

# LA 5.2: Worksheet - Second Language Acquisition Facts

## Realities

- There are many parallels between learning a first and second language.
- While younger language learners may learn to pronounce a new language with little or no accent, older language learners are often more efficient learners.
- The ability to speak a second language (especially in conversational settings) does not guarantee that student will be able to use the language effectively in academic settings.
- The challenge of learning English for school varies tremendously from learner to learner and depends on many factors.
- Language learning is a developmental process; while learning a language will not occur in the absence of exposure to the language, increased exposure to the language (particularly in academic settings) does not guarantee quicker learning.
- Students from all language and cultural backgrounds are equally capable of learning English as a second language; academic success cannot be attributed to language or cultural background, but rather to a variety of social, emotional, intellectual, and academic factors.

—From Myths and Realities, pp. 17-27.

## General Principles of Language Acquisition

- Language is functional.
  - Language varies.
  - Language learning is cultural learning.
  - Language acquisition is a long term process.
  - Language acquisition occurs through meaningful use and interaction.
  - Language processes develop interdependently
  - Native language proficiency contributes to second language acquisition.
  - Bilingualism is an individual and societal asset.
- From TESOL, ESL Standards of Pre-K-12 Students

## Collier's Synthesis

- Students with strong academic instruction in two languages usually take from 4-7 years to reach national norms.
- Immigrants arriving at ages 8-12, with 2 years of schooling in their first language take 5-7 years to reach average level of performance of native English speakers on standardized tests in reading, social studies, science.
- Young arrivals with no schooling in their first language may take as long as 7-10 years to reach the average level of performance of native English speakers on standardized tests in reading, social studies, science.
- Adolescent arrivals with no previous exposure to L2 who are not provided L1 support in academic work do not have enough time left in high school to make up the lost years of academic instruction.
- Consistent, uninterrupted cognitive academic development in all subjects throughout students' schooling is more important than the number of hours of instruction in L2 for successful achievement in the second language.

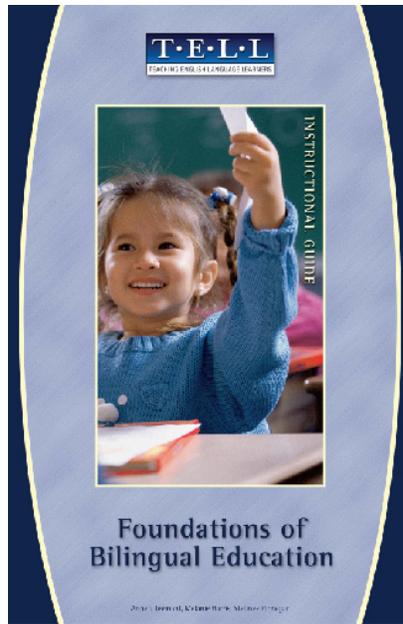
—From Myths and Realities, pp. 23-24.

## **ESL GOALS**

**To use English to communicate in social settings**

**To use English to achieve academically in all content areas**

**To used English in socially and culturally appropriate ways**



Pinnegar, S. E. (2019). *Foundations of Bilingual Education*. EdTech Books.  
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