



TESOL Writing Team

Deborah J. Short, *Lead Writer*

Wing Shuen (Alice) Lau

Helene Becker

Nancy Cloud

Andrea B. Hellman

Linda New Levine

Fatima Aldajani

Foreword by Jim Cummins



This book has a companion website.
Go to www.the6principles.org/K-12
for additional resources.





TESOL International Association
1925 Ballenger Avenue, Ste 550
Alexandria, VA 22314 USA
www.tesol.org

Associate Director of Publications: Tomiko Breland
Copy Editor: Wendy Rubin
Design and Typesetting: Citrine Sky Design
Head of Education and Events: Sarah Sahr

Copyright © 2024 by TESOL International Association

All rights reserved. Copying or further publication of the contents of this work is not permitted without permission of TESOL International Association, except for limited “fair use” for educational, scholarly, and similar purposes as authorized by U.S. Copyright Law, in which case appropriate notice of the source of the work should be given. Permission to reproduce material from this book must be obtained from www.copyright.com, or contact Copyright Clearance Center, Inc., 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, 978-750-8400.

Every effort has been made to copyright holders for permission to reprint borrowed material. We regret any oversights that may have occurred and will rectify them in future printings of this work.

Recommended citation:

TESOL International Association. (2024). *The 6 principles for exemplary teaching of English learners: K–12* (2nd ed.). TESOL Press.

ISBN 978-1-953745-12-5

ISBN (ebook) 978-1-953745-13-2

Library of Congress Control Number 2023950806

PURCHASE ORDERS AND
BULK PURCHASES
Discounts are available for
tax-exempt purchase orders and
bulk purchases. Please contact
publications@tesol.org for
more information.

Second edition, 2024

CONTENTS

Foreword to First Edition by Jim Cummins	v
Preface	vii
Acknowledgments	xii
Dedication	xii

CHAPTER 1

A Vision for Exemplary English Language Teaching	1
The Need for The 6 Principles in K–12 Programs	3
TESOL’s Vision for Exemplary Teaching of Multilingual Learners of English.	7
The 6 Principles for Exemplary English Language Teaching	10
A Look Back and a Look Ahead	11

CHAPTER 2

What Teachers Should Know About English Language Development to Plan Instruction ...	13
Foundations of English Language Acquisition in K–12	14
Developing Academic Language Proficiency in School	17
Literacy Skills Development for Multilingual Learners of English	26
Factors Affecting English Language Development	34
Additional Considerations for Supporting Language Development in the Multilingual Classroom	41
A 21st-Century Goal: Dynamic Bilingualism	44
A Look Back and a Look Ahead	46

CHAPTER 3

The 6 Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners	49
Principle 1. <i>Know Your Learners</i>	51
Principle 2. <i>Create Conditions for Language Learning</i>	56
Principle 3. <i>Design High-Quality Lessons for Language Development</i>	61
Principle 4. <i>Adapt Lesson Delivery as Needed</i>	77
Principle 5. <i>Monitor and Assess Student Language Development</i>	82
Principle 6. <i>Engage and Collaborate Within a Community of Practice</i>	91
A Look Back and a Look Ahead	94

CHAPTER 4

Additional Roles for Teachers of Multilingual Learners of English	97
Adviser	98
Advocate	99
Resource for Colleagues	105
Developer and Reviewer of Curricula, Materials, and Assessments	111
Participant on School and District Committees for Programming and Policy	112
A Look Back and a Look Ahead	113

CHAPTER 5

Establishing a Culture of Shared Responsibility	115
School Principals and Assistant Principals	116
District Curriculum Directors	122
Special Education Directors and Gifted and Talented Program Directors	124
Reading Specialists and Instructional Coaches	126
Paraeducators	130
Technology Coordinators	132
Librarians and Media Specialists	133
Guidance Counselors, Family Liaisons, Social Workers, and School Psychologists	134
Other Educators and Policymakers	137
A Look Back and a Look Ahead	138

CHAPTER 6

Implementing The 6 Principles in Different Contexts	139
It Starts With the Students: Teaching English Language Development With The 6 Principles in Middle School	139
Collaboration as Key: Preparing English Language Teacher Candidates in Higher Education	150
Building Bridges in Education: Connecting Teachers With The 6 Principles in Professional Development	156
A Look Back and Final Observations	161

Appendix A

Common Acronyms in the Field of English Language Teaching	165
---	-----

Appendix B

The 6 Principles Checklist for Teachers	167
---	-----

Appendix C

Book Discussion Questions	171
---------------------------------	-----

Glossary	175
-----------------------	-----

References	181
-------------------------	-----

FOREWORD

It is a privilege to write a foreword to this immensely valuable book. The 6 Principles for exemplary teaching of English learners elaborated in these pages provide an evidence-based foundation for schools to examine their own instructional practice and work collaboratively with colleagues, parents, and policymakers to enable English learners to acquire strong social and academic language proficiency. A major strength of the book is its inclusion of the entire school community—administrators, English language teachers, content teachers, school librarians, guidance counselors, and other groups of educators—within the scope of exemplary teaching of English learners. As noted in Chapter 1, most of these education professionals have not had opportunities in their preservice education to access the knowledge base and instructional expertise necessary to work effectively with English learners. The detailed discussion in Chapter 5 of concrete ways in which these various groups of educators can apply The 6 Principles opens not just a culture of shared responsibility within the school, but also a culture of shared opportunity. As our expertise to work effectively with diverse learners expands, so too does our sense of affirmation as *educators*.

An additional strength of the book is the way in which it highlights the instructional implications of well-established research findings that are frequently overlooked in teaching English learners. For example, it is now well established that bilingualism represents a positive force in children’s cognitive and academic development, particularly when literacy is developed in both languages. However, in classroom contexts where multiple languages are represented, many educators have been unsure about how to engage students’ multilingual repertoires. In response to this uncertainty, the classroom vignettes and instructional suggestions throughout this book illustrate how teachers, school librarians, and other professionals can mobilize students’ home languages as cognitive resources and instructional tools to enrich the learning of all students.

Another significant emphasis throughout this book is on the importance of encouraging English learners to become avid readers, ideally in both English and their L1. There is extensive research evidence regarding the impact of print access and literacy engagement on the development of students’ reading comprehension skills (e.g., OECD, 2010). As noted in Chapter 2, students who read extensively “encounter more words and meet each word more frequently, which can result in a larger vocabulary and deeper word knowledge.” Unfortunately, this research was largely ignored in reading policies instituted under the No Child Left Behind legislation that operated between 2002 and 2015 (Cummins, 2007).

The importance of promoting active literacy engagement is illustrated in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), an international assessment initiative involving more than 70 countries and hundreds of thousands of 15-year-old students conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) over the past 20 years. The PISA research has consistently shown that reading engagement is a stronger predictor of reading achievement than students’ socioeconomic status (SES). Furthermore, the OECD (2010) reported that there was about a one-third overlap between the negative effects of low SES and the positive

effects of reading engagement. The implication is that schools can potentially “push back” about one-third of the negative effects of socioeconomic disadvantage by ensuring that students have access to a print-rich environment and become actively engaged with literacy.

This finding assumes relevance in the present context because a large proportion of English learners come from lower-income communities with significantly less access to print in their schools and homes than is the case for students from middle-income communities (e.g., Duke, 2000). Immersion of these students in a literacy-rich environment from the day they enter school is a powerful tool in accelerating their academic catch-up trajectory. *The 6 Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners: Grades K–12* suggests multiple strategies both for engaging parents as partners in this process and creating a culture of literacy engagement throughout the school.

My expectation is that this lucid and inspirational book will act as a catalyst for a process of collective pedagogical inquiry in schools across the United States and internationally. Obviously, all schools operate in broader policy contexts that enable and constrain organizational and pedagogical initiatives to varying degrees. However, within schools, educators always have choices—degrees of freedom within which we can chart directions that reflect and shape our identities as educators. This book charts the landscape in ways that enable us to embark confidently on that journey.

Jim Cummins
University of Toronto

References

- Cummins, J. (2007). Pedagogies for the poor? Re-aligning reading instruction for low-income students with scientifically based reading research. *Educational Researcher*, 36, 564–572.
- Duke, N. (2000). For the rich it's richer: Print experiences and environments offered to children in very low- and very high-socioeconomic status first-grade classrooms. *American Educational Research Journal*, 37, 441–478.
- OECD. (2010). *PISA 2009 results: Learning to learn—Student engagement, strategies and practices (Volume III)*. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/17/48852630.pdf>

PREFACE

A Note on the Second Edition

The field of English language teaching uses a wide variety of terms to describe students, teachers, and their programs. In the first edition of this book, we used the term *English learner* for students identified as not yet proficient in English (according to a state-approved assessment). Since that book's publication, many organizations, including TESOL International Association, have shifted toward the use of more asset-based language. In this second edition, we use the term *multilingual learner of English*, in recognition of the full linguistic repertoire of our language learners and the assets they bring to language learning, as well as in celebration of linguistic diversity. We still use *English learner* occasionally when context requires it.

In a world where people are always on the move and the globalization of society leads us to interact regularly with a diverse group of neighbors, coworkers, shopkeepers, online friends, and even strangers, we all learn a little bit about language and culture every day. Sometimes these interactions are unexpected and delightful; sometimes they are deliberate or routine. Just as our lives touch other people, their lives touch us. Our interactions are most fruitful when they are supported by clear communication, respect, and cross-cultural understanding.

TESOL International Association (hereafter TESOL) is a community of professionals devoted to nurturing these three factors by means of its mission to advance the quality of English language teaching through professional development, research, standards, and advocacy. Our mission is particularly noteworthy because there are approximately 2.3 billion English speakers worldwide according to the British Council (Patel et al., 2023). Nearly 400 million people speak English as a home language, and nearly 2 billion speak it as an additional language. English is the most common lingua franca, with 67% of the world's population either speaking English or being exposed to it. More than half of the content on the internet (60%) is posted in English, and English is the most widely used language for international business and academic publications. For these reasons, effective English language teaching is critical.

The British Council report (Patel et al., 2023) points out that although the future of English language pedagogy and assessment is shifting with the advent of new technologies (including AI) and a decreased focus on native-like proficiency, English language teachers are and will still be needed. Teachers will continue to play a central role in language learning by providing high-quality instruction, which includes motivating learners, incorporating effective techniques, selecting appropriate materials, and more. The report does note, however, that many teachers will need additional skills, such as strategies for integrating content knowledge in English-medium instruction and applying educational technology tools.

The future of English language teaching is of prime interest to TESOL. The association of language educators has close to 11,000 members who represent 165 countries and 117 active affiliates worldwide. The educational setting has changed remarkably since TESOL's founding in 1966. What we know about teaching and learning has evolved. The global pandemic that began in 2020 has shaped the way we view instruction just as much as second language acquisition research and educational policies have over the past 50+ years. Our teachers no longer teach social conversational skills and basic reading and writing; they must plan lessons with more academic interaction among learners in class and more application of the four language domains to authentic, real-world uses. Our classroom environments are now in person, online, or hybrid. Newer technologies—from laptops and tablets to digital learning platforms to mobile apps—have become common instructional tools in many places (although a digital divide in access persists).

Throughout these years, TESOL's desire to provide the best guidance for language instruction has remained steadfast. TESOL has articulated a vision and a set of universal principles that hold the promise of exemplary education for multilingual learners of English. These principles are the natural progression of work TESOL has done over the years in numerous standards documents that describe *what* students should learn. These include pre-K–12 English language proficiency standards, standards for pre-K–12 teacher preparation programs and for short-term TEFL/TESL certificate programs, standards for teachers of adult English as a second language and English as a foreign language learners and for their programs, standards for using technology in instruction, and guidelines for developing EFL professional teaching standards. These standards represent broad statements of skills and conceptual knowledge that teachers or learners should have as the result of a course or program. The 6 Principles initiative, which was conceptualized in 2017, explains *how* a learner would gain the skills and knowledge identified in the standards and in curricula in schools around the world.

These are The 6 Principles of exemplary teaching:

1. Know your learners.
2. Create conditions for language learning.
3. Design high-quality lessons for language development.
4. Adapt lesson delivery as needed.
5. Monitor and assess student language development.
6. Engage and collaborate within a community of practice.

This book, *The 6 Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners: K–12* (2nd edition), is the first in a series of TESOL books and publications that bring to life the underlying linkages among TESOL's core values, standards, and position statements and the current state of English language teaching.¹ The 6 Principles are research based and set a foundation for teachers and learners to succeed in a variety of program types. The principles are applicable for all classrooms focused on English as an additional language, and they serve educators of children and adults, dual language learners, emerging bilinguals, and multilingual students.

This K–12 volume lays out important information that teachers should know about English language development, along with The 6 Principles and practical examples of how these principles can be enacted in classrooms. Although this book primarily reflects K–12 classrooms in the United States, many of the examples and suggestions transfer easily to other types of classrooms. Additional resources, such as webinars and online courses, have been designed to help teachers

¹ The other 6 Principles books address exemplary English teaching for (1) adult and workforce education, (2) postsecondary academic and specific purposes, and (3) young learners around the world. Quick guides are references (1) for paraprofessional educators, (2) about remote learning, and (3) about second language acquisition.

and other educators apply these standards in their specific contexts. Many are available on TESOL's website.

Audience

Teachers of multilingual learners of English in K–12 classrooms are the primary audience for this book. These educators include the following groups:

- English language development (ELD), bilingual, and dual language teachers (subsequently, for brevity, *English language teachers*) in self-contained, cotaught, or resource classrooms
- elementary grade-level teachers and secondary content teachers
- special educators, reading teachers, and teachers of elective courses such as music, art, and technology

Some of these teachers may not view themselves as teachers of English, but they are. They provide direct instruction to students learning English as an additional language, even if their subject is third-grade math, middle school social studies, or high school biology. These teachers model proficient use of the language; they incorporate the four language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking in their instruction; and they expect learners to demonstrate their knowledge through these skills as well. All teachers must help develop students' academic English skills while supporting their growing knowledge base in the content areas. For learners to have access to challenging, grade-level curricula and be successful in school, teachers must understand how second language development occurs and apply that understanding to their lesson designs and assessments. They must also teach in culturally responsive ways that value the learners' languages and heritages.

Secondary audiences for the book include

- school and district administrators;
- instructional coaches;
- other school or district personnel, such as curriculum directors, guidance counselors, reading specialists, and paraeducators; and
- teacher educators and professional developers.

Administrators and coaches have a leadership role in their schools or districts and should help the teachers with whom they work understand the importance of knowing one's learners and how best to instruct them. They are also involved in creating the conditions for learning and thus need to know how to support language development while meeting curriculum goals and standards. Other personnel play additional roles in students' lives, from planning their academic schedules to supporting their social-emotional needs and well-being to designing curricula and assessments. Teacher educators and professional developers can use this book to introduce preservice teachers to The 6 Principles and help in-service teachers add to or refine their current practices.

Besides using The 6 Principles to guide instruction, school-based educators can use the book to evaluate their school or district programs. As part of school improvement efforts, this book can serve as a tool to drive reform, confirming positive aspects of existing programs and practices and identifying those that might merit change. The book is designed to generate thoughtful discussion and reflection among educators who serve multilingual learners of English.

What's New in the Second Edition

This second edition reflects our evolving knowledge about second language acquisition and pedagogy for multilingual learners of English. It also addresses some shifts in educational policies in the United States and what we have learned about supporting our learners during and after the global

pandemic. We have updated the research to include recent studies that support The 6 Principles in theory and practice, incorporated new vignettes from teachers around the world, and written a new chapter to showcase the implementation of The 6 Principles in three different cases. We made several key changes throughout the book:

- **Enhanced focus on student assets, use of home language, and culturally responsive teaching.** We have added more attention to the assets students bring to school, including their funds of knowledge and their home language and literacy skills. Discussions of translanguaging and dynamic bilingualism are presented along with culturally responsive practices to help teachers tap into their learners' cultural and linguistic resources.
- **Enhanced focus on technology.** Educational technology increasingly plays a significant role in the teaching and learning process. Since the onset of the global pandemic, almost all teachers use tech tools (e.g., learning management platforms, online texts, mobile apps) to some extent with their students. We have provided explanations of how and why to use educational technology and descriptions of sample tools throughout the chapters.
- **Enhanced focus on literacy development.** We have provided more discussion on how multilingual learners of English develop and strengthen their reading and writing skills in English. Moving beyond just teaching phonics and vocabulary, we discuss how academic conversations, background building, tapping into experiential knowledge, and interaction with peers help bolster these important academic skills.
- **New focus on social-emotional learning (SEL).** SEL is a process for developing students' lifelong skills to help them build positive relationships, establish and work toward goals, enhance self-awareness, manage emotions, and make responsible decisions for personal and academic success. In this edition, we explore ways that teachers can support students' well-being and incorporate SEL practices in classroom lessons.
- **New appendix with discussion questions for book study groups.** Readers can reflect on the discussion questions for each chapter and share ideas and responses with colleagues.

We discuss chapter-specific additions in the Overview.

Overview

The book is organized in six chapters:

- **Chapter 1: A Vision for Exemplary English Language Teaching** lays out TESOL's vision for exemplary teaching of multilingual learners of English, along with the rationale for the U.S. K–12 focus of this book, and introduces The 6 Principles. In this second edition, we have expanded the discussion of the need for The 6 Principles to address societal and educational changes that have taken place since 2018.
- **Chapter 2: What Teachers Should Know About English Language Development to Plan Instruction** summarizes the main factors of second language learning as they apply to K–12 settings in the United States. This chapter also identifies what teachers should know in order to provide developmentally appropriate instruction and build on students' linguistic and cultural assets, as called for by The 6 Principles. In this edition, we give more attention to the components of language and how they correlate to the four language skills; literacy development practices; and research on asset-based language instruction, educational technology and SEL. We have included new tables that illustrate key points of the discussion.

- **Chapter 3: The 6 Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners** is the cornerstone of the book, as it explains The 6 Principles in detail and grounds them in research. For each principle, we identify a broad range of K–12 instructional practices that guide teachers as they get to know their learners, set up a classroom that promotes student interaction, craft lessons that integrate language and content, modify their lesson delivery on the spot if students struggle, assess student language development, and participate in the school community of practice. In this new edition, we have added more practices to Principles 3, 5, and 6; updated and added new examples of practices for all principles; and included more vignettes and teachers’ artifacts to help readers implement The 6 Principles more readily.
- **Chapter 4: Additional Roles for Teachers of Multilingual Learners of English** describes the various roles that teachers play in educational contexts outside the classroom. Teachers can function as change agents when they (a) advocate for these learners; (b) act as liaisons among families, communities, and the school system; and (c) serve as resources for other teachers and administrators on instruction, assessment, curriculum design, scheduling and programming, professional development, and other aspects of teaching and learning. We discuss additional roles that teachers have, such as coteacher and school leader, in this revised chapter.
- **Chapter 5: Establishing a Culture of Shared Responsibility** suggests ways in which school and district administrators, instructional coaches, and other specialists can apply The 6 Principles in their spheres beyond the classroom. All professionals can work together to ensure that multilingual learners of English receive quality programs and services designed to support their language development needs and foster educational success in a positive, welcoming school climate. We have updated information and added discussions for paraeducators, technology coordinators, and family liaisons.
- **Chapter 6: Implementing The 6 Principles in Different Contexts** is a new chapter in the second edition. Based in real classrooms, this chapter illustrates how teachers have applied The 6 Principles framework in several settings: an English language development class in a middle school; an online, graduate-level university foundations course for TESOL; and professional development sessions for practicing teachers. The teachers share their high-quality teaching practices to help other educators conceptualize what these principles look in action.

Moving Forward

The TESOL profession has much to offer the world in expertise in English language teaching and support for multilingualism and cross-cultural communication. *The Action Agenda for the Future of the TESOL Profession* (TESOL International Association, 2018a) calls for TESOL professionals to draw on their knowledge, experience, and expertise and be involved in the development and implementation of language policies, practices, and research at local and national levels.

The 6 Principles suite of resources complement those efforts and define the best practices for our classrooms, as well as what teachers need to know about second language learning to make informed instructional decisions and how to advocate for our students and their families. Our goal is to promote high-quality English instruction in every classroom while respecting and affirming all languages and cultures. We invite you to learn about The 6 Principles and implement them with your own classes. We also encourage you to join TESOL, if you are not yet a member, and use The 6 Principles for professional learning with your colleagues.

Acknowledgments

Educators around the world strive to implement best practices in English language development with a myriad of learners in diverse contexts. They have contributed to our understanding of second language learning and teaching. We are grateful to the educators who have shared their experiences with us through print resources and personal connections. We would also like to acknowledge Jaslyn Davies, Katryn Dougherty, Karen M. Gregory, Kathy Lobo, Julia Muething-Sallans, Gretchen Oliver, Karamjeet Singh, Christian Rafael Quevedo Lezama, Jeimi Venegas, and Michele Wilbert for letting us tell some of their stories about implementing *The 6 Principles*. We thank the TESOL Board of Directors and the central office staff for their ongoing support of *The 6 Principles* initiative. Tomiko Breland, Sarah Sahr, and Amber Crowell Kelleher deserve special recognition.

This second edition builds on the first. We are thankful that Karen Woodson, Sherry Blok, Christel Broady, and Ximena Uribe-Zarain provided assistance in the previous edition, and Jim Cummins deserves our sincere gratitude for writing the foreword. We very much appreciated the insights and productive feedback offered by the reviewers of the first book, who represented our TESOL international community and the bilingual and general education fields. We also offer our gratitude to those users of the first edition who provided reviews and feedback that helped inform this second edition. All of these individuals care about our learners and their teachers, and they have helped us write a better book.

Dedication

We dedicate this book to two friends and colleagues, Dr. Anna Uhl Chamot (1934–2017) and Dr. Emily “Cathy” Day (1942–2021), with deep appreciation for their years of service, research, writing, and teacher development on behalf of multilingual learners of English and their educators.

1 A VISION FOR EXEMPLARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Ms. Tejada opened the door to see her daughter and three classmates.

“Mami, estos son mis amigos de la escuela,” said Gabriela. “Ricky, Chantal, y John. Estamos trabajando en un proyecto.”

“Welcome,” said Ms. Tejada. “Please come in. What project are you working on?”

The young teens entered, and John turned to Gabriela’s mother. “We are working on a project about Darwin’s journey around the world. We have to make a map of his trip, tell why he made the journey, identify challenges and solutions, and describe different groups of people he met and different things he saw.”

Ricky continued, “We have to tell about his discoveries, too.”

Ms. Tejada said, “Goodness, that’s a lot of work. How will you do all that?”

“Watch us, Mami,” said her daughter.

The teens moved into the dining room and opened their tablets from the school. Chantal spread out a printed world map. She placed a toy boat on the southern coast of England and took a picture. Ms. Tejada saw her draw a route to the Canary Islands in red marker, place the boat there, and take another picture. Chantal did the same for the Cape Verde islands. “Où, eh, where next?” she asked John.

John said, “Remember how to Google, ah, la carte? Let me show you.” He helped Chantal find a web page with the route of Darwin’s ship.

To her mother, Gabriela said, “Chantal es de Haití. Ella es nueva y está aprendiendo inglés.”

Her mom replied, “I’m glad you all are helping her.”

Ricky, Gabriela, and John were looking at different web pages and taking notes in their notebooks. Occasionally they took a screenshot. Ms. Tejada watched for a while.

Ricky asked, “Did you know Darwin went to South America? He studied birds—finches—and saw things that were the same and different about them.”

John turned to Gabriela, “Come here and help me read this article. It’s in Spanish about the Galápagos Islands.”

The teens worked for another hour. Before leaving, they looked over the pictures they had taken. Chantal showed them the photos of the map, and the boys asked her to tell them the places where the boat was in each one. They helped her say the names of the towns and practice sentences like “The Beagle sailed to Cape Verde” and “The Beagle is in Cape Town.” Gabriela then pointed at some of the bird pictures and said, “Look at the beaks. This one is long. That one is short and thick. Darwin noticed the beaks changed to match the food the birds ate.”

As they were preparing dinner later, Ms. Tejada asked her daughter to tell her more about the project. “When I was in school,” she said, “we would read some books and write a report. We’d work by ourselves.”

Gabriela explained, “This is better, Mami. We are working on this in our science and geography classes. For the final project, we are going to do a screencast about Darwin’s voyage. It’s kind of

like a PowerPoint with sound. We have to put the photos we take with the tablet into a computer program, and then we can record information about each one. What's good is that we can record over what we say if we make a mistake. Each one of us has to speak part of the time. That's why we were helping Chantal practice. But we have four more days before we have to finish."

Gabriela went on to explain how the teachers on her middle school team were supporting the project. Mr. Mohan, the ESL teacher, coteaches with the science teacher, Ms. Kitima. In class, he explains the vocabulary and helps when they read texts. He helps them form sentences to express their ideas when they have to speak or write. In their current unit, Ms. Kitima teaches them about biodiversity. She uses a lot of photographs and video clips, and they did an experiment where they had to try to get food that birds eat—worms in soil, seeds on branches, and nuts on the ground—using different utensils, like tweezers, nutcrackers, and straws. Mr. Gándara, the social studies teacher, has bookmarked web pages for the geography tasks of the project. He found some in Spanish and French, in addition to pages in English. He also reads aloud parts of the diary that Darwin kept when he was sailing and explains what Darwin found. In ESL class with Mr. Mohan, the students read some of the diary entries closely and take notes.

"John no está en ESL pero estudia francés. Él puede ayudar a Chantal un poco," Gabriela concluded.

"You make a good team," said her mom.

We have written this book to share TESOL's vision and present The 6 Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners®—a core set of principles that should undergird any program of English language instruction. TESOL believes that all languages and cultures have equal worth and promotes multilingualism and multiculturalism. Respect for all languages and cultures is a core value. We recognize that many people around the world want to learn English for a variety of personal, academic, and economic reasons, so TESOL, the leading organization of English language teaching professionals, offers its best guidance in this book on how to do so, based on research findings and practitioner knowledge.

The sustained, popular interest in learning English around the world has created a need for a common understanding of second language learning theory and effective instructional and assessment design. In this book, we provide research-based knowledge about second language acquisition and effective pedagogical approaches so that educators can make informed decisions about the teaching and learning process. Learners today need advanced language and literacy skills to communicate with diverse audiences for various purposes along with critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. Our goal is to empower teachers of multilingual learners of English to reflect critically on their current practices, make adjustments as needed to best prepare their students for our globally connected world, and share their expertise with colleagues.

You will find that TESOL's vision, The 6 Principles, and accompanying practices are applicable to all contexts and all audiences. That said, this book, the first in the series, focuses on elementary and secondary classrooms in the United States where students learn English as a new language while also studying the subject area curricula, often through English. We mention specific U.S. policies and programs, but many educators in K–12 classrooms around the world will be able to apply The 6 Principles and their related practices to their own settings as well. The vignette that opens this chapter offers a snapshot of effective instruction that enables students to collaborate around an academically challenging project, using their home language resources, technology, and instructional materials to develop academic English. Although the students in the vignette attend a U.S. school, the situation could be replicated in many places. Some vignettes and cases in this book highlight the implementation of The 6 Principles in other countries.

A Note About Terminology

When referring to students, we use *multilingual learners of English*; in specific instances, we mention *newcomers* and *students with limited or interrupted formal education* (SLIFE).

For teachers with the prime responsibility of teaching English as a new language to these students, we use *English language teacher* or *English language specialist* interchangeably and *English language development (ELD) teacher*, *dual language teacher*, and *bilingual teacher* as appropriate. We also use *teachers of multilingual learners of English* to refer collectively to all teachers who have these students in their classrooms.

For the instructional programs, we use *English language development (ELD) program*, *dual language program*, and *bilingual program* as appropriate. ESL (English as a second language) is no longer commonly used in U.S. schools.

TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) refers to the international professional association. It can also refer to teaching English to speakers of other languages, meaning those who have studied the field and have a certificate (as in TESOL professional), as well as their coursework and university programs in the field.

We refer to the language spoken by an individual's family as the home language, although it is also known as the *native* or *first language*.

The glossary provides definitions of these terms and other relevant ones. Appendix A is a chart of the common acronyms related to English language teaching used in the United States.

The Need for The 6 Principles in K–12 Programs

The 6 Principles are universal guidelines and establish the foundation for exemplary teaching of multilingual learners of English. These principles are particularly relevant to the educational context in the United States in the 21st century for several academic and sociocultural reasons:

Multilingual learners of English are a significant subgroup of students in U.S. schools, and they have a pressing need to learn academic English. The majority of students in the United States study in English-medium classes for most of the school day. They need to understand academic English to access and be successful with grade-level curricula. Students in grades K–12 who are identified as not yet proficient in English (known as *multilingual learners of English*) have represented 10% of the total population in pre-K–12 schools since the 2009–2010 school year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). This statistic indicates that the stream of students is constant, with new learners of English entering U.S. schools each year. The term *multilingual learner of English* is a temporary designation, however, and most

Have you noticed changes in your multilingual learner population?

students reach proficiency between 5 and 7 years from the time they begin learning English until they exit English language assistance programs. Nonetheless, educators report that the number of students who struggle with the academic language used in school is considerably higher than the number of learners in these language programs because some learners who have exited the programs (*former English learners*) have not yet attained all of the academic English skills that would allow them to participate successfully in all of their content courses and demonstrate their knowledge on high-stakes assessments.

Many elementary grade-level and secondary content-area teachers are underprepared to teach multilingual learners of English effectively. English language development (ELD) teachers, bilingual teachers, and dual language teachers (subsequently identified inclusively as

English language teachers) are well trained to teach in English and about the English language. But essential courses on second language acquisition, ELD techniques for integrating language and content, teaching reading to multilingual learners of English, and cross-cultural communication are not the norm for others studying to be teachers in U.S. schools (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017). Among teachers who reported having at least one multilingual learner of English in class, only 10% of them had a major, minor, or certification in English as a second language (ESL), and less than half had taken any course on how to teach these students prior to their first year of teaching (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). Because so many teachers are not required to take such courses to obtain a teaching certificate, school districts bear the responsibility to provide professional development in these topics.

National standards for teacher education institutions recognize that teachers need to understand how to work with diverse learners, including multilingual learners of English, and that they should keep students' culture and language differences in mind to create inclusive learning plans (see Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2022). However, the standards do not outline the specific coursework that should be taught or the depth of treatment. Given the demands of state content standards and the high numbers of multilingual learners of English in our schools, future teachers need resources such as *The 6 Principles* for details on how to teach the academic language and literacy skills necessary for their subject areas to students who are not yet proficient in English.

Not all teachers know which students in their classes are multilingual learners of English. Consider the following responses to the question “Is that student a multilingual learner of English?”

- “I don’t think so. Her mom speaks English.”
- “He shouldn’t be. We can understand each other without any trouble.”
- “No, he was born in the U.S.”
- “We don’t know. Her home language survey said she speaks English, though the family speaks Bengali at home. She wasn’t tested for English language proficiency.”
- “Of course. Her first language is Mandarin, and she rarely speaks in class.”
- “He must be. He speaks English with a strong accent.”
- “I doubt it; they’re doing fine in my algebra class.”

English language specialists hear unsound explanations like these from some teachers when they speak about specific students. Such statements reflect the fact that these teachers tend to rely on their own casual interpretations of what it means to be a multilingual learner of English. In fact, speaking with an accent, being silent in class, and being able to perform math tasks are not reliable indicators of whether a student is a multilingual learner of English. Parents and children are often proficient in several languages, and sometimes a student’s current caregivers did not raise the student. Many educators also do not know that most multilingual learners of English in K–12 settings were born in the United States (Bialik et al., 2018).

English language specialists identify students according to a more formal definition, one defined by law. This definition does not equate a student’s status as a multilingual learner with being born outside the United States, having a home language other than English, or speaking with an obvious accent. Rather, the formal meaning of the term is that the student has not yet reached the level of English language proficiency that the state has defined as sufficient to succeed academically in the curriculum. Teachers should consult their district’s identification and

redesignation criteria, as well as their students' English language proficiency scores, to know with certainty which students are multilingual learners of English. With that knowledge and targeted professional development, they can provide better instruction to their students.

Since 2002, educational reforms in the United States have increased the academic rigor of instruction, but most of the resulting accountability measures have not been developed with multilingual learners of English in mind. We have high standards for learning in our schools and want to hold school districts accountable for helping students meet these standards. The situation for multilingual learners of English, however, is not straightforward. These students must do double the work in school by learning academic English while studying the core content areas of mathematics, science, history, English language arts, and other subjects. They are not given time to develop their English skills to intermediate or advanced levels of proficiency before they must participate in high-stakes assessments. They often take subject-area tests that have been designed and normed on English speakers and, except in a few states, conducted in English. These tests are not valid or reliable for multilingual learners of English (Abedi & Linqianti, 2012). Not surprisingly, the achievement gap between these students and students who are proficient in English on national exams of reading, mathematics, and science has not narrowed in the past 20 years (U.S. Department of Education [USED], n.d.). The long-term effects of the achievement gap include lower graduation rates among multilingual learners of English; in the 2019–2020 school year, only 71% of multilingual learners of English graduated, compared with 86% of all students (USED, Office of English Language Acquisition, 2023b).

Education reforms have had mixed consequences for programs designed to serve multilingual learners of English. Policymakers and the general public generally do not understand the process of second language acquisition, nor do they realize that teachers and other staff might not have the training or experience needed to fully meet the needs of multilingual learners of English. As a result, they may falsely blame the learners and their families when schools and districts do not perform well on state tests. At times, poor test performance has led to schools being taken over or closed down, with staff leaving or shifted elsewhere (Menken, 2010).

Misconceptions about learning a new language and learning through a new language can be countered, however. More districts regularly monitor the language proficiency growth and academic progress of their multilingual learners of English and include the data in school improvement conversations. With these analyses, educators can adjust programs, instruction, professional development plans, and resources as indicated. Some federal and state funding is available to help schools and teachers strengthen their programs and instruction so students can develop the necessary academic language and literacy skills to access core content curricula.

The COVID-19 pandemic upended some expectations and assumptions about schooling. When schools around the world began closing in March 2020, English language teachers had to pivot quickly and find ways to teach their students remotely. Traditional means for delivering instruction no longer worked. But not all teachers had the skill set and equipment to use digital tools and platforms, so they had a steep learning curve. Professional development also had to transition to virtual formats, and educators had to build online communities to provide support to their peers.

Furthermore, the divide between students who had technology devices, adequate internet access and bandwidth, and support for distance learning at home and those who did not (many of whom were multilingual learners of English) was striking and led to disparities in learning outcomes (USED, Office of Educational Technology, 2022). Digital inequities, along with the isolation and unmet social-emotional needs of learners, exacerbated achievement

gaps between multilingual learners of English and students who are proficient in English (Pier et al., 2021). The need to bridge the technology gap between students from diverse backgrounds to ensure that all learners can benefit from the technological innovations is ongoing. We have had to figure out the types of support our students require to manage the challenges of remote learning and ways to engage them and support their productivity. We have also needed to determine how best to incorporate new technology tools now that we have returned to our classrooms.

How has your instruction changed since the global pandemic?

Out-of-school factors have an impact on student academic achievement.

Factors that cause stress and physical or mental illness can lead to negative performance in school. Multilingual

learners of English are certainly not the only students affected by these factors, but some factors have particular relevance to their lives. For example, a number of these learners experience one or more of the following: poverty, food insecurity, discrimination, anti-immigrant bias, trauma, and cultural dissonance. Some teachers learn more about their learners' communities and develop partnerships with leaders to advocate for change (Linville & Whiting, 2020). Others explore social justice issues in their curricular units as a means to reduce some of the stress or help learners make sense of the society around them (Mohammed, 2023). Helping students feel safe and respected in classrooms helps them focus on learning. When teachers explicitly and intentionally integrate social-emotional learning into their teaching practices alongside academic content, they can strengthen students' sense of belonging within the school community and help them develop essential coping skills for handling academic challenges (Frey et al., 2019; Rimm-Kaufman, 2021; Short & Mendoza, 2020).

Ms. Vegas is an upper elementary school teacher in Colombia. She has established an international pen pal video talk partnership with a teacher in Taiwan to help students improve their language acquisition and develop global competencies. For one project, the students discussed social issues and, independently or with a partner, conducted research on one issue. Topics have included poverty, water conservation, and animal welfare. The students use Flip, a video discussion platform, to prepare a 2- to 4-minute talk on the problem and potential solutions. They exchange videos with their pen pals. With Flip, they in turn create a video response to their pen pal's presentation. Ms. Vegas has noticed that this activity boosts students' confidence as they practice English speaking and listening skills through authentic interactions on content-rich topics. The asynchronous nature of the platform allows students to overcome limitations of time and geography, and they find this activity fun and engaging.

Educators seek guidance regarding best practices for educating multilingual learners

of English. The use of best practices makes language learning more efficient and satisfying. TESOL, the leading organization of language teaching professionals in the United States, is well positioned to guide educators in the why, what, and how of high-quality teaching. In 1997, TESOL released the first-ever pre-K–12 standards for English as a second language, and its commitment to helping educators implement those standards and subsequent ones has been unwavering (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1997; TESOL International Association, 2006). This commitment has not changed postpandemic.

The stakes are high. TESOL recognizes that high-quality instruction in today's world includes the need for developing advanced literacy skills and intercultural competence, reimagining how to convey information and receive feedback with new and older technologies, personalizing the language learning experience, and differentiating the ways in which we can build our communities of practice. Our elementary and secondary students have university and career goals, so they need to achieve advanced levels of proficiency in English and

acquire the content-area knowledge expected of high school graduates. Our programs and practices must help them achieve these goals.

TESOL's Vision for Exemplary Teaching of Multilingual Learners of English

When TESOL conceptualized The 6 Principles initiative in 2017, it sought to address the needs of English language teachers and their learners in a way that would amplify TESOL's vision and disseminate exemplary English language teaching practices. The conviction that knowing more

"Knowledge of more than one language and culture is advantageous for all students." *(Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1997, p. 5)*

than one language and culture benefits all students is a core value and hallmark of TESOL's vision. The world is an interconnected place, and we all engage with linguistically and culturally diverse people. Technologies and trade have brought us closer together and require skilled cross-cultural communication.

Thus, dynamic bilingualism is an asset. Effective education in the 21st century calls for schools to provide opportunities for all students to learn about other cultures and to learn world languages (Commission on Language Learning, 2017). Knowing more than one language has individual and societal benefits, and diversity typically fosters creativity (Marian & Shook, 2012). Understanding different perspectives, life experiences, and world views enriches us and builds intercultural competence (TESOL International Association, 2006).

In TESOL's vision, multilingual learners of English can be successful in school and beyond. In our schools, these learners can share their viewpoints with English-speaking peers, teachers, administrators, and other members of the school community, who can in turn reciprocate and share their own perspectives. Learners can achieve advanced levels of English proficiency; thrive in English-medium content-area courses; become language-ready for higher education, careers, or other personal goals; and maintain their home language and culture while adding English to their language repertoire. We heartily believe these targets can be reached in effective English language learning programs that demonstrate the following characteristics:

Curricula for multilingual learners of English are rigorous, relevant, and designed and delivered with second language learning in mind. For many years—indeed, for most of the 20th century—multilingual learners of English in the United States were relegated to language development classes, with few opportunities to receive grade-level content instruction until they reached advanced levels of proficiency. When educational practices changed, particularly in the 1990s, these students were often on the receiving end of watered-down curricula and lower expectations than those for students who had proficiency in English. That situation should not be the case today. The standards and curricula for our learners need to be rigorous and relevant to their educational goals. Instructional practices such as the use of scaffolds, extended time, home language supports, and other aspects of differentiation help students gain access to the curricula and accommodate their proficiency levels. At times, newcomers and students with interrupted or limited educational backgrounds may need specialized courses to support their learning. Overall, however, we need to have not only high expectations for our students but also targeted professional development for our teachers so they can best serve their multilingual learners of English as they progress through the second language acquisition process (California Department of Education, 2010; USED, Office for Civil Rights & U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, 2015a).

Multilingual learners of English, including learners with special needs, have access to all programs and services. In the United States, multilingual learners of English must have access to ELD services and grade-level content. School districts have a legal obligation to ensure that these learners can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs and services (USED, Office for Civil Rights & U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, 2015a). The programs offered to these students must pass a three-pronged legal test: They must (1) be based on sound education theory and principles, (2) be implemented with adequate personnel and resources and appropriate instructional practices, and (3) demonstrate that language barriers are being overcome within a reasonable period of time so that multilingual learners of English attain parity with English-speaking classmates in instructional programs (*Castañeda v. Pickard*, 1981). Furthermore, multilingual learners of English who are dually identified with a learning disability must receive both ELD and special education services, and language proficiency should not be a factor in determining eligibility for gifted and talented programs (Burr et al., 2015; USED, Office of English Language Acquisition, 2017).

All educational personnel assume responsibility for the education of multilingual learners of English. Helping multilingual learners of English succeed in school must be the job of all teachers—not solely the ELD or bilingual ones. Academic language as used in school settings to meet rigorous standards, curricula, and assessments is more challenging to learn than social language (as detailed in Chapter 2). These students must develop literacy skills for each content area in their second language as they simultaneously learn, comprehend, and apply content-area concepts through their second language (Short & Echevarría, 2016). Indeed, multilingual learners of English must do double the work in schools—learning English and learning content—but they are not given double the time (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Apart from a 1-year grace period for language arts assessments, these learners are evaluated using the same tests as their classmates who are proficient in English, no matter what their English proficiency level is. The learners therefore need to maximize the time spent learning both academic English and content throughout the school day, which can happen only when all their teachers target both areas in their lesson objectives and plan instruction accordingly (Echevarría et al., 2024; Himmel, 2012).

All educational personnel

- **respect, affirm, and promote students' home languages and cultural knowledge and experiences as resources;**
- **celebrate multilingualism and diversity;**
- **support policies that promote individual language rights and multicultural education; and**
- **help prepare students to be global citizens.**

Our goal is for multilingual learners of English to be successful wherever and whenever they use English. However, we also want them to have opportunities to maintain and further develop their own language and be part of a community that respects their cultures (Canagarajah & Wurr, 2011; García & Kleyn, 2016). In many parts of the world, children learn a second and even a third language, sometimes at home and sometimes at school. We should celebrate and encourage this relatively normal practice of learning more than one language. We know that being bilingual or multilingual generates cognitive and societal benefits and is valuable in many careers. We should never try to eliminate a student's home language or

culture. Instead, teachers and administrators must welcome diversity in their schools and gain skills during their training that enable them to work with linguistically and culturally diverse learners and their families (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017; Nieto & Bode, 2021).

We know from recent research on translanguaging, in fact, that strategic use of a student's home language in the English-medium classroom can facilitate both content understanding and academic English language development. When students use all of their linguistic resources, they participate more in class, make sense of new information, and apply knowledge more fully in learning tasks (Ebe et al., 2021; García et al., 2017; Paterson, 2021).

What has improved for multilingual learners of English since you started working in schools?

TESOL professionals are recognized as specialists with accurate knowledge, skills, and dispositions for providing high-quality English language teaching. Our profession has struggled over the years with the false notion that if you speak English, you can teach English. Having native-speaking English skills does not ensure someone will be an effective English language teacher. TESOL professionals study a range of topics, including second language acquisition theory, ELD and sheltered instruction methods, and teaching reading to non-native speakers of English. They know how language works as a system, how to plan and differentiate instruction for multilingual learners of English and others who struggle with academic literacy in subject area courses, how culture affects learning and communication, how to assess students with emergent levels of English literacy, and how to interpret and apply results of language assessments. They stay up-to-date with research and policy once they are practicing teachers (see López et al., 2013; TESOL International Association, 2018a). In many U.S. K–12 public schools, teachers of English as an additional language must have either an ELD or bilingual teaching certificate or license or an elementary or content-area teaching certificate or license with an ELD endorsement. In a number of states, teachers must pass a professional exam as well.

TESOL professionals are valued by colleagues and other educators for their expertise and consulted in instructional, programming, and policy decision-making. Because of their knowledge in the fields of second language learning, ELD methodology, and cross-cultural communication, ELD, bilingual, and dual language teachers are valuable resources for colleagues and administrators in schools and districts. Through collaborative endeavors such as professional learning groups, school improvement teams, and textbook selection committees, their expertise serves as a resource for providing the best possible programming, instruction, and materials for multilingual learners of English. TESOL professionals can help colleagues adjust their teaching and testing practices according to the proficiency levels of the students in their classes and design interventions for newcomers and long-term multilingual learners of English. They can advise fellow teachers and administrators about the students' cultures and support them in communicating with parents (Benegas & Stolpestad, 2020; Cambridge English, n.d.; TESOL International Association, 2018a; Valdés et al., 2014).

Policies, programs, and practices are based on current research and accurate information. Policymakers and administrators must rely on research as they establish policies, develop or refine programs, and promote instructional and assessment practices. Building a program around anecdotes and myths will not result in student success. Students do not master academic English just by being exposed to it. Just because students speak English does not mean they are proficient in all four language domains at an advanced academic level. Over the past 35 years, research has become more rigorous, and we know more about how students learn a

second language. This learning takes time and investments in resources. Skimping on these needs will not yield the educational or economic outcomes that schools seek and society needs (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017; Williams, 2021).

The 6 Principles for Exemplary English Language Teaching

The 6 Principles put forth in this book are not revolutionary or groundbreaking concepts in language learning. They are well-established guidelines drawn from decades of research in language pedagogy and language acquisition theory. We present them in seemingly simple statements, yet they carry substantial weight because how well they are implemented can make the difference between student success and struggle. The 6 Principles must be taken together, as a cohesive whole. One cannot just know one's learners, for example, and then not act on that knowledge when planning instruction.

Figure 1.1 provides a brief explanation of each principle, and subsequent chapters show educators of multilingual learners of English how The 6 Principles may be realized inside and outside the classroom.

FIGURE 1.1 The 6 Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners

Exemplary teaching of English learners rests on the following 6 Principles:

- 1. Know your learners.** Teachers learn basic information about their students' families, languages, cultures, and educational backgrounds to engage them in the classroom and prepare and deliver lessons more effectively.
- 2. Create conditions for language learning.** Teachers create a classroom culture that will ensure students feel comfortable in the class. They make decisions regarding the physical environment, the materials, and the social integration of students to promote language learning.
- 3. Design high-quality lessons for language development.** Teachers plan lessons that are meaningful for students, promote language learning, and help them develop learning strategies and critical-thinking skills. These lessons evolve from the learning objectives.
- 4. Adapt lesson delivery as needed.** Teachers continually assess as they teach, observing and reflecting on learners' responses to determine whether the students are reaching the learning objectives. If students struggle or are not challenged enough, teachers consider the possible reasons and adjust their lessons.
- 5. Monitor and assess student language development.** Language learners learn at different rates, so teachers regularly monitor and assess their language development in order to advance their learning efficiently. Teachers also gather data to measure student language growth.
- 6. Engage and collaborate within a community of practice.** Teachers collaborate with others in the profession to provide the best possible support for multilingual learners of English with respect to programming, instruction, and advocacy. They also continue their own professional learning.

A Look Back and a Look Ahead

More people are learning English every day. It is critically important that their teachers make informed decisions about their instructional and assessment practices. This book supports teachers in this work.

In Chapter 1, we have

- explained TESOL's rationale for identifying core principles for exemplary teaching of multilingual learners of English and the pressing need for their implementation in K–12 classrooms in the United States;
- shared TESOL's vision of effective education, which includes honoring home languages and cultures, recognizing TESOL professionals as specialists in language education, and ensuring that multilingual learners of English have access to challenging, rigorous curricula; and
- introduced The 6 Principles, which are discussed in detail in Chapter 3. These principles help teachers create conditions in the classroom that promote language learning and plan and deliver lessons that keep learners' needs, interests, and backgrounds in mind.

Teachers of multilingual learners of English need to understand that language development is dynamic and not always linear and that how well we communicate depends on our purpose and audience. One aspect of making choices related to language teaching methods and techniques involves knowing how people learn second languages and what inhibits or facilitates the learning process. Chapter 2 explores what academic language is in schools, how students' levels of language proficiency influence their performance of tasks in English, and various factors that support learning English as a new language. The goal is that when teachers apply The 6 Principles in their classrooms, they will do so knowledgeably and with their learners' needs in mind.

Additional resources pertaining to this chapter are available at www.the6principles.org/K-12.

