

STANDARDS: A METRIC FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN PRE-K-12 EDUCATION

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In the last decade, unprecedented numbers of language learners have entered classrooms around the world. Concomitantly, the expansion of the standards movement has enabled educators to apply a common metric to describe student expectations and performance within their contexts. For teachers and administrators working in language education, this trend has translated into a vision for language teaching, and for students, a means of monitoring and documenting their language learning.

This paper speaks to PreK–12 English language proficiency standards and how they serve as the anchor for curriculum, instruction, and assessment for language education. This generation of standards has helped galvanize the role of language teachers in today's high-stakes educational environment and has elevated the status of our profession. Personal insights and experiences with the standards illustrate how language teachers have come to share a common bond across international boundaries.

THE PREMISE BEHIND STANDARDS-BASED EDUCATION

Since the late 1980s, standards-based reform has been a driving engine of educational improvement for individual states in the United States and now, as we approach the second decade of this millennium, the country as a whole is on the brink of adopting national core academic standards. Born from the idea that standards are the vehicle for educational equity on a pathway to educational excellence for all students (Lachat, 2004; McLaughlin & Shepard, 1995), in hindsight it has become apparent that standards are but one aspect of a broader agenda to strengthen the educational infrastructure of an entire nation.

All the while, the linguistic and cultural diversity of the student population, pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12, has continued to escalate and permeate urban, suburban, and rural nooks and crannies. The impact of this changing demographic has never been felt so strongly as in individual schools and classrooms, whereas the response at state and federal levels has been tacit at best. If it were not for the 2001 federal reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary School Act (No Child Left Behind) mandating states to implement English language proficiency standards and extend accountability to the subgroup of language learners, there would be little acknowledgement at the national and state levels of the important role of language development in explaining academic achievement of this subgroup of students.

Twenty years have passed since the inception of the standards movement and a fundamental question still persists throughout the educational community: Do standards (and related

assessments) “support better teaching and transform schooling for traditionally underserved students or do they merely reify existing inequities?” (Darling-Hammond, p. 7). Because equity is a function of open access to educational opportunities and meaningful interaction with rigorous subject matter, we can only claim social justice in our schools when teachers and administrators are familiar with the unique linguistic and cultural characteristics of language learners and, in turn, use this contextual background information to help shape teaching and learning (Gottlieb & Nguyen, 2007).

As advocates for language learners, we have taken strides in improving the learning conditions for our students, but we haven’t gone far enough. Language and culture must be front and center in the educational accountability equation. The purpose of this paper is to challenge the status quo by reaffirming the critical role of this generation of language standards as a metric for all educators who touch the lives of language learners.

THE BIG PICTURE: A SYSTEMS APPROACH TO STANDARDS-REFERENCED LANGUAGE EDUCATION

No one educational innovation operates in a vacuum; rather, to be effective, it must be integrated into a well-conceptualized system. When contemplating a standards-based education system for language learners, first and foremost, there must be an interplay in the treatment of language and content (Gottlieb, 2006). An example of this relationship is depicted in Figure 1, an educational framework that centers on the interaction of language learners and their teachers where language (and content) standards are the touchstones within an iterative cycle of assessment, curriculum, and instruction.

The influence of content on language in planning and enacting standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment has been increasingly evident in language education. In fact, content-based instruction and assessment have come to be a recognized paradigm within elementary and secondary education (see, e.g., Chamot & O’Malley, 1994; Echevarria, Short, & Vogt, 2000; Snow & Brinton, 1997). The acceptance in language education that social language is necessary but not sufficient for academic success and that language operates not in isolation but rather as the vehicle for students to access content has sparked a substantive change in the role of language teachers and teaching (Gottlieb, 2003; Kaufmann & Crandall, 2005). It is my contention that language standards have helped stimulate and sustain this change process.

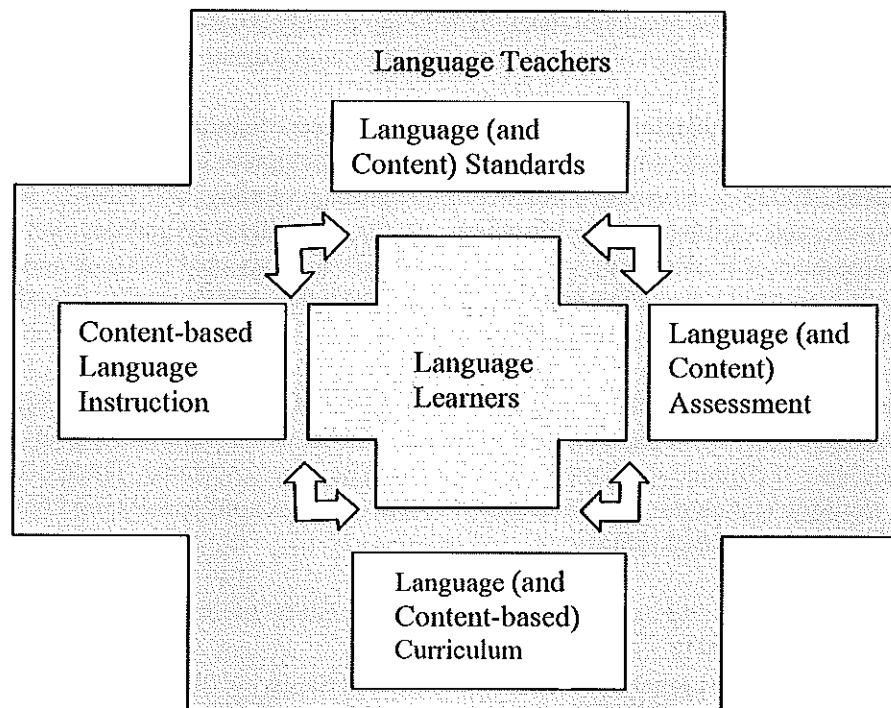


Figure 1. The interface of a standards-referenced educational system with language teachers and learners.

Language standards should provide direction and focus for teachers and students in language-centered classrooms. Integral to a language curriculum framework, language standards are the centerpiece of a three-phase process: 1. Previewing the context for language instruction, 2. Planning how language is incorporated into lesson design, and 3. Reflecting on how language learning has occurred (Gottlieb, Katz, & Ernst-Slavit, 2009). When language standards are systemically utilized for the collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of data that inform curriculum and instructional decisions for language learners, their impact can be strongly felt throughout the educational community.

PROFESSIONALISM: LANGUAGE STANDARDS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS AND LANGUAGE LEARNERS

In today's educational arena, standards underpin two key areas: assessment and accountability. In fact, language learners are subject to a double dose of accountability, both for their language development and academic achievement. In essence, language standards have been underutilized; standards-referenced language reporting, as currently construed, fails to adequately explain language learners' academic achievement. More often than not, the influence of language (whether native language or English) is not considered in students' content learning. As a result, schools and districts in the United States are being unjustifiably punished for students who, by definition, are not fully proficient in English (Wright, 2007). Paradoxically, according to federal guidelines, achievement on content tests impacts whether language learners meet state language criteria, while the converse—the influence of students' language proficiency on their academic achievement—is not acknowledged as part of the accountability equation.

Thus, the professionalism of language teachers is being unduly jeopardized for being unable to explicate the impact of language on achievement of language learners.

Accountability has been the driving force in the escalated use of student and teacher standards. Language standards, designed for language learners, are descriptive of how students use language, that is, student performance in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, at each level of proficiency or stage of language development. Academic content standards, intended for all students, outline what students at the various grade-levels are expected to know and be able to do in each content area, such as mathematics and science. Teacher standards describe the qualities of effective teachers and teaching practices.

Standards have infiltrated the field of education, impacting all students, language learners being no exception. Standards, by being a curricular anchor, instructional referent, and criterion for measurement, have facilitated the creation of aligned educational systems. The use of standards has touched multiple stakeholders, in particular, teachers and school leaders, and has permeated every aspect of schooling, including:

- curriculum and its alignment with assessment (Carr & Harris, 2001; Drake, 2007; TESOL, 2001)
- instructional practice (Agor, 2000; Davies Samway, 2000; Gottlieb, Katz, & Ernst-Slavit, 2009; Irujo, 2000; Smallwood, 2000)
- reporting of data (Gregory & Kuzmich, 2004)
- grading student progress (Trumbull & Farr, 2000)
- student portfolios (Koch & Schwarz-Petterson, 2000)
- professional development (Snow, 2000) and communities of practice for teachers and administrators.

Unlike other educational innovations which have waned and even disappeared over time, the standards-driven reform movement has maintained momentum. Its strength today can be attributed to the ongoing sharpening and evolution of educational theories and practices that are subsequently operationalized in the renewal of standards. Case in point, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) initially published its seminal *English as a Second Language Standards for Pre-K-12 Students* in 1997 and, as the field has matured, built on the knowledge base and expertise of a consortium of states to produce its 2006 *PreK-12 English Language Proficiency Standards*. Although language standards have remained steadfast to describing what students should know and be able to do at each level of proficiency, the underlying vision of *what* students should know and *how* that knowledge is measured has advanced substantively.

Language Standards for Language Learners

Language standards are expressions of language expectations of language learners as they move through a series of predictable stages on the pathway toward acquiring a new language. Generally descriptive statements that address the four language domains or modalities, language standards account for how language learners process or produce language for a given purpose within a given situation. In large part, language standards within English speaking societies have

been designed for linguistically and culturally diverse students requiring specialized instructional support in their development of English as an additional language as a conduit for achieving academic parity with their English proficient peers. The current generation of language standards centers on students' development of academic language requisite for navigating school and life.

Since 2003, I have been involved in the design, development, and implementation of English language proficiency standards for elementary and secondary students as lead developer of a consortium of more than 20 states housed at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin, as chair of TESOL's preK-12 Standards Committee, and as a course instructor for the Micronesian Institute at the University of Guam. Each new iteration of language proficiency standards has focused on the ongoing evolution of academic language as the theoretical base necessary for language learners to succeed in school. Having had the opportunity to work with literally hundreds of teachers and administrators, I have personally witnessed the gradual transformation of their thinking in regard to how to effectively educate this ever-growing school population of language learners through language standards.

Let's examine what constitutes language standards, in particular, TESOL's preK-12 English language proficiency standards. First, the five English language proficiency standards themselves:

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

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

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

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

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

Couched within the language proficiency standards is a full range of competencies of English language learners for five grade-level spans: PreK–K, 1–3, 4–5, 6–8, and 9–12. Within each span, or grade-level cluster, are five language proficiency levels: (1) Starting, (2) Emerging, (3) Developing, (4) Expanding, and (5) Bridging. These levels scaffold, or build on each other, across the second language acquisition continuum based on four criteria of the *performance definitions*: (1) social and academic language functions: how students process or use language to communicate; (2) vocabulary: how students process or use general, specialized, or technical words, phrases, and expressions endemic to content; (3) grammatical structures: how students process or use language patterns associated with individual contexts or content areas; and (4)

discourse: how students process or use the language of discipline-specific genres (TESOL, 2006).

Figure 2 is a page reproduced from the TESOL 2006 preK-12 English language proficiency standards that illustrates how each standard is represented within a matrix. The matrix is formed by the five levels of language proficiency crossed with selected language domains, in this case, reading and writing. In each cell, or sample performance indicator, language proficiency is expressed as the *language* associated with the language function, the content stem or context of interaction, and graphic, visual, or interactive support. The five cells (across the levels of language proficiency), bound by a common topic identified in the left-hand column, constitute a strand of sample performance indicators. The matrix is framed by native languages and cultures that serve as a visual reminder to educators of the valuable assets and resources language learners bring to school as well as the lens through which their learning is filtered.

English Language Proficiency Standard 3: The language of mathematics

Grade Level Cluster: 4–5

Language Domains: Reading and Writing

Content Topics: Three dimensional shapes, polygons, & angles; data analysis

Standard 3 English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the area of MATHEMATICS						
Domain	Topic	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
READING	Three-dimensional shapes	Sort figures by characteristics and properties from labeled visuals or objects (e.g., three sides, four angles)	Match characteristics and properties from visuals, objects, and phrases (e.g., the corner or right angle of the square)	Distinguish among figures from visually supported descriptions	Construct or draw figures by following steps of visually supported text	Inter geometric relationships among figures from modified grade-level text
	Polygons					
WRITING	Angles					
	Data analysis	Label variables or sets from graphs, tables, or charts working with a partner	Formulate and answer wh-questions from graphs, tables, or charts working with a partner	Organize, display, and describe information in graphs, tables, or charts with a partner	Produce paragraphs using information from graphs, tables, or charts	Summarize and apply information in graphs, tables, or charts to new situations

Figure 2. An example of a matrix from TESOL's 2006 English language proficiency standards (p. 73).

Features of This Generation of Language Standards

The advent of the new generation of English language proficiency standards with which I have been involved this decade represents a major shift in focus and format. The following aspects of standards development and delivery have changed their orientation, and have influenced the way educators view language teaching:

1. the target audience: from language educators to all educators who work with language learners
2. the content: from social language with acknowledgement of academic language to an emphasis on academic language in conjunction with social, intercultural, and instructional language
3. their design: from lists of descriptors and sample progress indicators to a series of matrices with strands of related sample performance indicators that, as outlined in the performance definitions, exhibit an incremental increase in vocabulary usage, grammatical complexity, and amount of discourse
4. their presentation: from implicit to explicit treatment of the four language domains coupled with built-in visual, graphic, or interactive support into the sample performance indicators
5. their implementation: from isolated classrooms to cooperative teams of language and content teachers
6. their use: from a resource for language teaching to a metric for language teaching.

Taken in their entirety, these language proficiency standards can be characterized by their transparency, flexibility, and sustainability. The overall versatility of the components of the standards encourages their adaptation and use by educational communities that value learning language through content for their language learners.

Transparency

The matrix design, as shown in Figure 2, with its left-to-right orientation of the language proficiency levels from lowest to highest, makes the process of language acquisition comprehensible and intuitive to stakeholders. The entire developmental progression, which indeed may be a multiyear endeavor for language learners, is set forth on a single page and replicated across standards, language domains, and grade-level clusters. The frame around the matrices is an ever present reminder to educators of the substantive role of native languages and cultures in second language learning and their accompanying perspectives for learning. This clear delineation of how the standards are represented results in a teacher-friendly document that is readily transparent to educational stakeholders.

Flexibility

Although the five English language proficiency standards remain constant and fixed, every component and element representative of the standards is subject to change or transformation (Gottlieb, 2004; Gottlieb, Cranley, & Oliver, 2007; Gottlieb, Katz, & Ernst-Slavit, 2009; TESOL, 2006). The reasoning behind this innovative treatment of how standards are expressed is twofold. First, as in large part the standards represent the language requisite for students to

access grade-level content, it simply would be an unmanageable compendium if every combination and permutation of academic content standards, to which the language proficiency standards are aligned, and academic language, the grounding of the language standards, were to be present in the document. Second, we value teacher voice and choice in curriculum development, instructional delivery, and instructional assessment. Educators should have the option to personalize and customize the implementation of the language standards to best reflect their teaching practices and individual circumstances.

Let's deconstruct a sample performance indicator of a language proficiency standard so that teachers can see their flexibility and latitude in constructing lessons and units of instruction.

Grade-level cluster: 6–8

Standard 4: The language of science

Topic: Weather, climate zones, natural disasters

Language Domain: Writing

Language Proficiency Level: 4. Expanding

Sample Performance Indicator (TESOL, 2006, p. 85)

Narrate personal impact of features, conditions or occurrences of natural disasters around the world using multiple sources (e.g., the Internet and family stories)

In this example, all three elements of the sample performance indicator (SPI)—the language function (**narrate personal impact**), the content stem (features, conditions or occurrences of natural disasters around the world) and support (*using multiple sources*)—as well as the language domain and topic may be transformed through substitution or addition. So if a teacher in Panama is having her language learners study forest fires, it would be easy to swap that content stem with the broader topic of “natural disasters” and “Panama” for “around the world” while maintaining the elements of the SPI. Or if the teacher wishes to have students produce oral reports in lieu of written narration, then the language domain would switch to speaking; if she wants the students to conduct an investigation and present a PowerPoint on the topic, then the support might change to *using multimedia*.

Numerous configurations can be made from a strand of sample performance indicators. Therefore, for a given sample performance indicator, teachers must ask, “What is the language necessary for students to access the content required in this context at this level of language proficiency?” The language demands of the situation are, in essence, how the standard is exemplified and represented in curriculum, instruction, and assessment for these language learners. The situated language associated with the standard includes the sample performance indicator coupled with the three criteria of the performance definitions (vocabulary, syntax, and discourse).

Sustainability

A third quality of the language standards is their projected durability over time. Given their theoretical grounding from a confluence of related fields—education, linguistics, and social psychology—language standards have become a mainstay in preservice and in-service teacher education programs. Given their usefulness across settings, with their ability to transcend types

of language education programs, language standards have wide applicability for all age groups and language learners. Given their alignment with academic content and language tests, language standards have become indispensable in helping to explain the relationship between language proficiency and academic achievement for language learners. Given their support by school leaders as well as content and language teachers, language standards have gained acceptance across the educational community serving language learners. In summary, over the past decade, language standards have become the genesis for developing curriculum and instruction for language learning and the criterion for which measurement of that learning is based.

Standards for Language Teachers

Recently, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (2009) has issued draft *English as a New Language (ENL) Standards* for accomplished teachers of linguistically and culturally diverse learners. These twelve standards address a deep and rich knowledge base for preparing teachers for advancing and supporting student learning. The standards stress teachers' internalization of the language development process and its affect on the students' acquisition and command of subject matter. Through these standards, teachers are not only expected to understand the nature and character of students from a linguistically and culturally diverse perspective, but are also to be their advocates in a world that remains skeptical as to how to embrace its linguistic and cultural richness.

There is a philosophical concordance between the proposed standards for language teachers and those for language learners. Language teachers are expected to provide language learners access to grade-level curriculum through language while honoring their heritages; language learners from a myriad of linguistic and cultural backgrounds are expected to process and use their new language within the school-based curriculum across a variety of contexts. The symmetry between these two sets of standards is striking and reinforces the cohesiveness of the educational community as it strives to enhance opportunities for academic success to these historically underserved students.

Yet another set of standards impacting P-12 Teacher Education Programs are those from TESOL/ National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Since 2001, these two organizations have collaborated to ensure consistency in the preparation and licensure of educators from language education programs in the United States. These standards are represented by interlocking circles that form five conceptual domains: language, culture, instruction, and assessment, with professionalism at the core.

THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE: ACADEMIC LANGUAGE AND ITS ROLE IN LANGUAGE STANDARDS

Much of the theoretical underpinning for standards, whether for language teachers or language learners, has centered on defining the construct of *academic language*. In fact, during this decade, the reconceptualization of language standards and how they are operationalized in PreK–12 classrooms has helped codify the emerging paradigm that views academic language as the centerpiece of language teaching and learning. This shift in thinking and acting is reflected in how language education is conceived, delivered, and evaluated, how language teachers envision,

design, and implement curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and how language targets are formulated and shared with students.

The roots of the current construct of academic language can be traced to the seminal work of Jim Cummins (1981), who in the early 1980s, first distinguished social from academic language, and Bernard Mohan (1986), who first elaborated the interrelationship between language and content learning. Today, the notion of academic language has expanded in depth and breadth to represent particular contexts of interaction related to specific subject disciplines and genres, such as the language of scientific inquiry or the language of historical documentation (Schleppegrell, 2004). Academic language is connected to school where language learners must negotiate and master a complex system of linguistically bound ideas, concepts, and relationships within individual content areas (Gee, 2007). To say the least, academic language encompasses a multidimensional and multifaceted range of competencies that language learners must develop over time to reach academic parity with their proficient peers.

From a conceptual standpoint, I originally envisioned academic language as the intersection of social language and academic achievement within a Venn diagram (Gottlieb, 2003). The dovetailing of these constructs underscores the notion that for language learners, academic language serves as a bridge to achievement and, at the same time, is integral to content learning. By expanding this model to include students' native language proficiency and its potential impact on overall achievement, the notion of academic language becomes more inclusive.

Various frameworks have been posited that attempt to define the dimensions of academic language as they pertain to the schooling of language learners (Dutro & Moran, 2003; Bailey & Butler, 2002; Scarcella, 2003). In addition, research practitioners have begun to delve into classroom application by analyzing the language of the core content areas: language arts (Fisher, Rothenberg, & Frey, 2007), mathematics (Coggins, Kravin, Coates, & Carroll, 2007), science (Bailey, Butler, Stevens, & Lord, 2007; Fatham, & Crowther, 2006) and social studies (Short, 1996).

It is this thinking, sparked by the language education research, which captured my attention and imagination in formulating language standards and illustrating the scaffolding of language development by means of the standards matrix. Initially, I devised a model of academic language proficiency in the form of a cube where each side represented a dimension—language complexity, contexts of interaction, cognitive engagement, and instructional support—across the four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Gottlieb, 2002). The dimensions identified in this model translated into the elements of sample performance indicators that serve as expressions of the English language proficiency standards: topics and content stems (contexts of interaction), language functions (levels of cognitive engagement), and instructional supports (visual, graphic, and interactive).

Today, the educational community as a whole is coming to consensus on the fact that students' academic language facilitates their ability to succeed academically. For without requisite use and control over academic language, students' opportunities for content learning are compromised (Francis, Lesaux, Kieffer, & Rivera, 2006).

CURRENT PRACTICE: THE USE AND ABUSE OF LANGUAGE STANDARDS

Any educational innovation generates a range of policies and their consequent interpretation of use; the implementation of standards is no exception. Compounding the issue is the fact that there was already a history attached to academic content standards and when language standards came onto the scene some 20 years later, teachers had preconceived ideas of their value and usability. On the positive side, overall, educators have embraced language standards for their focus on language learners, a group historically marginalized by the general education community.

There are pros and cons of any educational movement. Some educators see educational reform as a challenge of the status quo and an opportunity to pursue creative endeavors. Language standards, as a contributor to the reform movement, have enabled teachers to have a vision and description of how the language development process unfolds. As a result, teachers are able to differentiate language by proficiency level and differentiate language for instruction to maximize students' opportunities to access content through language. At the same time, language standards have helped shape curriculum, instruction, and assessment as well as continuity of educational experiences for language learners.

Other educators tend to be reductionistic and view educational reform through a narrow lens saying that standards, in attempting to make one size fit all, inhibit the creativity and ingenuity of teaching (Ohanian, 1999). This group of teachers and administrators most likely see standards as externally imposed by state and federal directives rather than as documents originated by teachers for teachers. For this group, standards become a vehicle for teacher compliance through static curriculum and standardized tests. Additionally, the unidimensional orientation of most standards fails to capture the linguistic and cultural richness that needs to be infused in teaching. Table 1 summarizes some of the advantages and disadvantages of using language standards.

Table 1
Potential Uses and Abuses of Language Standards

Potential Uses	Potential Abuses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A descriptive representation of the language development process to share with educators • A flexible, customizable document • A guide for language curriculum planning • The grounding for instruction and assessment for language learners • A communication tool for stakeholders • A resource for stakeholders involved in the education of language learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The sole interpretation of the language development process for language teachers ❖ A fixed, unalterable document ❖ The de facto language curriculum ❖ A narrow interpretation of instruction and assessment for language learners ❖ A mandate forced upon educators ❖ An albatross around educators' necks

Irrespective of which side you find yourself on in reference to language standards, you must admit that ultimately, having a common referent brings some sense of solidarity to language

educators and a yardstick for measuring student progress. This last section speaks to the ultimate goal of language standards: to disseminate clear information regarding the performance of language learners in their acquisition of social, instructional, intercultural, and academic language in school to the field of language education and the educational community at large.

LANGUAGE STANDARDS: A METRIC FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Standards-driven reform has been the engine that has fueled educational improvement while assessment has been the linchpin for educational accountability. Combining these two powerful forces, standards have, and continue to, set the bar on which student assessment rests. Standards-referenced assessment has become the criterion for measuring progress of students' language development and achievement, and indirectly, the barometer of teacher, school, and district performance. Without having this common metric for envisioning, enacting, and documenting what language learners know and are able to do, how can we meaningfully communicate our educational goals for these students and secure the needed evidence to advocate on their behalf?

Over this past decade, language standards have become foundational to language education and integral to the school life of language learners and their teachers. In fact, the introduction of language standards brings a conscious acknowledgement of an ever-increasing segment of the school population and their growing influence on curricular and instructional decision making. Language standards, in serving as the crosswalk to academic content standards, enable teachers and administrators to seamlessly connect students' language proficiency to their academic achievement.

Many stakeholders have become cognizant of the influential impact of language standards on guiding the teaching and learning of language learners. Teachers now set and share language targets for individual and groups of students based on grade-level language demands and language proficiency levels. Coordinators or directors of language education programs establish progress milestones and goals. Principals set benchmarks of language performance for each grade or their schools as a whole. And we cannot forget family members who must be informed of the language expectations for their children, how they are being measured, and the extent to which they are being met.

Language standards have altered the dynamic of educating language learners. Language teachers are being recognized for their critical role in furthering the development of their students' academic language and are succeeding in having classroom teachers share that responsibility. Language standards have also altered the dynamic of language learning. Language learners increasingly are having a say in defining their own language learning targets and assuming responsibility for achieving them.

In today's world, language teaching and language learning are becoming more synchronized as stakeholders become aware that language standards binds them together. Language standards, by being responsive to language learners' rich linguistic and cultural heritage and the value of their linguistic diversity, send a clear message that this generation of language learners can indeed succeed academically and contribute to our global society. It is my personal conviction that the

use of language standards, if viewed as a common metric for language teaching and language learning, can stimulate educational change, advance international understanding of academic language, and help unify the field of language education around the globe.

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