Connecting Policy and Practice to Support Dual Language Learners: Two California School District Examples

November 8, 2019
Introductions/Overview
Who are Dual Language Learners (DLLs)?
Overview of DLL Research & State Policies
Overview of 2 Key Programs
Audience Q&A
Introductions/Overview
Presenters

Patricia Lozano
Early Edge California

Carolyne Crolotte
Early Edge California

Deanna Mathies
Fresno Unified School District

Dean Tagawa
Los Angeles Unified School District
Dual Language Learner (DLL) refers to children, birth to age 5, who are learning two (or more) languages at the same time.

Source: U.S. Office of Head Start
Why Should We Focus on DLLs?

Between 1990 and 2014, the number of DLL children in U.S. grew +79%.

60% of California children are DLL.

50% of children in state preschools.

57% live in low-income families.

On average, DLL children enter kindergarten behind their peers in language, literacy, and math.

Other than parents, teachers have the most significant and long-lasting impact on a child’s educational trajectory.

AIR 2017 Research Brief “Transitional Kindergarten in California: The Impact of Transitional Kindergarten on English Learner Students”
Most Teachers/Providers Have Not Received DLL-Specific Training

Research shows that without specific training, teachers are not adequately prepared to teach DLL children.

Sources: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California at Berkeley & California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, California Early Care and Education Workforce Study: Licensed Child Care Centers and Family Care Providers, Los Angeles County (2006); NASEM Report Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures (2017)
ELs make up 20% of California’s K-12 public education system, totaling 1.3M students.

In 2018, nearly 90% of ELs across all grades in California did not meet English and math standards.

4 in 10 of California’s K-12 students are current or former ELs.
• Children are wired to learn any language and can successfully learn more than one language

• Strong home language supports learning English and academic achievement

• Learning two languages is associated with improved cognition, executive function and social interactions
Early Years: Critical Period for Language Learning

The graph illustrates the language score based on the age of acquisition of a new language. The score is high for native speakers and decreases as the age of acquisition increases from 3-7 to 17-39 years old.
Early and continuous **English AND home language development** in high-quality early childhood programs can help reduce the achievement gap.

**DLLs are at risk of losing their home language**, reducing levels of competence, and advantages associated with bilingualism, if home language is not supported in Early Learning settings.

What is known about high-quality ECE in general is the foundation for effective practices for DLLs. However, that basic high-quality ECE instruction **must be enhanced** to meet the unique linguistic and developmental needs of DLLs.
Overview of State Policies
Recent Policies that Support Bilingualism/DLLs

- **Proposition 58** – *(Education for a Global Economy initiative)* passed by voters in November 2016 (73.5%)

- **The California English Learner Roadmap Policy** – adopted by the State Board of Education in July 2017

- **The State Seal of Biliteracy**

- **Global California 2030**
California English Learner Roadmap

- Early childhood to 12th grade policy
- Aligned with state priorities, policies and current research
- Bilingualism & biliteracy as a goal
- DLL/EL students are the shared responsibility of all educators
The Benefits of Dual Language Programs in the Early Years
Overview of 2 Key Programs
Fresno Language Project

Goal of the Fresno Language Project: Improve professional development and training for early learning educators to better support the needs of young Dual Language Learners (DLLs).

The Fresno Language Project was created as a multi-agency collaborative to ensure all children have a strong foundation in both English and their home language upon entering kindergarten.

The project is implementing innovative practices—including Personalized Oral Language(s) Learning (POLL) strategies, which are concrete approaches that support language learning in multiple environments.
Professional Development Sessions
All participants engaged in five three-hour Saturday professional development sessions each year. The training sessions focused on the following topics:

1. The Value of Linguistic and Cultural Diversity
2. Family Engagement
3. Personalized Oral Language(s) Learning (POLL)
4. Support for Home Language
Fresno USD
Language Learning Project

Ongoing Coaching Support
The project included one coach designated to support the 19 learning settings participating in the Fresno Language Project. In addition to the five Saturday professional development trainings, all educators received a minimum of three coaching contacts a month to support the implementation of P.O.L.L. strategies.

The coaching format is designed around the following:
1. Collaborative Learning
2. Coaching Portfolios

@EarlyEdgeCA  #acsaSummit

EarlyEdgeCalifornia.org
Language Learning Project

COMPONENTS

- Language Learning Project: Leadership Orientation
- DLL Toolkit
- Fours statewide orientations (Orange county, LA, Sacramento, and Central)
- Language Learning Project Cohorts (Kern & Tulare)
- State Evaluation

@EarlyEdgeCA #acsasummit EarlyEdgeCalifornia.org
LAUSD
Dual Language Program Pilot

- Supported by the White House Report on Dual Language Learners
- Support from board members and district senior leadership
- Developing a board resolution
- Learning from others
- Thoughtful investments
Highly collaborative process
- Partnerships
- Securing Funding
- On-going support

Workforce development
- Training for all
- Full cycle professional development
- Resources

LAUSD
Dual Language Program Pilot

#acsasummit
Students at the center
● Alignment
● Culturally relevant
● Resources
● Developmentally appropriate
● Pathways to the seal of biliteracy