

APPENDIX C

TYPES OF L2 LEARNERS

Although many different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and English proficiency levels characterize the large and heterogeneous population of California students, the groupings of ELL and FEP based on school assessments can be described generally as follows:

English Language Learner (ELL) students are defined by the California Department of Education as “those students for whom there is a report of a primary language other than English on the state-approved Home Language Survey and who, on the basis of the state-approved oral language (K-12) assessment procedures and including literacy (grades 3-12), have been determined to lack the clearly defined English language skills of listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing necessary to succeed in the school’s regular instructional programs.”

ELLs typically have the following backgrounds:

- are newly or recently arrived nonnative English speaking immigrants;
- may have little or no English language proficiency or cultural knowledge of the U.S.;
- may or may not have first language literacy; and

- will require specialized instruction to develop oral fluency as well as academic reading and writing proficiency.

Fluent-English Proficient (FEP) learners, on the other hand, typically have the following characteristics:

- are children of immigrants to the U.S. whose home language is other than English and who have received much (if not all) of their education in the U.S.;
- have dual cultural development; hence they have been referred to as Generation 1.5 (Rumbaut and Ima, 1988), with traits of both the first and second generation immigrants;
- are often bilingual or multilingual; and
- although orally fluent, often lack college/ university level competency in academic reading and writing.

From these defining characteristics, it is clear that our L2 population is extremely diverse and that the levels and kinds of English proficiency vary widely.