

# Section 1

## Why Evaluate?

- Accountability
  - Describe, Monitor and Document Your Program
  - Resources Issues
  - SUGGESTIONS & EXAMPLES: Begin an Evaluation Notebook
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### **Accountability**

DO DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAMS WORK? That is, do students in dual language programs develop appropriate bilingual and academic competencies?

If you answered "YES" to this question, how do you know these programs work? This is a common question asked by parents, principals, teachers, superintendents, school board members, legislators, community members and journalists. Few educators and parents are willing to support a program based on a hunch that it might work. They want proof—data—that the program is successful. Thus, one major reason for evaluation is accountability. This issue tends to permeate discussions at the local, state and national levels in the current era of rigorous standards and escalating pressure to demonstrate the academic competencies of students. Added to the dialogue on school accountability is a political climate that is unreceptive to bilingual education in some parts of the country. In this politically charged climate, we must be able to demonstrate that dual language programs work—and that they work for all student participants: English language learners (ELLs), native English speakers, students of different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, and special needs students.

In addition, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires the establishment of measurable objectives for all students, including ELLs, and enforces accountability requirements. The rationale for including ELLs in high-stakes tests is to hold them to the same high standards as their peers and to ensure that their needs are not overlooked. The NCLB accountability system requires that schools assess all students (with certain exceptions) at most grade levels, but it does not charge schools with collecting data that is relevant to dual language programs, such as the progress of English language learners and native English speakers in:

- oral proficiency in the non-English language,
- language arts (reading and writing) in the non-English language,
- academic achievement in challenging subject matter demonstrated through a non-English language,
- cultural, social, or affective arenas.

## Describe, Monitor, and Document Your Program

There are other important reasons for doing an evaluation as well. According to Diane August & Kenji Hakuta (1998)<sup>1</sup>, assessment should be incorporated into the educational process so that the progress of students, teachers, programs, classrooms, and schools can be monitored. Research on effective schools also demonstrates that schools that are considered highly effective use ongoing diagnosis, evaluation and feedback. So, a well-designed evaluation can provide information to guide decisions at the school and classroom levels by:

### Why Evaluate?

- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Program development
- ✓ Modify instructional strategies, management
- ✓ Understand staff, parent & student needs and attitudes
- ✓ Student self-assessment

#### School level:

- Assuring that the program is meeting its goals
- Using evaluative information to further enhance the program
- Ensuring that teachers understand the model and are implementing it correctly
- Understanding teacher attitudes toward the program and students being served
- Better understanding needs of parents

#### Classroom level:

- Monitoring student progress
- Providing diagnostic information about student abilities
- Guiding and improving instructional planning and activities for students
- Facilitating classroom management
- Helping students to regulate their own learning
- Communicating student performance to parents

Clearly, there are many issues that can be included in an evaluation. Developing appropriate program evaluation requires careful planning. In the next section, we will turn to the topic of making appropriate decisions about what to include in an evaluation plan.

Some of this planning requires determining what resources are available to you as you plan for your evaluation, so we turn to that next.

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<sup>1</sup> August, D. & Hakuta, K. (Eds.). (1997). *Improving schooling for language minority children: A research agenda*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

## **Resources Issues**

Different types of resources will be needed to conduct a good program evaluation. These include:

- Personnel to establish the evaluation plan
- Personnel to oversee the data collection and make sure that the instruments are available at the time that they are needed, and that the data are collected on time
- Personnel to enter the data into the spreadsheet
- Personnel to conduct the analyses and interpret the results
- Funding for these personnel
- Funding for the cost of ordering and scoring tests that are not covered by the district
- Funding to make copies of questionnaires or other instruments
- Funding for professional development

These factors need to be contemplated during the course of establishing the evaluation plan, as it may be necessary to obtain additional funding from the district or fundraising or a nearby business, or to seek help from parents, or from faculty or students at a nearby university.

But, a high quality evaluation will definitely be worth its cost!

Before we move on to the next section, it is important to start a Program Evaluation Notebook (you can make the title something more interesting to you—whatever you want). This notebook will be further developed here as you begin the step-by-step procedure in evaluating your program.

## **SUGGESTIONS & EXAMPLES: Begin an Evaluation Notebook**

If you don't have a written program guide, it is difficult to evaluate your program, and now would be a good time to start to develop one or to enhance the one that you do have.

You should get an empty binder with dividers, and begin to fill it with information obtained in this Toolkit.

- On the next page, you can see an EXAMPLE of a Program Description
- In the next few pages, you will see some questions and tables that can help you develop or enhance your own program description.

## EXAMPLE of a Program Description

### Language Academy of Sacramento, California

Excerpt From One School's Description

The method of instruction utilized will be the 90:10 model of Two-Way Spanish Immersion in which a majority of the school curriculum is taught in Spanish. Students in kindergarten and first grade will receive 90% of their daily instruction in Spanish and 10% in English. Each year, students will receive more instruction in English as the percentage of Spanish instruction time begins to decrease. By 5<sup>th</sup> grade students will receive 50% of their daily instruction in Spanish and 50% in English.

Two-Way Immersion 90:10 Model: Percentages of Daily Instruction

Grade	% of Spanish	% of English
K and 1 <sup>st</sup>	90%	10%
2 <sup>nd</sup>	80%	20%
3 <sup>rd</sup>	70%	30%
4 <sup>th</sup>	60%	40%
5 <sup>th</sup> - 6 <sup>th</sup>	50%	50%

Spanish becomes the vehicle for content instruction and the subject of instruction itself, particularly in the primary grades, where primary age students are taught the California Standards in Spanish with an emphasis on concrete objects, first-hand experiences, visual aids and hands-on cooperative group learning. Most of the instruction is in Spanish in the primary grades, and formal introduction to literacy occurs in Spanish for all students starting in kindergarten. Beginning in third grade, both Spanish and English reading/language arts are taught at each grade level. English Language Development is taught daily from kindergarten through sixth grade.

The curriculum is based on the California state standards and will be taught through thematic cycles, identified through grade level standards in science and social studies, and designed to reflect the interests and backgrounds of the student population.

Two-way immersion teachers have created thematic units based on appropriate state-adopted texts and supplemented with authentic literature. All themes reflect California grade level standards in all content areas, and include multicultural content as well. Students' backgrounds and interests have provided natural points of departure for the themes, and the

community's "funds of knowledge" have been tapped into as resources for learning. The multicultural component of the curriculum is based on Sleeter and Grant's (2001) model of multicultural education, which stresses the learning of core academic content knowledge along with knowledge of democratic processes and social equity.

Instructional strategies will be based on the Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol (SIOP)<sup>2</sup>, a research-driven approach to teaching students who are learning academic content in a second language. Strategies from the SIOP include identifying academic language to be taught explicitly in each lesson, using appropriate formative and summative assessment tools, and using different participatory structures to enhance language use and elicit extended academic discourse in students' second language. Special attention will be paid to grouping students, since research on successful two-way programs indicates that: "Classrooms should include a balance of students from the non-English and English backgrounds who participate in instructional activities together," and, "Positive interactions among students should be facilitated by the use of strategies such as cooperative learning."<sup>3</sup> In response to these findings, students will often be grouped heterogeneously by language in cooperative learning groups, and will engage in activities that are meaning-based and allow the students to work toward common academic goals.

During a daily English Language Development (ELD) period, students will be grouped within the same classroom and across classrooms by English proficiency level and will be taught by a teacher who has a deep knowledge of the English language curriculum that corresponds to the students' language and cognitive levels. At the start of the academic year, teachers will analyze the scores of the annually administered California English Language Development Test (CELDT) in order to determine appropriate groupings. During the course of the year, ongoing assessments in ELD will provide a more accurate picture as students develop higher levels of English proficiency in line with annual program expectations.

In order to make content accessible to English learners, teachers will use GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Development) educational strategies, which has received nation-wide recognition for enhancing English learners' educational success. Native English speakers will serve as language models for the English learners and will receive instruction appropriate to their needs. In order to fulfill these needs, a similar twofold strategy will be used. Native English speakers will be taught in Spanish with similar language content to English learners. In addition, teachers will use the GLAD and SIOP methods when they teach in Spanish, to ensure that native English speakers have access to the core curriculum.

**NOTE.** You can find other examples of program descriptions in various schools' brochures or in descriptions online.

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<sup>2</sup> Echevarria, J., Vogt, M., & Short, D. (2003). *Making Content Comprehensible for English Language Learners: The SIOP Model* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

<sup>3</sup> Lindholm-Leary, K. (2001). *Dual Language Education*. Avon, England: Multilingual Matters.

# EVALUATION NOTEBOOK: Dual Language Program Description

## I. Description of Program Structure

The model is a (two-way immersion/dual language/developmental bilingual) program in English and \_\_\_\_\_(other language).

Percentages of Daily Instruction

Grade	Percent of Instruction Through English	Percent of Instruction Through L2		Reading & Writing in English is formally taught at the following grade levels	Reading & Writing in L2 is formally taught at the following grade levels
K					
1 <sup>st</sup>					
2 <sup>nd</sup>					
3 <sup>rd</sup>					
4 <sup>th</sup>					
5 <sup>th</sup>					
6 <sup>th</sup>					

You should describe, in as much detail as possible, what your program looks like. It should contain everything that new teachers to your program would need to help them make good instructional decisions (in addition to professional development, of course).

- What content areas are taught in each language at each grade level?
- What instructional materials are used at each grade level in each language?
- What instructional strategies are used (or should be used)?
- What research supports the program?

In doing this, you might discover that you are not implementing the program you thought, or that teachers are not using the instructional strategies you thought, or that you are unclear about what strategies or approaches are best. These are all pieces that you could investigate as a part of your evaluation.