Introduction
The PreK–12 English Language Proficiency Standards

**Standard 1:** English language learners communicate for social, intercultural, and instructional purposes within the school setting.

**Standard 2:** English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the area of language arts.

**Standard 3:** English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the area of mathematics.

**Standard 4:** English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the area of science.

**Standard 5:** English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the area of social studies.
Introduction

*To have another language is to possess a second soul.*
—Charlemagne

In 2006, in response to the changing political and educational context for English language learners in U.S. schools, TESOL published a revised set of language standards in *PreK–12 English Language Proficiency Standards*. These standards build on the theoretical framework set out in TESOL's 1997 English language standards (*ESL Standards for Pre-K–12 Students*) and exemplify the academic language that English language learners must develop in order to access the academic content of the general educational curriculum. The current volume, *Paper to Practice: Using the TESOL English Language Proficiency Standards in PreK–12 Classrooms*, serves as a companion to the 2006 standards by illustrating how educators in a variety of contexts can apply the standards to meet the diverse needs of their students.

Our purpose in *Paper to Practice* is to demonstrate how the English language proficiency (ELP) standards can function as a starting point for action in the classroom. The examples in each chapter suggest ways of using the ELP standards to improve instruction for English language learners within the framework of 21st-century classrooms. Today's teachers face daunting tasks that include understanding the complex nature of language as it is used in school, grappling with how to meet the diverse needs of their learners, creating lessons that help students access challenging academic content, and charting student progress in meeting the accountability criteria required of their schools.

Our premise is straightforward: Language is woven into the fabric of instruction. Understanding the multidimensionality of language and how it functions provides teachers with the means to support student achievement. When teachers have a thorough understanding of how language and content interact within school contexts, they are better equipped to make well-formed decisions about learning and teaching.

**Content and organization**

*Paper to Practice* consists of two sections. The first section presents an analysis of the language of school, provides an overview of the TESOL English language proficiency standards, and explores how the standards exemplify the academic language required for student achievement in school.

The second section builds on the resources found in section I by suggesting ways for educators to coordinate efforts in using the English language proficiency standards to develop
instructional plans that are relevant to local school contexts. Specifically, it explores how the English language proficiency standards can be used when educators

- extend the usefulness of various elements of the standards matrices to meet individual classroom contexts
- collaborate to plan meaningful opportunities for English language learners to access content through language
- design curriculum and instruction that take into account students’ English language proficiency levels
- create classroom-based assessment plans

Figure 1 illustrates the flow of these topics throughout the book.

Figure 1. The Flow of Topics in Paper to Practice.
**Approach**

We explore the topics in Figure 1 as a means of assisting teachers, teacher educators, and others engaged in professional development. Our intent throughout *Paper to Practice* is to provide resources that will support personal reflection as well as teacher education in a variety of venues, including pre-service preparation programs and in-service workshops. The book includes the following features to assist in this endeavor:

- **Guiding Questions** provide structure for each chapter as well as a preview of the issues to be addressed. These questions may be used to stimulate discussion.

- **Vignettes** contextualize the content in classroom or school settings and illustrate the factors that affect teaching practice. We vary the classrooms portrayed because we recognize that English language learners are served via a variety of language education programs.

- **Tasks** sprinkled throughout each chapter make the content more useful for pre-service and in-service educators. The tasks are designed to engage readers in applications of the material—for example, by applying new ideas to their own teaching situations or by trying out standards-based techniques demonstrated in the chapter.

- **Reflect and Respond**, a section at the end of each chapter, is an opportunity to apply the key themes.

By incorporating these features, we emphasize the importance of professional development in disseminating the ELP standards and demonstrate ways of infusing the standards into curriculum, instruction, and assessment to make a cohesive and equitable educational system for all students.