covered limits students' exposure to the academic language specific to each subject area.

Without exposure to the language of scientific inquiry, for example, English learners are hard pressed to acquire the linguistic skills necessary to both gain and demonstrate competency in scientific exploration. The practice of simplifying academic content and language limits English learners' experiences with and development in these content areas (Harklau, 1999; Katz, 1999). In her analysis of the educational experiences of English learners, Harklau (1994) found that exposure to oral and written genres varied by track. Those English learners who negotiated entry into high-track classes became versed in complex discourse skills, while those who remained in low-track classes learned to repeat and respond at a very superficial level. The divergence of English learners' discourse skills at the end of the term illustrates the academic impact of track placement on their development.

Teacher Expectations

The rationale for exposing English learners to a less challenging curriculum resides in educators' beliefs about linguistic as well as academic abilities. Teachers, principals, and counselors frequently, though perhaps inadvertently, interpret limited English proficiency as a form of limited intelligence and place students in low-track classes to compensate for this perceived deficiency. Katz (1999) found that track placement not only determined access to academic and linguistic content but also influenced teachers' beliefs about and treatment of students. Katz argued that teachers' low expectations of English learners combined with school administrators' open preference for high-track gifted and talented students "resulted in institutionalized racism against Latino immigrant students" (p. 823). Placed in low-track classes, English learn-

ers find that teachers expect little of them academically (Olsen, 1997; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995; Valenzuela, 1999). Often, when little is expected, little is produced.

Academic Outcomes

Qualitative literature links the overall low academic performance of minority and linguistic minority students to less than optimal learning environments, low-level academic content, and poor teacher-student relationships (Olsen, 1997; Valenzuela, 1999; Vigil, 1997). These contexts are exacerbated for English learners in ESL learning environments. Katz's (1999) analysis of the tracking processes present in a middle school shows how English learners are placed in low-track classes with little expected of them, assigned to a physically isolated site, and taught by underprepared teachers in classrooms with limited materials. In such a setting, academic needs cannot help but be left untended. As did Katz, Valenzuela (1999) and Olsen (1997) portrayed physically, academically, and socially isolated school contexts for immigrant, minority, and linguistic minority students. This research brings the theme of inequitable opportunity to learn to the forefront; future studies are necessary to provide a better understanding of the academic consequences of the widespread implementation of these practices.

In addition to ethnographic research, quantitative analyses of the relationships among language proficiency, placement, and achievement have attempted to isolate the effect of English learner/LEP status on academic outcomes. Wang and Goldschmidt (1999) found that while students placed in minimum standards courses scored below all other students, the effect of low-track placement was strongest among English learners. They also found that "the marginal effect of being classified as LEP changes depending upon whether the student was enrolled in a minimum standards mathematics course" or high-level coursework (Wang & Goldschmidt, 1999, p. 108). The effect of English learner status on academic performance was minimized among those students placed in higher track classes, suggesting heightened sensitivity to the quality of academic exposure for these students. These findings imply that, given access to higher quality curricula, English learners will rise to meet the challenge.

English Learner Cohorts: Does Tracking Maintain LEP Status?

The discussion thus far has dealt with the placement of English learners as a group; by no means does this suggest that English learners are a homogeneous group with a single set of academic and linguistic needs. Previous research has outlined at minimum three English learner cohorts, defined on the basis of length of residency and schooling prior to immigration, at the secondary level. By far, the largest group in California comprises long-term English learners, who make up approximately two thirds of the population. The remainder of the secondary English learner population is made up of recent immigrants

with either low or high levels of previous schooling (Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri, 2002; Olsen & Jaramillo, 1999).

The academic and linguistic requirements of each of the three cohorts are unique. Recent immigrants with significant amounts of previous schooling have mastered grade-level academic content and often require instruction only in English literacy skills. Having missed more than 1 year of academic instruction in their home country, recent immigrants with limited schooling require literacy skill development *and* content-area instruction in order to access the high school curriculum. Schooled primarily in the United States, long-term English learners are generally orally proficient but have poor reading and writing skills and little control of academic English (Faltis & Wolfe, 1999; Harklau, Losey, & Siegal, 1999). Many long-term English learners are unable to exit from LEP programs because their academic achievement is not at grade level (Gándara & Merino, 1993; Linqunti, 2001). The 7-year cutoff used draws from the literature indicating that learning a second language requires 6 years or more (Collier, 1987; Cummins, 1984; Ramírez, 1992). Regardless of the academic and linguistic needs of each cohort, tracking English learners limits access to academic and linguistic models and input. Placement in low-track classes contributes to the perception of English learners as "limited": limited in language, knowledge, skills, and cultural competencies.

It has been hypothesized that exposure to academic content and pedagogy, for example laboratory science as opposed to lecture, affects English learners' academic achievement. As school personnel work to provide academic and linguistic programs for a growing English learner population, the question remains as to how to best meet the needs of these students. Much of the literature treats English learners as a homogeneous group, minimizing the effects of length of residency and previous schooling and regarding English language proficiency as a dichotomous variable: Either one is an English learner, or one is not. By analyzing the effects of track placement both by English learner cohort and by language proficiency level, this study hopes to answer the question "Does track placement or English proficiency predict the academic achievement of high school English learners?"

Method

Data were collected from a rural high school in northern California at which the researcher had previously worked as a resource teacher. With respect to program offerings and student composition, both the school and district are representative of the rural, working-class, and agricultural high schools that English learners are likely to attend. Demographic and student achievement data were collected from the school's student database. Internal English-language development (ELD) department records supplied the data regarding previous schooling and grade at immigration.

Approximately 2,000 students were enrolled in the participating high school, 32.3% of whom spoke a language other than English at home. Statewide, 34.6% of all California secondary students are not native English

speakers.⁷ Sixteen percent of the school's students were limited in terms of English proficiency, as are 16.1% of all 9th- to 12th-grade students in California. The remainder of the language minority student population was considered fluent in terms of English proficiency.

Sample Composition

The sample ($N = 355$) consisted of the school's entire English learner population in the spring of 2002. Slightly more than half (55%) of the students were male; 42% were in 10th grade, 37% were in 11th grade, and 21% were in 12th grade. Eighty-nine percent were Spanish speakers, as are 84% of the English learners in California. The remaining English learners spoke one or more of 11 other non-English languages. The two next most prominent languages were Punjabi and Urdu, the reason being that the study site is located in a valley area that is host to a large immigrant farming population from both Pakistan and the Punjab region of India.

English learners fell into one of three distinct cohorts defined according to both length of residency and previous schooling: long-term English learners, recent immigrants with high amounts of previous schooling, and recent immigrants with limited previous schooling. In 2002, 60% of the 205,025 California English learners in Grades 9–12 for whom data were reported on the CELDT had been enrolled in California schools for 5 years or more. Likewise, 60% of the students in the present sample were long-term English learners.

Variables

All individual and achievement data were collected from the school site's student database. Students' grade, gender, English learner level, track placement, and all academic achievement data were collected from the general school database, while data on English learner cohort, years of residence in the United States, and previous schooling were collected from department records. Descriptive statistics in regard to the dependent and independent variables are shown in Table 1.

Dependent Variables

As a means of best capturing academic performance, a number of achievement measures were collected from the schoolwide database: grade point average (GPA), number of credits, standardized language and mathematics test scores, and both SAT9 and California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) scores. GPA data included academic as well as nonacademic classes; honors or advanced placement classes used in the present analysis were not weighted. A credit ratio was calculated for each student at the end of the semester by dividing the number of credits completed during the student's high school tenure by the number attempted. Because the SAT9 is not administered in Grade 12, 11th-grade SAT9 reading and math scores were used for 12th-grade students. At the time of this study, CAHSEE language arts and math scores were available only for the 10th-grade cohort.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Dependent and Independent Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Minimum	Maximum
Outcome				
GPA	1.99	0.88	0.00	4.00
Proportion of credits passed	.84	.18	.00	1.00
SAT9 reading (NCE)	30.09	9.01	1.00	61.00
SAT9 math (NCE)	15.52	5.06	2.00	36.00
CAHSEE language (scale score)	331.56	18.81	290.00	385.00
CAHSEE math (scale score)	320.57	19.11	254.00	378.00
Predictor				
Track placement	.31	.15	.00	.83
EL level	3.77	1.43	1.00	5.00
Female	.45	.50	.00	1.00
Grade 10	.42	.50	.00	1.00
Recent immigrant	.40	.49	0.00	1.00
Limited previous schooling	.12	.32	0.00	1.00

Note. NCE = normal curve equivalent.

Independent Variables

Six independent variables were included. *Grade level* was coded as a dummy variable contrasting Grade 10 students with those in Grades 11 and 12. None of the measures of academic achievement varied significantly between Grades 11 and 12, but the results for students in these two grades combined proved significantly different from those of students in Grade 10. *Female gender* was also coded as a dummy variable.

English-language proficiency level, determined according to site-level measures of performance, was coded as an ordinal variable ranging from 1 to 5. Educators in the district from which this sample was taken had developed a set of English-language exit criteria before the implementation of the CELDT exam. These criteria corresponded to the state-adopted ELD standards and were used to determine placement. To exit from a given level, a student was required to demonstrate oral proficiency commensurate to that level and to pass both reading and writing assessments aligned to the standards. The literacy assessments were scored according to a rubric aligned with the state ELD standards. The ELD team teachers met every semester to score students' reading and writing assessments and determine the placement of any students who might be considered borderline. Although most changes in level were made at the end of an academic year, students' schedules were designed to allow for semester changes if necessary.

Originally, I intended to use CELDT overall language proficiency scores as a proxy for English proficiency level; however, as a result of a variety of factors inherent to the first administration of a new assessment, approximately a third (33.4%) of the most advanced English learners (those at Levels 4 and 5)

failed to attain a passing score on the CELDT⁸ (Green, Boyer, Connely, Hayter, & Kelley, 2003). Given that these advanced English learners had previously passed oral English assessments and met reading and writing requirements corresponding to the state ELD standards, the distribution of CELDT results seemed questionable. As a consequence, it was my opinion that the locally designated English proficiency level would be a more reliable, comprehensive measure of students' language proficiency than the relatively new CELDT scores.

Track placement was defined according to the proportion of classes on a student's transcript that met college entry requirements. If a student is to graduate from high school eligible for entry into a 4-year university in California, two thirds of his or her coursework, on average, must meet college entry requirements. This ratio provides a general estimate of students' exposure to rigorous academic content and their opportunity to learn.

Parameters set forth by Olsen and Jaramillo (1999) and adapted by Freeman et al. (2002) were used in defining *English learner cohorts*. The state of California defines immigrant students who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than 3 years as recent immigrants; however, English learners are expected to advance approximately one level per year and thus gain proficiency within approximately 5 years (Warren, 2004). The decision to include students who had been enrolled in U.S. schools 5 years or less in the recent immigrant sample was made so as to align the definition of the sample with the implicit and explicit expectations of both ELD programs and standards (California Department of Education, 2002). Educators and policymakers following the state guidelines for instructing English learners expect students to progress at minimum one level per year, completing the five levels in so many years (Warren, 2004); students who remain limited in regard to English-language proficiency beyond the 5-year cutoff are perceived to be problematic. Defining recent immigrants as only those students enrolled 3 years or less would result in the premature exit of students English learner educators view as in need of English learner programs. Furthermore, there is a broader literature involving the linguistic, social, and academic development of students constrained by the structures inherent in school contexts (Freeman et al., 2002; Olsen & Jaramillo, 1999) that defines recent immigrants as students who have enrolled in the U.S. school system within the past 5, rather than 3, years. A goal of this study was to build on that literature.

As mentioned, three English learner cohorts were identified for this study: long-term English learners, recent immigrants with a high amount of previous schooling, and recent immigrants with limited previous schooling. *Recent immigrant* status was coded as a dummy variable indicating that a student had been enrolled in U.S. schools for 5 years or less; for the purposes of this analysis, all remaining students were identified as long-term English learners. *Limited previous schooling* was also coded as a dummy variable, in this case indicating that a student had missed more than 1 year of schooling before entry into the secondary system. Neither long-term English learners nor recent immigrants with a high amount of previous schooling had missed a year or more of coursework before entry into the secondary system. Distributions of English

learners according to cohort and level are presented in Table 2. Recent immigrants were spread relatively evenly across the five EL levels, and long-term English learners were clustered at the higher levels.

Data Analysis

A series of linear regression models were estimated for each academic outcome. Initially, models included interaction terms for all of the key variables; however, if it was determined that an individual interaction term was not sufficiently significant alone to merit inclusion in the final model, it was subsequently removed. Ultimately, none of the interaction terms were found to be significant, and, as a result, none were included in the final models. Student variables were fit to the following regression equation for each academic achievement outcome: $\beta_0 + \beta_1$ Track Placement + β_2 English Proficiency Level + β_3 Grade10 + β_4 Gender + β_5 Recent Immigrant + β_6 Limited Previous Schooling + e (where e refers to the unobserved error). The regression models were then used to identify the significant predictors and the amount of variance in a given academic outcome accounted for by each of these predictors.

Results

Track Placement as a Predictor of Academic Achievement

While learning English is obviously necessary and important for long-term academic success, results from this study suggest that it is neither the sole nor the primary determinant of academic success for English learners; the situation is much more complex and varied. As illustrated in Table 3, track placement proved to be significant in predicting all four non-language-based academic outcomes. In contrast, English proficiency level was significant only in predicting performance on the two language-based academic achievement measures: SAT9 reading and CAHSEE language arts.

Table 2
Percentage Distribution of English Learners by Cohort and Level

EL level	Long-term EL (59.6%)	Recent immigrant: low previous schooling (11.8%)	Recent immigrant: high previous schooling (28.7%)	Total
Level 1	0.5	23.8	24.5	10.4
Level 2	4.7	33.3	25.5	14.0
Level 3	6.1	19.0	23.5	12.6
Level 4	18.9	2.4	11.8	14.9
Level 5	69.8	21.4	14.7	48.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note. EL = English learner.

Table 3
**Regression Estimates for Track Placement, English Learner (EL) Level,
 and Demographic Variables**

Measure	GPA	Credits	SAT9 reading	SAT9 math	CAHSEE language	CAHSEE math
Constant	1.511** (0.18)	0.827** (0.04)	15.638** (2.09)	9.104** (1.23)	289.659** (8.11)	293.004** (9.26)
Track placement	0.279** (0.28)	0.205** (0.06)	0.140 (3.10)	0.274** (1.85)	0.249 (12.08)	0.317* (13.53)
EL level	-0.112 (0.04)	-0.173 (0.01)	0.467** (0.46)	0.181 (0.27)	0.403** (2.04)	0.158 (2.30)
Gender	0.156* (0.08)	0.138* (0.02)	0.022 (0.87)	-0.123 (0.53)	0.115 (3.15)	-0.035 (3.59)
Recent immigrant	0.394** (0.12)	0.213* (0.03)	-0.002 (1.28)	0.281** (0.77)	0.026 (4.41)	0.293 (4.88)
Low previous schooling	-0.187** (0.14)	-0.128 (0.03)	-0.010 (1.54)	-0.148* (0.90)	-0.035 (6.99)	0.052 (8.22)
Grade 10	-0.134* (0.08)	-0.136* (0.02)	-0.063 (0.87)	0.166* (0.53)	— ^a	— ^a
Adjusted R^2	.313	.168	.282	.188	.315	.147
<i>N</i>	355	355	327	329	109	109

Note. Values are standardized coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

^aCAHSEE results were available only for students in Grade 10 at the time of this study.

* $p < .01$. ** $p < .001$.

Interaction of Track Placement and English Proficiency Level

Data on grades and cumulative GPAs were collected for all students in all of their classes, both those perceived to be linguistically demanding, such as English and social science, and those that could conceivably be less linguistically complex, such as math and science. It could be argued that the linguistic demands of English learners' classes are relatively low and that, as such, English proficiency level should influence neither individual course grades nor overall GPA. If this were true, one would expect relatively little variation in the proportion of As and Bs, as opposed to Ds and Fs, earned by English learners at all levels. It is evident in Figure 1 that this was clearly not the case. More than half of the grades earned by beginning English learners (those at Levels 1 and 2) were As and Bs, as opposed to a quarter of those earned by advanced English learners (those at Levels 4 and 5).

An alternative explanation for this disparity in proportion of passing grades may have more to do with academic expectations than with linguistic complexity. The level of academic performance teachers expect may better predict a student's grade than language proficiency. Teachers at the study school frequently noted that an SDAIE course offered for beginning English learners involved lower academic demands than its mainstream counterpart. It was not surprising, then, that teachers reported expecting less academi-

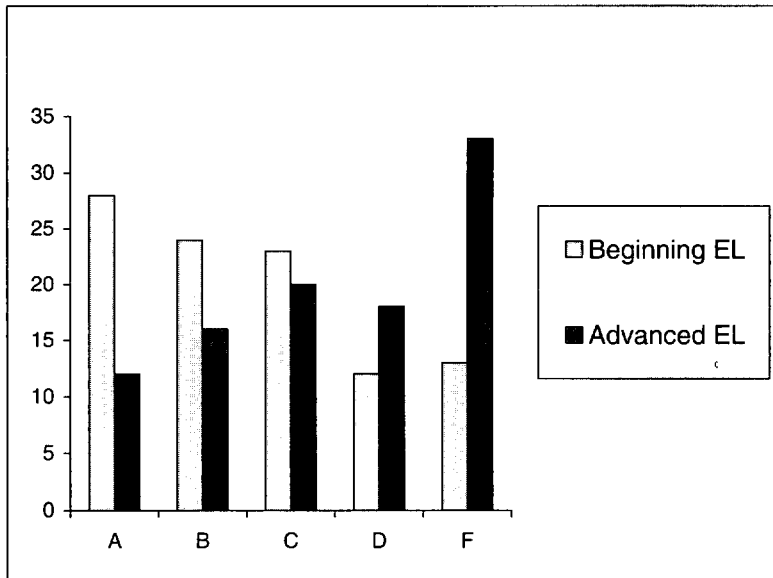


Figure 1. Grade percentages by English learner (EL) level.

cally from beginning as opposed to advanced English learners, perhaps grading the first group higher as a result. At the advanced levels, students begin to demonstrate some of the language proficiency skills required to exit English learner programs; however, this is the same point in time at which they are moved into mainstream coursework. Confronted with high expectations that they are academically ill equipped to meet, advanced English learners begin to earn poorer grades. The change from low expectations at the early English proficiency levels may contribute to the poor academic performance among advanced English learners.

The relationship between English proficiency level and track placement is illustrated in Figure 2. A student preparing to enter a 4-year university in California should have a track placement ratio of 0.67 at minimum (as mentioned earlier, approximately two thirds of the student's secondary coursework must meet college entry requirements). Only a few students, less than 2% of the sample, took a sufficient number of college-preparatory courses to be eligible to apply for admission into a 4-year university; whether these courses were actually the ones required and whether the students earned a passing grade in the courses are entirely different questions. Figure 2 shows that the two highest-track placement ratios were for Levels 1 and 5, and the lowest was for Level 3. There were no significant differences in college-preparatory enrollment among Levels 1, 4, and 5; however, the difference between Level 5 and both Level 2 and Level 3 ($p < .000$) was significant. The two independent variables, English proficiency level and track placement, correlated ($r = .268$) at

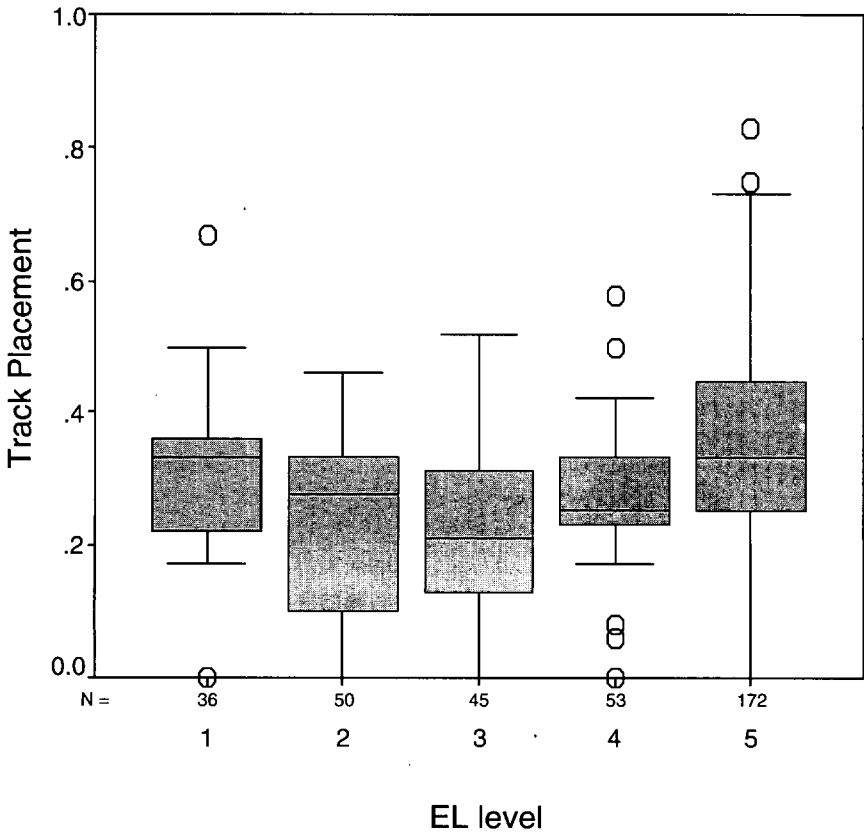


Figure 2. Track placement by English learner (EL) level.

these middle levels but not at the outer ends of the spectrum. As a result, English proficiency level and track placement were treated as independent so that each set of issues could be addressed individually.

English Learner Cohort

As demonstrated in Table 4, academic achievement varied greatly according to English learner cohort. Mean scores for long-term English learners fell below those of both recent immigrant cohorts on three of the six academic achievement outcomes: GPA, credit ratio, and CAHSEE mathematics. In addition, their SAT9 math scores were significantly lower than those of recent immigrants with a high amount of previous schooling. On SAT9 total reading, however, long-term English learners earned significantly higher scores than either recent immigrant cohort. Recent immigrants with a high amount of previous schooling scored significantly higher than the two other cohorts on three

Table 4
Mean Scores by English Learner (EL) Cohort

Measure	Long-term EL	Recent immigrant: high previous schooling	Recent immigrant: low previous schooling
GPA	1.70	2.59***	2.01
Credits	.80	.93*	.85
SAT9 math	15.15	17.05**	14.05
SAT9 reading	32.19***	26.61	26.06
CAHSEE language	334.35	323.27	325.43
CAHSEE math	318.47	324.96	330.00
<i>N</i>	212	102	42

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

measures: GPA, credit ratio, and SAT9 total math. There were no significant differences in performance on the high school exit examination according to English learner cohort.

As is the case with English proficiency level, English learner cohort is believed to interact with track placement to some degree, as illustrated in Figure 3. English learner cohort was found to be significant in predicting academic achievement in both content-area and language-based measures, while English proficiency level was significant only in predicting achievement on the two language-based outcomes, SAT9 reading and CAHSEE language arts. Long-term as opposed to recent immigrant status proved to be significant in predicting performance in terms of grades, credits, and SAT9 math. In addition, limited previous schooling was significant in predicting performance in regard to SAT9 math and GPA. It can be seen from Figure 3 that recent immigrants with a high amount of previous schooling enrolled in a slightly higher proportion of college-preparatory coursework; however, as indicated by the dotted line, the means and top quartiles for all three cohorts fell well below the 0.67 minimum ratio necessary for college eligibility.

It was originally hypothesized that, despite the preference in program models for an English-language acquisition focus, academic preparation might be a stronger predictor of English learners' academic achievement than language proficiency. The present findings suggest that this is in fact true in the case of secondary English learners. The significant differences in academic performance according to English learner cohort support an argument for instructional quality over linguistic quantity. Recent immigrants with a high amount of previous schooling enrolled in slightly higher level content-area classes than long-term English learners, even though the latter had been exposed to much more English instruction over the course of their schooling (see Figure 3). The strong academic performance of these recent immigrants, measured in terms of GPA, credits, and math scores, points to

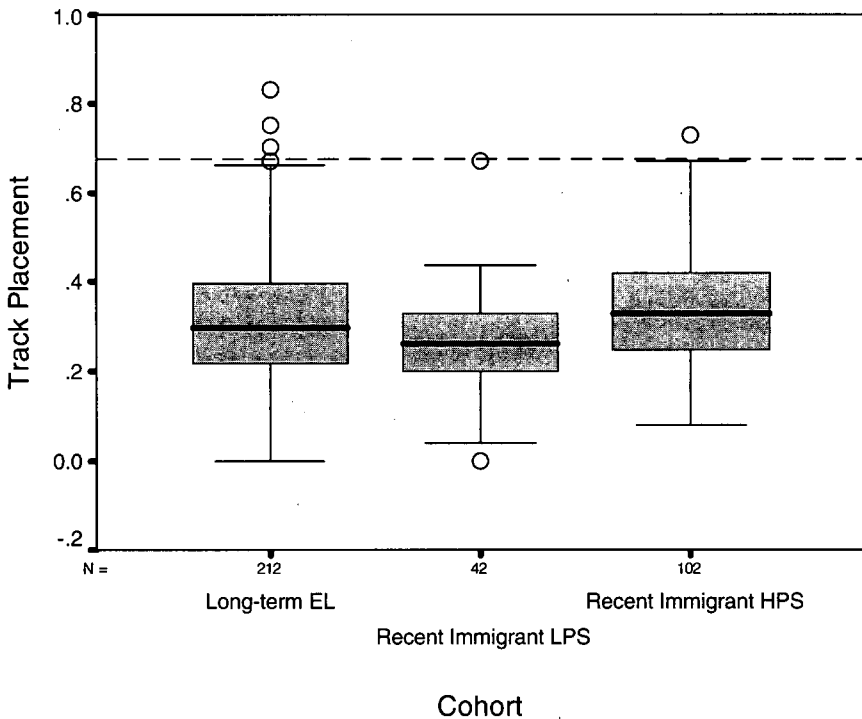


Figure 3. Track placement by English learner (EL) cohort. LPS = low level of previous schooling; HPS = high level of previous schooling.

the importance of academic preparation and previous schooling over English-language proficiency in certain areas. This is not to say that developing English-language proficiency is not important for English learners; rather, these students benefit from access and exposure to high-quality content-area instruction as well.

Discussion

Low-Level Content, Low Expectations

As evidenced by the overall absence of placement in college-preparatory curricula across this sample, many English learners find themselves enrolled in low-track curricula with limited exposure to either the content or discourse necessary to enter into higher education. Placement is affected by a variety of factors, not the least of which is lack of knowledge of school processes. Frequently, English learners are inadequately informed as to the breadth of their choices and the consequences of taking one class over another (DeLany, 1991; Romo & Falbo, 1996). For example, science classes meeting college entry requirements involve hands-on laboratory work, experiments, and active

exploration, while English learner and SDAIE versions of the same coursework are not college preparatory, do not incorporate laboratory work, and are primarily lecture and textbook based (Riverbend High School, 2001). Barely 15% of the students in the present sample had taken one or more college-preparatory science courses during their secondary tenure. The remaining English learners had completed only science coursework that was not college preparatory, if they had completed any science coursework at all. In addition, anecdotal discussions with content-area teachers at the school indicated that course sections designed for English learners covered less material than mainstream sections, college preparatory or not. Parrish et al. (2002) have presented evidence of diminished content coverage among English learners relative to mainstream students.

Research has shown that students enrolled in non-college-preparatory curricula find school boring, undemanding, and disengaging (Oakes & Lipton, 1999; Stevens, 1999). When students discover that little is expected of them, they respond by performing at lower levels (Chunn, 1989; Fritzberg, 2001; Gamoran, 1989; Stevens, 1999). Expecting high levels of performance even from students at the earliest English proficiency levels sets the precedent for academic development.

More Than Just Language: The (De)Construction of English Learners as Scholars

Policymakers, practitioners, and the public have long recognized that English learners enter schools with an educational disadvantage; that fact remains undisputed. The general assumption, however, is that the primary disadvantage is one of language. I argue that the situation is much more complex and that, until we clearly understand the interdependence of language and academic preparation, English learners will face substantial academic *and* linguistic disadvantages regardless of their point of school entry. To initiate discussions of academic parity, policymakers and practitioners alike must begin to view English learners as competitors in the academic arena.

Currently, the deficit model dominates the discourse on English learners; that is, language is a liability. The terminology used to discuss English learners hinges on a shared understanding of the overarching importance of the English language and its acquisition. Terms such as *English learner*, *LEP*, *sheltered English*, *specialty designed academic instruction in English*, *English learner advisory committee*, and *English language acquisition program* all define students with respect to linguistic deficiency. Constructions of English learners as deficient, bilingual programs as compensatory, and ESL classrooms as linguistic rather than academic speak to the marginalization of English learners in U.S. schools.

By no means do I argue that acquisition of English is not critical for immigrant students and other students who are not native English speakers. Rather, I propose two key areas in need of instructional reform: (a) the variety of Eng-

lish language being taught and (b) the rigor of the academic preparation available to English learners. Because they are not native English speakers, English learners require explicit instruction in the genre of academic English used in scientific reports, court documents, public information articles, and the like. Exposure to domain-specific language facilitates content-area understanding, bringing English learners to the academic forefront.

While EL programs have been found to lack academic rigor (Katz, 1999), research and theory suggest that this need not be the case (Chamot, 1995). Both Walqui's (2000) and Nadelstern's (1986) descriptions of the successful English learner program at New York City's International High School demonstrate effective integration of content-area curricula and English-language acquisition strategies for recent immigrants.

English Learner Cohort

On the basis of a popular belief that fluency in English must be achieved *before* academic immersion, schools tend to process English learners in ways that marginalize them linguistically and academically (Valdés, 1998, 2001). At the elementary level, California state policy dictates learning English through instruction in English, with no mention of mathematics, science, or social science (State of California, 1998). One foreseeable outcome of prioritizing English instruction over content in the elementary grades is the production of a class of long-term English learners often referred to as "lifers" (Faltis & Wolfe, 1999; Harklau et al., 1999).

Academically unprepared to participate in a rigorous high school curriculum, these long-term English learners are caught in a cycle of underpreparation (Scarcella, 1996). During elementary school, they focus on acquiring the English necessary to survive in an English-only classroom, while their native-English-speaking peers develop math, science, and literacy skills. Testimony of the failure of English-only programs to meet the academic needs of English learners resides in the fact that 94% of the long-term English learners in the present sample participated in an English-only curriculum for 70% or more of their elementary school years. Currently of high school age, these students are behind academically and lack the skills necessary to exit English learner programs.

Not only do long-term English learners have significantly lower GPAs than recent immigrants, but years enrolled in U.S. schools also correlates negatively with GPA. Their poor academic performance reflects the high incidence of alienation documented among long-term English learners and members of other minority groups, especially Latinos, in U.S. schools (Foley, 1990; Romo & Falbo, 1996; Valenzuela, 1999; Vigil, 1997). The negative correlation between years enrolled in U.S. schools and academic performance seems counterintuitive until one takes into account the sociological phenomena addressed in the aforementioned studies. More research is needed to qualify and quantify the processes in place that result in English learners' levels of language proficiency and academic performance remaining dangerously low.

Conclusion

The results of this study suggest that tracking plays a much larger role than previously believed in predicting English learners' academic achievement. Low levels of language proficiency can no longer excuse away poor performance. Instead, educators must look toward a new framework that emphasizes the quality of content-area instruction. Academic achievement can be explained in part by access to content; however, the limited variation in the present sample raises questions regarding placement procedures. In this study, English learners were clustered primarily in non-college-preparatory coursework; only a few students managed to "jump track" (Harklau, 1994) and experience academically challenging coursework.

The fact that only a few of the students in the present sample had been exposed to any college-preparatory curricula is discouraging to say the least. Ninety-eight percent of the students in the sample had not enrolled in the coursework necessary for a 4-year college to be an option. If these students do graduate from high school, and many will not, they will do so without the option of applying to and enrolling in a state college or university. Community college becomes the default higher education option for these English learners and others like them across the state. If these students are to have educational options, school personnel must not only restructure program offerings but also reflect on their expectations for this growing population.

While high-quality content-area instruction presents a challenge for teachers of English learners, they are not without guidance (Anstrom, 1997; Walqui, 2000). In a move away from the deficit framework toward a content-based English-language-acquisition curriculum, a science course might include academic activities designed to involve students in the language of experimentation and hypothesis making. In this context, when teachers employ effective instructional strategies, English learners are not only exposed to but will also internalize the nuances of academic English and critical thinking in that content area. Essentially, English learners must be exposed to twice as much instruction as native English speakers in terms of both language and content. To provide effective instruction to English learners, educators will need to revisit allotments of time and course-taking patterns in an effort to integrate higher levels of language alongside academic content. Focusing on the quality of classroom instruction will shift the discourse away from limited language proficiency back to academic content.

Notes

This research was made possible by grants from the American Educational Research Association-Institution for Educational Sciences and the University of California All Campus Consortium on Research for Diversity. The opinions offered reflect those of the author and are not necessarily those of the granting agencies.

¹See <http://www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t20/tab02.xls>.

²See http://www.nclae.gwu.edu/policy/states/reports/statedata/2002LEP/Growing_LEP0203.pdf.

³While the federal government uses the term *LEP* to refer to students limited in regard to English-language proficiency, most schools and California's Department of Education

use the term *English learner*. These terms can be used interchangeably. I use "English learner" for the purposes of this article unless citing or referring to federal reporting or documentation of LEP student performance.

⁴See <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/reports/state-data/1998/index.htm>.

⁵See <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>.

⁶See <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/el/documents/section4.pdf>.

⁷See <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>.

⁸For the most part, CELDT subscores were comparable to overall scores: 24.3% of advanced English learners did not pass the reading portion, 34.5% did not pass the oral section, and 44.1% did not pass the writing section.

References

- Adger, C. T., & Peyton, J. K. (1999). Enhancing the education of immigrant students in secondary school: Structural challenges and directions. In C. J. Faltis & P. M. Wolfe (Eds.), *So much to say: Adolescents, bilingualism and ESL in the secondary school* (pp. 205–224). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Anstrom, K. (1997). *Academic achievement for secondary language minority students: Standards, measures and promising practices*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, U.S. Department of Education.
- August, D., & Hakuta, K. (1997). *Improving schooling for language minority children: A research agenda*. Washington, DC: Institute of Medicine.
- California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. (1998). *Standards of quality and effectiveness for multiple and single subject credentials: Handbook for teacher educators and accreditation team members*. Sacramento, CA: Author.
- California Department of Education. (2002). *English language development standards for California public schools: Kindergarten through grade twelve*. Sacramento, CA: Author.
- Carbonaro, W. J., & Gamoran, A. (2002). The production of achievement inequality in high school English. *American Educational Research Journal*, 39, 801–827.
- Chamot, A. U. (1995). Implementing the cognitive academic language learning approach: CALLA in Arlington, Virginia. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 19, 379–394.
- Chunn, E. W. (1989). Sorting Black students for success and failure: The inequity of ability grouping and tracking. *Urban League Review*, 2, 93–106.
- Collier, V. P. (1987). Age and rate of acquisition of second language for academic purposes. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21, 617–641.
- Cummins, J. (1984). Wanted: A theoretical framework for relating language proficiency to academic achievement among bilingual students. In C. Rivera (Ed.), *Language proficiency and academic achievement* (pp. 2–19). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.
- Dauber, S. L., Alexander, K. L., & Entwisle, D. R. (1996). Tracking and transitions through the middle grades: Channeling educational trajectories. *Sociology of Education*, 69, 290–307.
- DeLany, B. (1991). Allocation, choice, and stratification within high schools: How the sorting machine copes. *American Journal of Education*, 99, 181–207.
- Faltis, C. J., & Wolfe, P. M. (1999). *So much to say: Adolescents, bilingualism, and ESL in the secondary school*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Ferguson, R. (1998). Teachers' perceptions and expectations and the Black-White test score gap. In C. Jencks & M. Phillips (Eds.), *The Black-White test score gap* (pp. 273–317). Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Foley, D. E. (1990). *Learning capitalist culture: Deep in the heart of Texas*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Freeman, Y. S., Freeman, D. E., & Mercuri, S. (2002). *Closing the achievement gap: How to reach limited-formal-schooling and long-term English learners*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

- Fritzberg, G. J. (2001). Less than equal: A former urban schoolteacher examines the causes of educational disadvantage. *Urban Review*, 33, 107–129.
- Gamoran, A. (1989). Measuring curriculum differentiation. *American Journal of Education*, 97, 129–143.
- Gamoran, A., Porter, A. C., Smithson, J., & White, P. A. (1997). Upgrading high school mathematics instruction: Improving learning opportunities for low-achieving, low-income youth. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 19, 325–338.
- Gass, S. M., & Selinker, L. (2001). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Gándara, P. C., & Merino, B. (1993). Measuring the outcomes of LEP programs: Test scores, exit rates, and other mythological data. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 15, 320–338.
- Green, D. R., Boyer, M., Connely, E., Hayter, J., & Kelley, D. (2003). *Technical report for the California English Language Development Test 2000–2001*. Monterey, CA: CTB McGraw-Hill.
- Hallinan, M. T. (1992). The organization of students for instruction in the middle school. *Sociology of Education*, 65, 114–127.
- Hallinan, M. T. (1994). School differences in tracking effects on achievement. *Social Forces*, 72, 799–820.
- Hallinan, M. T., & Kubitschek, W. N. (1999). Curriculum differentiation and high school achievement. *Social Psychology of Education*, 3, 41–62.
- Harklau, L. (1994). Jumping tracks: How language-minority students negotiate evaluations of ability. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 25, 347–363.
- Harklau, L. (1999). The ESL learning environment in secondary school. In C. J. Faltis & P. M. Wolfe (Eds.), *So much to say: Adolescents, bilingualism and ESL in the secondary school* (pp. 42–60). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Harklau, L., Losey, K. M., & Siegal, M. (1999). *Generation 1.5 meets college composition*. London: Erlbaum.
- Jencks, C., & Phillips, M. (Eds.). (1998). *The Black-White test score gap*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Katz, S. R. (1999). Teaching in tensions: Latino immigrant youth, their teachers and the structures of schooling. *Teachers College Record*, 100, 809–840.
- Kindler, A. (2002). *Survey of the states' limited English proficient students and available educational programs and services: 2000–2001 summary report*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs.
- Lam, T. C. (1993). Testability: A critical issue in testing language minority students with standardized achievement tests. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 26, 179–191.
- Lara, J. (2001). *Summary of state responses to informal survey: Assessing limited English proficient (LEP) students*. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers.
- Linguanti, R. (2001). *The redesignation dilemma: Challenges and choices in fostering meaningful accountability for English learners* (Report No. 2001-1). Oakland: University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute.
- Lucas, S. R. (1999). *Tracking inequality: Stratification and mobility in American high schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Lucas, S. R., & Good, A. D. (2001). Race, class, and tournament track mobility. *Sociology of Education*, 74, 139–156.
- Minicucci, C., & Olsen, I. (1992). *Programs for secondary limited English proficient students: A California study*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.
- Nadelstern, E. (1986). *The International High School at LaGuardia Community College: Bridging the gap*. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 270983.

- National Research Council. (1993). *Losing generations: Adolescents in high-risk settings*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Oakes, J. (1982). The reproduction of inequity: The content of secondary school tracking. *Urban Review*, 14, 107–120.
- Oakes, J. (1985). *Keeping track: How schools structure inequality*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Oakes, J., & Lipton, M. (1999). *Teaching to change the world*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Olsen, L. (1997). *Made in America: Immigrant students in our public schools*. New York: New Press.
- Olsen, L., & Jaramillo, A. (1999). *Turning the tides of exclusion: A guide for educators and advocates for immigrant students*. Oakland: California Tomorrow.
- Parrish, T., Linquanti, R., Merickel, A., Quick, H., Laird, J., & Esra, P. (2002). *Effects of the implementation of Proposition 227*. Palo Alto, CA: American Institutes for Research.
- Ramírez, J. D. (1992). Executive summary of the final report: Longitudinal study of structured English-immersion strategy, early-exit and late-exit transitional bilingual programs for language-minority students. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 16, 1–62.
- Raudenbush, S. W., Rowan, B., & Cheong, Y. F. (1993). Higher order instructional goals in secondary schools: Class, teacher, and school influences. *American Educational Research Journal*, 30, 523–553.
- Riverbend High School. (2001). *Riverbend High School course catalog, 2001–2002*. Riverbend, CA: Riverbend Unified School District.
- Romo, H. D., & Falbo, T. (1996). *Latino high school graduation: Defying the odds*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Ruiz-de-Velasco, J., & Fix, M. (2000). *Overlooked and underserved: Immigrant students in U.S. secondary schools*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
- Scarcella, R. (1996). Secondary education in California and second language research: Instructing ESL students in the 1990s. *CATESOL Journal*, 9, 129–152.
- Slavin, R. (1990). Achievement effects of ability groups in secondary schools: A best evidence synthesis. *Review of Educational Research*, 60, 471–499.
- State of California. (1998). *Proposition 227: English language education for children in public schools*. Retrieved February 1, 2004, from <http://primary98.ss.ca.gov/VoterGuide/Propositions/227text.htm>
- Stevens, A. S. (1999). *Tracking, curriculum differentiation, and the student experience in English*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, State University of New York at Albany.
- Suárez-Orozco, M., & Suárez-Orozco, C. (1995). The cultural patterning of achievement motivation: A comparison of Mexican, Mexican immigrant, and non-Latino White American students. In R. Rumbaut & W. Cornelius (Eds.), *California's immigrant children* (pp. 161–190). San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California.
- Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). *A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement*. Santa Cruz, CA: Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence.
- Tyack, D. B. (1974). *The one best system: A history of American urban education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Valdés, G. (1998). The world outside and inside schools: Language and immigrant children. *Educational Researcher*, 27(6), 4–18.
- Valdés, G. (2001). *Learning and not learning English: Latino students in American schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive schooling: U.S.-Mexican youth and the politics of caring*. New York: State University of New York Press.

- Vigil, D. (1997). *Personas Mexicanas: Chicano high schoolers in a changing Los Angeles*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt, Brace.
- Walqui, A. (2000). *Access and engagement: Program design and instructional approaches for immigrant students in secondary school*. McHenry, IL: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Wang, J., & Goldschmidt, P. (1999). Opportunity to learn, language proficiency, and immigrant status effects on mathematics achievement. *Journal of Educational Research*, 93, 101–111.
- Warren, P. (2004). *A look at the progress of English learner students*. Sacramento, CA: Legislative Analyst's Office.
- Wong-Fillmore, L. (1991). Second-language learning in children: A model of language learning in social context. In E. Bialystok (Ed.), *Language processing in bilingual children* (pp. 49–69). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Manuscript received February 10, 2004

Revision received September 5, 2004

Accepted December 8, 2004

A vertical bar on the left side of the page, consisting of a series of horizontal segments in shades of yellow and orange, with a small red diamond at the top.

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

TITLE: Tracking and High School English Learners: Limiting
Opportunity to Learn

SOURCE: Am Educ Res J 42 no2 Summ 2005

WN: 0519604678003

The magazine publisher is the copyright holder of this article and it is reproduced with permission. Further reproduction of this article in violation of the copyright is prohibited. To contact the publisher:
<http://www.aera.net/>

Copyright 1982-2005 The H.W. Wilson Company. All rights reserved.