

Integrated English Language Development

Kelli Scardina and Jennifer Johnson

Language development is a responsibility of all teachers, regardless of their assignment or content area. To meet content standards like the Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, students must not only understand content but also develop critical language knowledge and skills, as outlined in English language proficiency standards like [those used in Oregon](#).

The integrated English language development (ELD) service model guides educators to combine content and language instruction. The model provides inclusive, equitable access to core content while improving linguistic and academic outcomes for emergent multilingual students.

What is integrated instruction?

In the integrated ELD model, educators teach language and content simultaneously by designing lessons focused on content standards with scaffolding that supports emergent multilingual students at their respective language proficiency levels. With integrated ELD, students experience explicit language development opportunities throughout the school day—not just in language classes.



Guided by both language and content standards, students receive high-quality, embedded English language instruction while engaging in rigorous language arts practice: reading, writing, speaking, and listening about meaningful current topics, themes, and events. In addition, all students can take elective courses. Newcomer and beginning English learner students, who tend to need more intensive support, may receive additional instruction in a separate ELD class.

Content area and ELD teachers use English language proficiency standards to design integrated language and learning outcomes. The standards define what students should know and do by highlighting how language is used to access grade-appropriate texts and tasks. The standards also delineate how students interact with one another to construct meaning, use language to connect their ideas, and express their understanding of concepts.

The inclusive integrated ELD model differs from traditional practices such as pull-out programs, the typical model for English learner students. Pull-out programs often socially stigmatize students and create barriers to opportunity.^{i, ii} Further, pull-out programs offer few opportunities to extend language learning and are relatively ineffective in terms of student outcomes.ⁱⁱⁱ By contrast, integrated ELD benefits all students—regardless of whether they are designated as English learners.

Why integrated instruction?

Research shows that students acquire English faster, make greater academic gains, form stronger relationships with their classmates, and better engage in classroom tasks if they remain in core classes with their peers instead of being pulled into a separate ELD class.^{iv} By emphasizing grade-level access to core content with high support, the integrated ELD model ensures that students designated as English learners participate in the same engaging disciplinary practices as their peers.^v The model helps educators weave concepts, analytical practices, and the associated language demands into a seamless, coherent experience.^{vi}

“Given the growing numbers of English learners attending schools throughout the United States, the increasing language and literacy demands across the subject areas, and the fact that disciplinary instruction can serve as an ideal context for language development, it can no longer be the case that the development of English for academic purposes remains the sole responsibility of English as a Second Language teachers. This responsibility has to be understood as belonging to every teacher, in every discipline.”

– Walqui & Bunch 2019, p. ix

Federal law mandates that all schools give students access to grade-level content and provide ELD that allows English learners “to attain both English proficiency and parity of participation in the standard instructional program within a reasonable amount of time ... until [they] are proficient in English and can participate meaningfully” without designated English learner support.^{vii} Similar to the highly effective dual language model, the integrated ELD model provides language instruction in the context of academic content, making content area learning more accessible.^{viii}

Districts that have shifted to integrated ELD programs say the model supports meaningful content-rich activities and language growth. When teachers carefully scaffold language and content learning—and students work and talk together—language development occurs.^{ix}

References

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