DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF SERVICES TO LEP STUDENTS AND LEP STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

(Contract No. ED-00-CO-0089)

POLICY REPORT: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS RELATED TO LEP AND SPED-LEP STUDENTS

Authors:

ANNETTE M. ZEHLER
HOWARD L. FLEISCHMAN
PAUL J. HOPSTOCK
TODD G. STEPHENSON
MICHELLE L. PENDZICK
SALONI SAPRU

Submitted by:

Development Associates, Inc.

Subcontractors:

Center for Equity and Excellence in Education
The George Washington University

National Center on Educational Outcomes
University of Minnesota

Submitted to:

U.S. Department of Education
Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement of Limited English Proficient Students (OELA)

2003

This report was prepared for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA), under Contract No. ED-00-CO-0089. The opinions, conclusions and recommendations expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department of Education and no official endorsement by the Department of Education should be inferred.

Technical Advisory Panel Members

Dr. Donna Christian
President
Center for Applied Linguistics
Washington, DC

Dr. Patricia Gandara
Professor & Associate Director
UC Linguistic Minority Research Institute
Division of Education,
Univ. of California at Davis
Davis, CA

Mr. Richard Maraschiello
Former Director
Office of Assessment
School District of Philadelphia
National Measurement Consultant
Harcourt Educational Measurement
Philadelphia, PA

Dr. Alba A. Ortiz
Director, Office of Bilingual Education
Professor, Dept. of Special Education
University of Texas at Austin
Austin, TX

Mr. Gerard Toussaint
State ESL Consultant (Retired)
Instructional Services
Raleigh, NC

Mr. Dao Xiong
Parent Advocate
Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights
Minneapolis, MN

Ms. Elizabeth Watkins
ELL & Minority Issues Specialist
Division of Special Education
Minnesota State Dept. of Children, Families & Learning
Roseville, MN

Acknowledgments

The study *Descriptive Study of Services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students and LEP Students with Disabilities* was conducted for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement of Limited English Proficient Students (OELA; formerly, OBEMLA), under contract No. ED-00-CO-0089. We were fortunate to work with a number of people on the project team and outside, and we are indebted to the intellectual insights and support that they provided in a number of ways. On this project Development Associates, Inc., was pleased to work with our partners, the Center for Equity and Excellence in Education (CEEE, The George Washington University), and the National Center for Educational Outcomes (NCEO, University of Minnesota). We are grateful to Dr. Charlene Rivera, Director, Dr. Janet Orr, and Dr. Janet Voigt, of CEEE; and to Dr. Martha Thurlow, Director, Ms. Kristin Liu, and Dr. Jane Minnema of NCEO, for their input at key points in the project, as well as their assistance in conducting the case study portion of the research. In particular, we thank Dr. Orr and Dr. Voight for overseeing the conduct of the case study interviews and reporting. Also, we thank Ms. Emily Crandall, Ms. Laura Golden, Ms. Madlene Hamilton, Ms. Marilyn Muirhead, and Ms. Lisa Bushey, all of CEEE, and Dr. Shirley Thomas for their assistance in the case study research.

Development Associates, Inc. was also guided in the study by contributions from the members of the Technical Advisory Panel, who met as a group with the study staff to provide comment and insight at critical points in the design and implementation of the project. We extend our special appreciation to these panel members for their time and contributions: Dr. Donna Christian (Center for Applied Linguistics), Dr. Patricia Gandara (Linguistic Minority Research Institute, University of California, Davis), Mr. Richard Maraschiello (formerly, School District of Philadelphia), Dr. Alba Ortiz (University of Texas), Mr. L. Gerard Toussaint (State ESL Consultant, North Carolina, now retired), Mr. Dao Xiong (Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights), and Ms. Elizabeth Watkins (Division of Special Education, Minnesota State Department of Children Families, and Learning). We also acknowledge the contributions of Dr. Grace Zamora Duran, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education; we are most appreciative of her input and support through her participation as a Department of Education member of the Advisory panel.

As a large and complex undertaking, the study presented many points at which content and procedural decisions were required to be made in consultation with the study sponsor, the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) of the U.S. Department of Education. We are grateful to Dr. Maria Ferrier, Deputy Under-Secretary and Director of OELA, and Ms. Kathleen Leos, Associate Deputy Under-Secretary**,** OELA, for their interest, careful review, and support of the study. In particular, we wish to thank Mr. Timothy D'Emilio, Senior Education Research Analyst for OELA and COTR for the study, for his vision and support throughout the many steps in the course of the project; his guidance and untiring efforts were very important to the successful completion of this research. We also thank Mr. John Chapman (Budget Service, U. S. Department of Education) for his input to the study design and support in the conduct of the study, including his assistance in providing the historical databases on Title VII funding necessary to the process of developing the study sample; and Mr. Peter McCabe, for his assistance in sharing information from the Office for Civil Rights survey to assist in the definition of the study sampling frame.

Special appreciation is extended to the many district and school coordinators for LEP services and for special education who participated in the study surveys, assisted in the on-site data collection, and shared their experience and perspectives with us in interviews. Their contributions were the core of the study, and we are deeply grateful for their support and interest in the study, and for their care in providing the information requested.

There were many who contributed to the completion of this research. Within Development Associates, Inc., the study benefited at key points through the input and support of Dr. Malcolm B. Young, Vice President and Corporate Officer in Charge. This project was the work of a close team of researchers. As in the prior study, we benefited from the expertise of our colleague Dr. Paul Hopstock in developing the design and in the conduct of the sampling and analyses. We also thank Dr. Hopstock for his significant contributions to the development of the main study reports, and in particular his contributions to this policy report. The follow-up efforts in the study proved to be particularly demanding, but we were fortunate in having the assistance of Ms. Michelle Pendzick as coordinator for the on-site data collection and follow-up supervisor. Ms. Pendzick trained and managed the teams of district liaisons and follow-up callers. Mr. Todd Stephenson and Ms. Pendzick maintained the study files and conducted the data analyses under the guidance and direction of Dr. Paul Hopstock. Dr. Saloni Sapru was the study liaison working with CEEE to organize the case study visits and receipt of reports. Ms. Cynthia Hamill conducted key work in developing and maintaining the sampling frame database, and in developing and finalizing the databases for the study sample. Dr. Dirhan Ghosh, consultant, offered expert input on sampling and analysis issues. We thank the dedicated team of district liaisons and follow-up callers, and extend our appreciation also to Ms. Maureen Guillot, administrative assistant, for all of her work in responding to many calls during the survey portion of the study, and assisting in the production of the study reports. We thank all of these members of the study team for their dedication to the study tasks and for their important contributions to the study overall.

Annette M. Zehler, PhD
Project Director

Howard L. Fleischman
Deputy Director

September 2003

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

A. FINDINGS RELATED TO LEP STUDENTS

Numbers and Characteristics of LEP Students

- There were an estimated 3,977,819 LEP students in grades K-12 in public schools in the United States in 2001-2002.
- The LEP student population increased 72 percent between 1992 and 2002.
- LEP students represented 8.4 percent of all students in grades K-12.
- Spanish-language students were by far the largest group of LEP students, representing 76.9 percent of all LEP students.
- LEP students were enrolled in about 43 percent of all districts, and in about half of all public schools in the United States.
- The majority (53.7 percent) of LEP students were enrolled in a small number of districts with very large LEP student populations (5,000 or more LEP students each).
- The majority (60.8 percent) of school districts with LEP students enrolled 99 or fewer LEP students each, and about half of these districts enrolled fewer than 25 LEP students.

Instruction of LEP Students

- Between 1992 and 2002, the percentage of LEP students who received LEP services all in English increased substantially (from 33.7 percent to 47.9 percent).
- Between 1992 and 2002, the percentage of LEP students who received *Extensive LEP services, with significant native language use* (Service Type 8) decreased by more than half (from 37.0 percent to 17.0 percent).
- Between 1992 and 2002, the percentage of LEP students who received mainstream instruction only, without LEP services, increased (from 3.5 percent to 11.7 percent).

Instructional Staff who Work with LEP Students

- There were more than 1.2 million teachers who instructed at least one LEP student in grades K-12 in 2001-2002. This estimate is 3.5 times the number of staff estimated in 1992.
- In 2001-2002, teachers of LEP students represented an estimated 43 percent of all teachers in grades K-12, as compared with 15 percent ten years earlier.
- Teachers who worked with three or more LEP students reported a median of 4 hours of training related to LEP students over the past five years.
- Approximately 40 percent of teachers who worked with at least three LEP students reported "significant LEP training", i.e., ESL certification, or bilingual education certification, or 20 hours or more of in-service training (within the past five years) related to the instruction of LEP students.
- There were an estimated 204,553 instructional aides who worked with at least one LEP student in grades K-12 in 2001-2002. This is about three times the number estimated in 1992.

Alignment of Instruction and Assessment of LEP Students

- Instructional programs for LEP students were reported to be less aligned with standards than were programs for English-proficient students.
- Teachers received general materials and training on alignment more commonly than they received materials and training specifically related to LEP students.
- Responses from district coordinators indicated that 82.0 percent of LEP students participated in the most recent Statewide testing.
- One in four (25.4 percent) LEP students received some form of accommodation on Statewide tests.

Data on LEP Students and LEP Student Outcomes

- Criteria for defining LEP status are determined by districts based on a combination of State and district policies; thus, there is variation in the definition of LEP status across districts and States.
- Coordinators reported that current LEP students were scoring below grade level in English reading and mathematics: 76.0 percent reported third-grade LEP students were below or well below grade level in reading; 52.9 percent reported eighth grade LEP students were below or well below grade level in mathematics.
- Many district coordinators were unable to provide summary data on the achievement of former LEP students.
- *Former LEP status* is often not included in district databases.

B. FINDINGS RELATED TO SPED-LEP STUDENTS

Number and Characteristics of SpEd-LEP Students

- **Many districts did not have mechanisms in place for identifying SpEd-LEP students as a specific subgroup of students.**
- **SpEd-LEP students were most typically (in 69.7 percent of districts with SpEd-LEP students) first identified as LEP and later identified as requiring special education services.**
- **There were an estimated 357,325 SpEd-LEP students in public schools in grades K-12 in 2001-2002.**
- **SpEd-LEP students represented 9.0 percent of all LEP students in U.S. public schools.**
- **SpEd-LEP students were an estimated 8.2 percent of all special education students in districts with at least one SpEd-LEP student.**
- **In districts with at least one SpEd-LEP student, smaller proportions of LEP students (9.2 percent) than of students in general (13.5 percent) were reported to be receiving special education program services.**
- **The proportion of LEP students receiving special education program services varied by district. Districts with 99 or fewer LEP students reported higher percentages of SpEd-LEP students (15.8 percent of LEP students) than did districts with 100 or more LEP students (9.1 percent of LEP students).**

Instruction of SpEd-LEP Students

- **Three-quarters (75.7 percent) of districts with SpEd-LEP students did not have services designed specifically for these students; most appeared to provide services for SpEd-LEP students by combining the separate efforts of LEP program staff and special education staff.**
- **Compared to LEP students, SpEd-LEP students were less likely to receive extensive LEP services, and were more likely to receive instruction in English.**
- **A majority (55.0 percent) of SpEd-LEP students received special education services outside the general classroom 21 percent or more of the time.**
- **A majority (55.0 percent) of SpEd-LEP students received some special education services within the general classroom.**

Instructional Staff who Work with SpEd-LEP Students

- An estimated 729,603 teachers in public schools in the U.S. worked with at least one SpEd-LEP student 2001-2002.
- Teachers of SpEd-LEP students represented 24 percent of all public school teachers in grades K-12.
- An estimated 156,292 instructional aides worked with at least one SpEd-LEP students in 2001-2002.
- Three-quarters of district coordinators in districts with SpEd-LEP students reported that they lacked sufficient numbers of teachers qualified to serve SpEd-LEP students.

Alignment of Instruction and Assessment for SpEd-LEP Students

- Instructional programs for SpEd-LEP students were reported to be not as aligned with State content/performance standards as were instructional programs for special education students in general.
- General curriculum materials/training to align instruction with State standards were provided more often to teachers of SpEd-LEP students than were materials/ training specific to LEP or SpEd-LEP students.
- Approximately three-quarters of SpEd-LEP students in grades in which tests were administered were included in the most recent Statewide testing.
- The majority (63.0 percent) of SpEd-LEP students received accommodations on Statewide tests.

Data on SpEd-LEP Students and Learning Outcomes for SpEd-LEP Students

- District coordinators indicated that data on SpEd-LEP students were most commonly combined with data for other special education students for reporting; SpEd-LEP student data are reported separately by only few districts.
- Only a very few districts could provide data in response to questions on outcomes in terms of diplomas received and dropout among SpEd-LEP students and special education students.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Technical Advisory Panel Members ..... *i*
Acknowledgments ..... *iii*
Summary of Key Findings ..... *v*

1. Introduction 1

2. Findings Related to LEP Students 3

2.1 What is the size of the LEP student population? 3
2.2 What are the native languages of LEP students? 4
2.3 Where are LEP students enrolled? 5
2.4 What instructional services do LEP students receive? 6
2.5 What change has there been in the instructional services received by LEP students since 1991-1992? 8
2.6 Do LEP students receive sequences of services? That is, do they change from one service type to another over time? 10
2.7 How many instructional staff in grades K-12 work with LEP students? 11
2.8 What are the backgrounds and training of instructional staff who work with LEP students? 13
2.9 To what extent have LEP students participated in reforms related to State standards and assessments? 15
2.10 What are outcomes for LEP students? 18

3. Findings Related to SpEd-LEP Students 21

3.1 What is the size of the SpEd-LEP student population? 21
3.2 What is the process for identification of SpEd-LEP students? 21
3.3 What percentages of LEP students receive special education services? 22
3.4 What are the native languages of SpEd-LEP students? 24
3.5 Where are SpEd-LEP students enrolled? 24
3.6 What instructional services are provided to SpEd-LEP students? 24
3.7 How many instructional staff in grades K-12 work with SpEd-LEP students? 28
3.8 What are the backgrounds and training of instructional staff who work with SpEd-LEP students? 29
3.9 To what extent is instruction for SpEd-LEP students aligned with State standards? 30
3.10 To what extent have SpEd-LEP students participated in Statewide assessments? 32
3.11 What are outcomes for SpEd-LEP students? 33

4. Implications of Key Findings for Policy and Practice 35

4.1 What Are the Key Findings and Implications Related to LEP Students?.....35

4.2 What Are the Key Findings and Implications Relating to Special Education LEP Students?.....37

Chapter Notes 39
References.....41

Appendix A: Definitions of Instructional Service Types for LEP Students
Appendix B: List of Descriptive Study Reports

1

INTRODUCTION

The *Descriptive Study of Services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students and LEP Students with Disabilities* (herein referred to as the "Descriptive Study"), provides current findings on the number of LEP students, their backgrounds, and the instructional services they receive in grades K-12 in public schools in the United States. The findings of this national study are based on data collected in the 2001-2002 school year from districts and schools that served at least one LEP student.

The Descriptive Study is related in its goals and data collection approach to a prior study, which was conducted in 1991-1992 (Fleischman & Hopstock, 1993). Some comparisons are therefore possible across the two studies to examine the changes that have taken place over the intervening ten years in the number of LEP students and the services they receive. Such comparisons can offer policy-makers important direction in identifying needs and issues for consideration in future decision-making.

The current Descriptive Study extends beyond the scope of the prior study in that it includes a special focus on LEP students with disabilities who are identified as being in need of special education services. There has been considerable concern regarding the identification of these students, referred to here as "SpEd-LEP" students. This study offers national estimates on the number of SpEd-LEP students, the disability categories in which they have been identified, and the nature of the instructional services they receive. The study also expands upon the scope of the prior study in that it provides information on policy and practice related to LEP students' participation in standards and assessments.

The Descriptive Study findings are based on responses to mail survey questionnaires sent to a national sample of districts and schools that enrolled at least one LEP student. There were two district questionnaires, one focused on LEP students and services (completed by the administrator/coordinator responsible for LEP student services), and one focused on SpEd-LEP students and services (completed by the administrator/coordinator responsible for special education services). Similarly, for each school there were two separate questionnaires, one focused on LEP students and services, and the other focused on SpEd-LEP students and services (completed by the coordinator/lead teacher in the school for LEP students and services, and for SpEd-LEP students and services, respectively). These four sets of questionnaire responses formed the core data for the study. [1]

Additional information on students and instructional services was obtained from a subset of districts and schools in which data were obtained directly from staff, teachers, and aides regarding their backgrounds and experience, and directly from student records regarding the students' backgrounds and services received.[2] Finally, visits were made to twelve districts, and

to three schools within each district, to conduct focused interviews with staff on key issues concerning LEP and SpEd-LEP students.

The Descriptive Study does not provide data for comparisons of effectiveness or evaluation of practices. As a descriptive study, it serves the important goal of offering a picture of students, services, and policy and practice. This descriptive information offers a critical basis for decision-making to address educational needs of LEP and SpEd-LEP students. The purpose of this report is to summarize key findings of the Study, and to identify findings with possible implications for policy or practice which warrant further consideration by policy-makers and educators. Initial questions for consideration are indicated in separate boxes in relevant sections of the text.

In this report, the findings for LEP students overall are presented in Chapter 2, and the findings for SpEd-LEP students are presented in Chapter 3. A summary of key findings and their implications is presented in Chapter 4.

2

FINDINGS RELATED TO LEP STUDENTS

The findings related to limited English proficient (LEP) students were based on responses to the core study survey questionnaires by district administrators and school coordinators of services for LEP students. Those responding to the surveys were asked to use their district's or school's definition of a LEP student[1].

The findings indicate substantial changes in 2001-2002 from what was reported ten years earlier. These changes are seen in the numbers of LEP students, in the nature of the instructional services that LEP students received, and in the numbers of teachers and aides who instructed LEP students.

2.1 *What is the size of the LEP student population?*

The results of the Descriptive Study indicate that the number of LEP students in the U.S. continues to grow. There were an estimated 3,977,819 LEP students in grades K-12 in U.S. public schools (50 States and the District of Columbia) in the 2001-2002 school year, as compared with the estimate of 2,314,079 LEP students for the 1991-1992 school year (see Figure 2.1). This is an increase of 72 percent in the LEP student population. LEP students represented 8.4 percent of all public school students in the U.S. in 2001-2002.

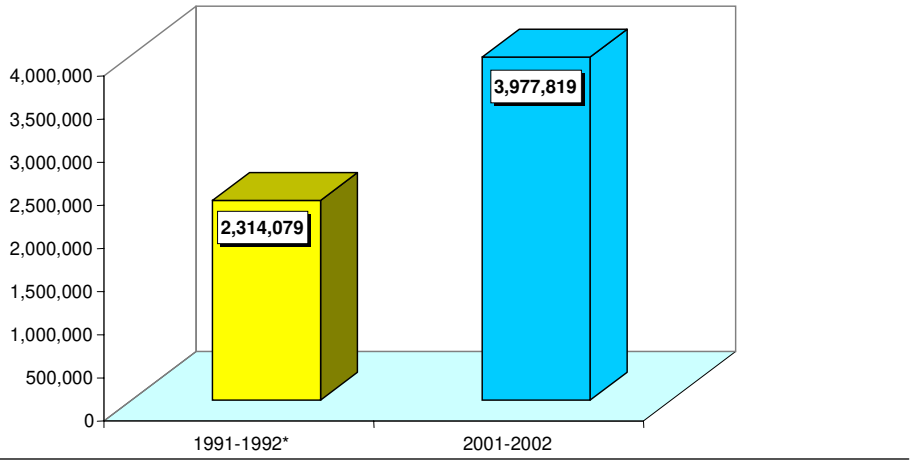
Key Finding:

There has been a dramatic increase in the number of LEP students in U.S. public schools over the past decade.

The majority of LEP students were in the lower elementary grades: 52.7 percent of the LEP student population was enrolled in grades K-4, as compared with 25.7 percent in grades 5-8, and 19.5 percent in grades 9-12.

The specific standards and criteria for defining LEP status are not determined nationally, and the Descriptive Study findings indicated that the definition of LEP status was most commonly based on a combination of State and school district policies. Districts use both objective data (e.g., oral proficiency tests) and subjective data (e.g., informal assessments such as those based on teacher judgment) to define LEP status, to assign LEP students to services, and to exit students from LEP status.

FIGURE 2.1
Sizes of LEP Student Populations in 1991-1992* and 2001-2002
(District LEP Services Questionnaire)



The number of respondents who provided data on this item was 930. The item response represented 97.8 percent of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the item level to be nationally representative.

* Data from Fleischman and Hopstock (1993).

2.2 *What are the native languages of LEP students?*

In 1991-1992, students with Spanish as their native language ("Spanish-language students") made up 72.9 percent of LEP students in the U.S. The Descriptive Study data for 2001-2002 show that, even with the overall increase in the LEP student population, the proportion of Spanish-language LEP students increased by four percent to 76.9 percent of all LEP students. The next most common language groups were Vietnamese (2.4 percent of LEP students) and Hmong (1.8 percent).

The most common language group also was identified within individual districts and schools. Spanish was the most common LEP student language for 81.5 percent of districts. Three other languages were reported as the most common languages by more than one percent of districts; these were Russian (1.6 percent of districts), Korean (1.3 percent), and Hmong (1.3 percent).

The most common LEP student languages reported for more than one percent of schools were Spanish (82.0 percent of schools), Russian (2.3 percent), Hmong (1.9 percent), Arabic (1.3 percent), and Korean (1.3 percent).

2.3 *Where are LEP students enrolled?*

Thousands of public school districts and schools across the country provide instruction to one or more LEP students. An estimated 6,471 districts (43 percent) of the approximately 15,000 school districts in the United States enrolled at least one LEP student in 2001-2002. An estimated 45,283 schools (50 percent) of the approximately 91,000 public schools in the U.S. enrolled at least one LEP student.

LEP Students: Diversity in District Populations

One large city school district has 363,127 students. Of these students, 66,011 are LEP, and the majority (58,475) is Spanish-speaking. There are also large numbers of Haitian Creole speakers (6,567), and many students who speak Portuguese, French, and Cantonese, among the other language groups in the district.

Another district, located in a small city, has a total student population of 11,500 of whom 4,035 are identified as LEP. Although more than half of the LEP students (2,248) are Spanish-speaking, there are also significant numbers of LEP students from Southeast Asian backgrounds who speak Hmong, Mien, and Lao.

A suburban school district has 3,166 students, and 206 students are identified as LEP. The largest language group is Mandarin (127 LEP students); languages spoken by other LEP students include Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish.

A rural district has 27 students identified as LEP out of a total of 7,231 students. The students are spread across many schools, with each school enrolling only one or two LEP students. The students are primarily Spanish speakers (16), but also include Urdu, Cantonese, Russian, and Latvian speakers.

In 2001-2002, 2.6 percent of districts with LEP students enrolled 5,000 or more LEP students; together, these districts accounted for 53.7 percent of all LEP students in grades K-12. In contrast, 60.8 percent of districts with LEP students enrolled 99 or fewer LEP students; combined, these districts accounted for a total of only 2.8 percent of the total LEP student population.

However, the number of LEP students alone does not describe the impact of a particular LEP student population on a district. The same number of LEP students may represent a very small proportion of one district's student population but a large proportion of the students within another district (e.g., 100 LEP students within a district of 11,000 students versus within a district of 600 students). Thus, there is diversity not only in the number of LEP students within districts but in the significance of the LEP student population for individual districts. Districts' uses of resources and instructional programs will typically reflect these diverse circumstances.

Key Finding:

Although the largest portion of the LEP student population is enrolled within a small number of districts with many LEP students, there are many districts across the U.S. serving small numbers of LEP students.

Policy Questions: LEP Student Population

1. **Given the size of the LEP population, what are appropriate levels of resources for serving the needs of LEP students (by schools, districts, SEAs)?**
2. **What type of guidance is most useful for districts with very small LEP student populations (e.g., related to services, to best use of limited resources for their LEP students)?**

2.4 *What instructional services do LEP students receive?*

A number of terms are used to describe the instructional services received by LEP students; for example, programs are described as sheltered English, structured immersion, transitional bilingual, among other descriptions. However, these terms are not applied in a consistent way across schools and districts. The same terms may describe classrooms that are very different in language use and in instructional approach, while different terms may describe services that are very similar. Thus, relying on the existing terminology to distinguish types of instructional services was not an appropriate approach for a national description of instructional services for LEP students; an objective means of describing the services was needed for the Descriptive Study.

Finding a means of defining services for LEP students was not a new challenge; the same issue was faced in designing the 1993 Descriptive Study. As in that study, the Descriptive Study utilized a system for describing the instructional services received by LEP students that was based upon three principles:

(1) The description of services should be ***student-centered.***

The focus of the description of services should be on what an individual student *receives*, rather than on what is offered within the school.

2) The description of services should be ***comprehensiwe.***

The description of services should include *all* instruction received by a student in a typical week, across all instructional settings.

(3) The description of services should be ***objective.***

There should be specific criteria used to describe services, and these criteria should represent key aspects of services for LEP students.

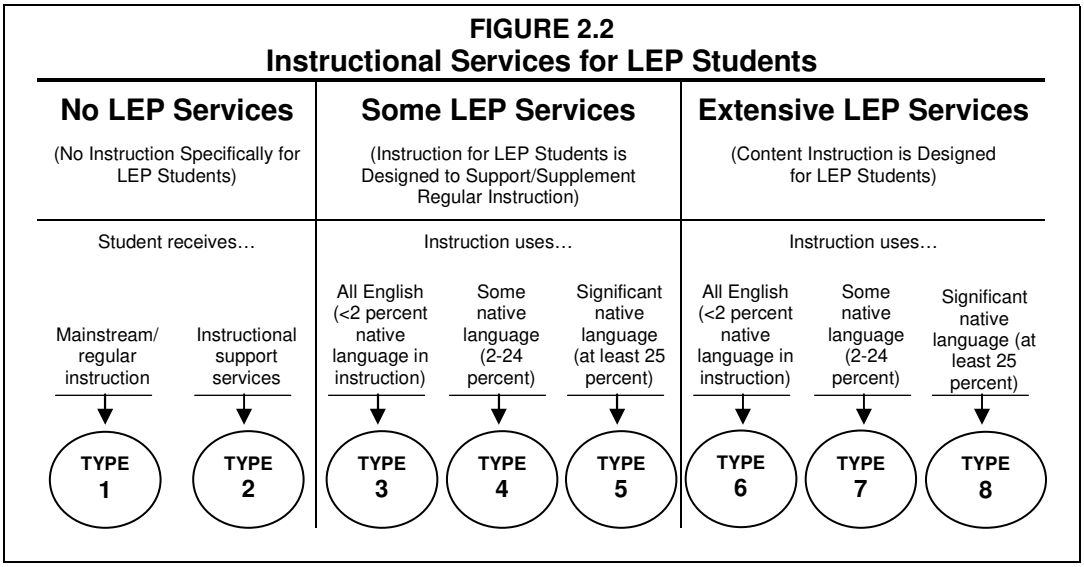
Two variables were identified as representing key aspects of services for LEP students, and these were used to define eight instructional service types. The key variables were:

(1) *Extent of LEP instructional services* (i.e., the extent of services that are specifically designed to address the student's needs as a LEP student); and,

(2) *Extent of use of the student's native language in instruction*.

The eight instructional service types for LEP students are shown in Figure 2.2, and definitions of the instructional services types are provided in Appendix A.

FIGURE 2.2
Instructional Services for LEP Students



An Example of Type 3 Services:
Some LEP Services Using English for Fatima

Fatima, a fourth-grade native Arabic speaker in a large urban school district, is in her third year of receiving LEP services. She receives 45 minutes of ESL instruction every day in a pull-out session during periods in which her English-proficient classmates are instructed in either social studies or science. She also receives after-school homework assistance for an hour every day.

An Example of Type 6 Services:
Alexandra Receives Extensive LEP Services

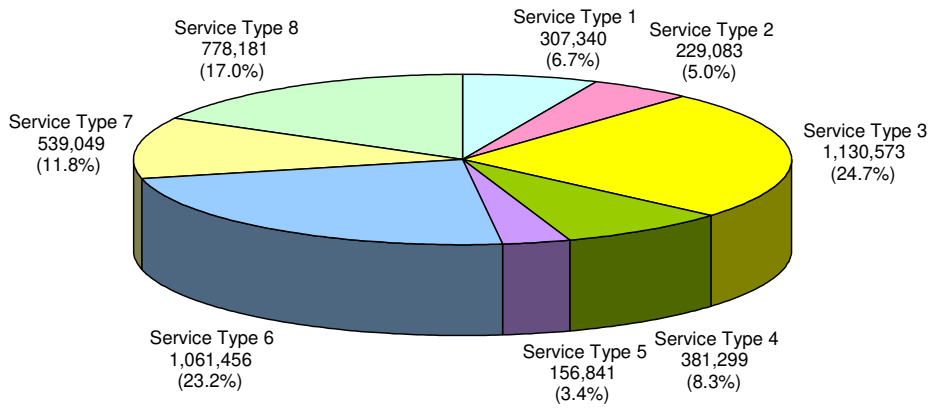
Alexandra, a Serbian 10th grade LEP student in a large urban school district, receives instruction from seven different teachers within a typical week. Each week she meets separately with two different ESL teachers who coordinate and share information about her instruction. Alexandra attends her ESL classes during periods when her English-proficient classmates attend English and foreign language classes. Her U.S. history, geometry and biology teachers use English and instructional strategies that address Alexandra's needs as a LEP student while ensuring that she learns content parallel to what her English-proficient classmates receive. She receives mainstream instruction only for computers and physical education.

An Example of Type 8 Services:
Instruction in Spanish and English

Gloria, a Hispanic kindergartener in a large urban school district, receives 4 hours of instruction per day from a bilingual teacher. Of this, ESL instruction is provided for one hour, and the other 3 hours of instruction are in Spanish reading and math. An arts/music teacher, a character education teacher, a library teacher, and a gym teacher provide additional instruction in English during the week. Gloria will continue receiving Type 8 services next year, when she will begin to receive 5½ hours of instruction per day. She will receive an additional hour of ESL and Spanish reading, and most of her content instruction will continue to be in Spanish.

As seen in Figure 2.3 below, findings based on data provided by school LEP services coordinators showed that Service Type 3 (*Some LEP services, all English*) and Service Type 6 (*Extensive LEP services, all English*) were the most common service types received by LEP students. Next most common were Service Type 8 (*Extensive LEP services, significant native language use*) and Service Type 7 (*Some LEP services, some native language use*).

FIGURE 2.3
Numbers and Percentages of LEP Students Receiving Each Service Type
(School LEP Services Questionnaire)



The number of respondents who provided data on this item was 1,987. The item response represented 95.1% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the item level to be nationally representative.

It is possible to sum across service types to examine the findings in terms of each of the two key variables used for describing services. In terms of the extent of LEP services, 11.7 percent of LEP students received mainstream instruction with *no LEP services* (Service Types 1 and 2); 36.4 percent received *some LEP services* (Service Types 3-5); and 52.0 percent received *extensive LEP services* (Service Types 6-8). In terms of extent of native language use, 59.6 percent of students were taught *all in English* (Service Types 1, 2, 3, 6). For 20.1 percent of LEP students, instruction included *some native language use* (Service Types 4, 7); and 20.4 percent of students received *significant native language use* (Service Types 5, 8).

2.5 *What change has there been in the instructional services received by LEP students since 1991-1992?*

Table 2.1 provides a comparison of the types of instructional services received by LEP students in 1991-1992 and in 2001-2002. The study findings show a substantial decrease over the ten-year period in the number of LEP students receiving Service Type 8 (*Extensive LEP services, significant native language use*), and a decrease in students receiving Service Type 7 (*Extensive LEP services, some native language use*). At the same time, there were increases in the number of LEP students receiving Service Type 6 (*Extensive LEP services, all English*), Service Type 3

(*Some LEP services, all English*), Service Type 1 (*No LEP services, mainstream instruction only*), and Service Type 2 (*No LEP services, instructional support*) services. Overall, these findings show a shift toward instruction provided in English. The shift is also away from *extensive LEP services* and toward service types in which LEP students are more commonly instructed within mainstream classrooms.

Key Finding:

There has been a substantial shift in the past ten years in the instructional services received by LEP students. This shift has been toward LEP instructional services provided in English.

TABLE 2.1
Service Types Received by LEP Students in 1991-1992* and 2001-2002
(School LEP Services Questionnaire)

	Percentage of LEP Students	
Service Type:	**1991-1992***	**2001-2002**
1—No LEP services/mainstream instruction only	2.1 %	6.7%
2—No LEP services/instructional support	1.4	5.0
3—Some LEP services/all English	19.1	24.7
4—Some LEP services/some native language	7.0	8.3
5—Some LEP services/significant native language	3.1	3.4
6—Extensive LEP services/all English	14.6	23.2
7—Extensive LEP services/some native language	15.8	11.8
8—Extensive LEP services/significant native language	37.0	17.0
Total	100.0 %	100.0 %

The number of respondents who provided data on the item from the current study was 1,987. The item response represented 95.1 % of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the item level to be nationally representative.
*Data from Fleischman and Hopstock (1993). The percentages were recalculated to exclude an "unknown" category.

The significance of these changes includes their broader impact on the composition of classrooms within a school. That is, given the shift in the nature of services received by LEP students, mainstream classes are likely to be increasingly diverse in terms of English language and other academic abilities. This diversity presents additional challenges for mainstream teachers, with the implication that they may require additional training and expertise to work effectively with LEP students.

The findings also indicated that increasing numbers of LEP students are not receiving LEP instructional services. In some cases, the students' parents may have requested a waiver of LEP

services. Other students may have been exited from LEP services and placed into mainstream instruction for a "transitional" period prior to exit from LEP status. These students may receive support through transition services such as monitoring, extended day, or other support services not specific to LEP students. In still other cases, LEP students may have transitioned to mainstream classes due to time limits on services.

There is a need for more information on students who are retained in LEP status while not receiving LEP services and on the nature of transition services that are provided. Similarly, more should be learned about what transition services are provided to former LEP students who have recently exited from LEP services.

Policy Questions: Instruction of LEP Students

1. **Do the observed changes in instructional approaches have implications for staffing, training, and/or program development? What are the implications for States? For districts? For schools?**
2. **Increasing numbers of LEP students do not receive LEP services. Are additional monitoring/support services needed, and, if so, what systems should be developed for such monitoring/support?**

2.6 *Do LEP students receive sequences of services? That is, do they change from one instructional service type to another over time?*

Schools typically reported more than one type of instructional service for LEP students. As might be expected, schools with larger numbers of LEP students reported providing a greater number of the eight instructional service types defined by the study. In about half (52.2 percent) of the schools that served LEP students, school coordinators reported that LEP students received a sequence of services; that is, a LEP student moved from one service type to another over time.

An Example of a Sequence of Services:
Pablo Transitions from Service Type 8 to Service Type 6

In a large urban school district, Pablo, a 10th grader of Spanish language background, is receiving his second year of Type 8 services. He receives instruction that uses both English and Spanish in history, geometry, and earth sciences classes, and receives English as a second language (ESL) instruction while his classmates have English and foreign language classes. He attends computer and physical education classes with his English-proficient classmates. Next year, however, all instruction in Spanish will be phased out, but he will receive content instruction designed for LEP students (i.e., Type 6 services). He will have an elective social studies class in which the English language instruction is adapted to the needs of LEP students, an ESL class, a mainstream class in mathematics, and a foreign language (French).

The most typical sequences of services involved decreases in the extent of LEP services and decreases in use of the native language. The five most common sequences of services reported by school coordinators were:

	Sequence	Percentage of schools
(1)	Type 6 (*Extensive LEP services, all English*) ↓ Type 3 (*Some LEP services, all English):*	25.0%;
(2)	Type 3 (*Some LEP services, all English)* ↓ Type 2 (*No LEP services, instructional support*):	18.6%;
(3)	Type 8 *(Extensive LEP services, significant native language)* ↓ Type 7 *(Extensive LEP services, some native language)*:	12.9%;
(4)	Type 4 *(Some LEP services, some native language)* ↓ Type 3 *(Some LEP services, all English)*:	12.7%; and,
(5)	Type 3 *(Some LEP services, all English)* ↓ Type 1 *(No LEP services, mainstream instruction only)*:	10.8%.

Possible sequences of services for an individual student could include more than two types of services, for example, Type 6, Type 3, and then Type 2 services.

2.7 *How many instructional staff in grades K-12 work with LEP students?*

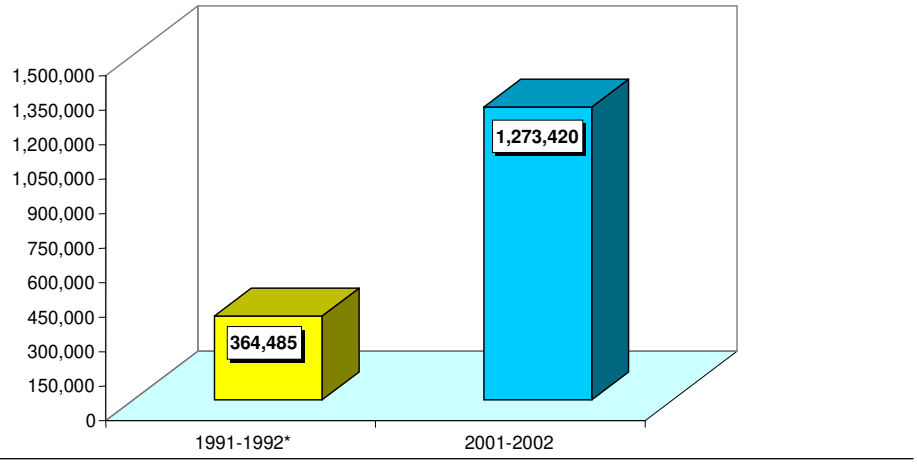
The findings indicated that, in the 2001-2002 school year, there were an estimated 1,273,420 public school teachers who instructed at least one LEP student in Grades K-12. This estimate is 3.5 times as large as the 364,485 teachers reported for the 1991-1992 school year (see Figure 2.4). Viewing the findings in terms of all teachers in grades K-12, teachers working with at least one LEP student increased from an estimated 15 percent of all teachers in 1991-1992 to almost 43 percent in 2001-2002.

Key Finding:

There has been a dramatic increase in the number of teachers who work with at least one LEP student. In 2001-2002 there were approximately 3.5 times as many teachers of LEP students as were reported for 1991-1992; teachers of LEP students in 2001-2002 represented nearly 43 percent of all teachers in grades K-12.

These findings show that over a ten-year period, the number of teachers increased by a factor of 3.5 while the number of LEP students increased by a factor of about two. These data suggest a greater spread of LEP students across classrooms as compared to ten years earlier; such a pattern would be consistent with the changes in instructional services for LEP students described above.

FIGURE 2.4
Numbers of Teachers Serving LEP Students in 1991-1992* and 2001-2002
(School LEP Services Questionnaire)



The number of respondents who provided data on this item was 1,937. The item response represented 93.6% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the item level to be nationally representative.
* Data from Fleischman and Hopstock (1993).

There was a parallel increase in the number of instructional aides who worked with at least one LEP student in the 2001-2002 school year. An estimated 204,553 instructional aides worked with LEP students in grades K-12 in public schools as compared with the estimated 67,795 aides reported for the 1991-1992 school year. This is a three-fold increase over the ten-year period.

Key Finding:

Over the past decade, the number of instructional aides who teach at least one LEP student increased dramatically. The estimated 204,553 instructional aides in 2001-2001 was approximately three times the number estimated in 1991-1992.

2.8 *What are the backgrounds and training of instructional staff who work with LEP students?*

A Teacher of LEP Students:
Mrs. Martinez, First Grade Teacher

Mrs. Martinez, a first grade teacher, has been teaching in a large urban school district for three decades. Her class is composed of twenty students, seven of whom are LEP. Mrs. Martinez is fluent in Spanish but rarely uses this language with her students. She holds a Bachelor's degree and has certification in bilingual education. In her school district, several hours are devoted each year to teacher training related to the instruction of LEP students. In the last school year, she received twenty hours of such training. The training content included language acquisition theory, effective practices for instructing LEP students, teaching English to LEP students, and teaching reading and writing to State standards. In addition, she also received two hours of training concerning instruction for SpEd-LEP students.

Almost half (45.8 percent) of teachers of three or more LEP students reported that they held a Master's or more advanced degree; slightly more than half (53.7 percent) had a Bachelor's degree; and 0.5 percent had an Associate's degree. Almost all (97.6 percent) reported that they held teaching certification, with 18.1 percent reporting English as a Second Language (ESL) certification and 11.1 percent reporting bilingual education certification. Teachers of three or more LEP students also reported a median of 9.0 years of teaching experience at the K-12 level; 7.0 years of teaching experience at their current districts; 4.0 years of experience at their current school; and 6.0 years of experience teaching LEP students.

Six in ten teachers (61.8 percent) who worked with at least three LEP students indicated that they had received in-service training specifically related to the teaching of LEP students in the past five years. Overall, the teachers of at least three LEP students reported a median of 4.0 hours of such training over the past five years (the median included those with no training). About one in five (20.8 percent) of the teachers reported between 1 and 9 hours of training related to LEP students in the past five years; and about one in four (25.3 percent) reported between 10 and 49 hours of training related to LEP students in the past five years.

Key Finding:

Teachers who worked with three or more LEP students reported a median of four hours of in-service training in the past five years that was related to the instruction of LEP students; six in ten of these teachers reported receiving such training.

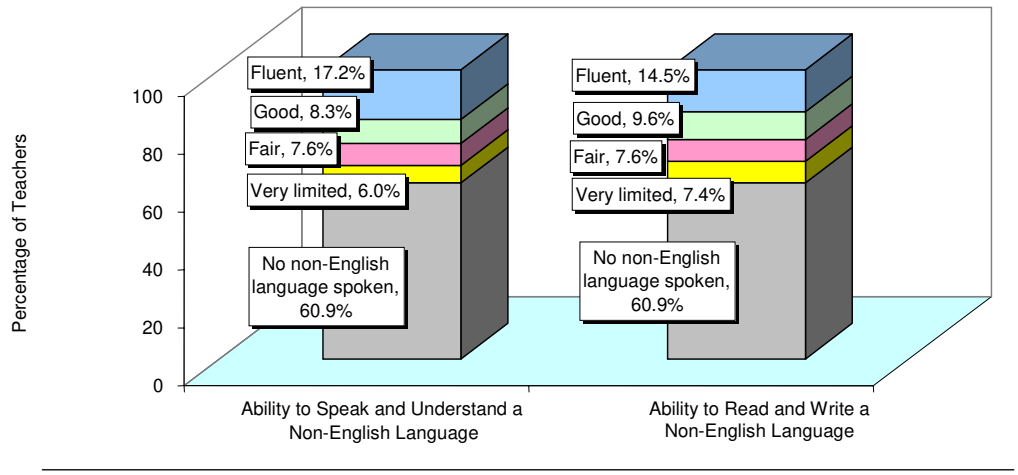
A dichotomous variable was created to indicate whether or not teachers had "significant LEP training." A teacher was considered to have had "significant LEP training" if the teacher: (1) had bilingual education certification; or (2) had English as a Second Language (ESL) certification; or (3) had received 20 or more hours of in-service training related to the teaching of LEP students in the previous five years. The results of this analysis indicated that 40.2 percent of teachers of three or more LEP students were identified as having "significant LEP training." The following groups of teachers were more likely to have had "significant LEP training": (1) teachers in districts with large numbers of LEP students; (2) teachers in schools with large numbers of LEP students; (3) teachers who taught large numbers of LEP students; (4) teachers in

elementary schools; (5) ESL teachers; and (6) teachers who spoke a non-English language spoken by their LEP students.

Four in ten teachers (39.1 percent) who worked with at least three LEP students reported that they spoke a non-English language that was the native language of their students. The most frequent language reported spoken was Spanish. However, of all teachers of three or more LEP students, only 25.5 percent described their ability to speak and understand the language of the largest numbers of their LEP students as "fluent" or "good," and 24.1 percent described their ability to read and write as "excellent" or "good," as opposed to "fair' or "very limited" (see Figure 2.5). Elementary school teachers compared to middle or high school teachers were more likely to describe their non-English language abilities as "good" or better.

Of teachers of three or more LEP students, 10.1 percent reported that they used the non-English language "a significant amount" (25 percent or more) as part of their instruction; and 12.4 percent reported that they used the non-English language to "some extent" (2-24 percent).

FIGURE 2.5
Non-English Language Abilities of Teachers Who Teach Three or More LEP Students
(Teacher Background Questionnaire)



The number of respondents who provided data on this item was from 4,148 to 4,149. The item response represented 98.9% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the form level to be nationally representative.

Of instructional aides who worked with at least three LEP students, approximately one-quarter (27.7 percent) reported that they held a Bachelor's degree; 49.5 percent reported at least an Associate's degree or some college; and 21.8 percent were high school graduates or held a GED certificate. High school aides reported more education than did elementary school aides.

Four in ten aides (40.9 percent) who worked with at least three LEP students reported that they received in-service training specifically related to the teaching of LEP students in the past five years. The data indicated that elementary school aides were more likely to receive such in-service training than were middle school or high school aides.

An Aide Serving LEP Students:
Mrs. Asuncion, Bilingual High School Aide

In this mid-size school district, more than half of the students are Hispanic. Ms. Asuncion is a native Spanish-speaking instructional aide for grades 9 through 12. She has had some college-level education, and has been working in the migrant and bilingual education programs since she joined the district seven years ago. Of the 40 students that she instructs during the week, 30 are LEP from mainly Spanish-speaking homes. Ms. Asuncion uses a significant amount of Spanish with her students. She has not received any in-service training on teaching LEP students or students with disabilities.

Six in ten aides (60.3 percent) who worked with at least three LEP students reported that they spoke a non-English language that was the native language of their students. By far, the most frequent language spoken by aides who worked with LEP students was Spanish.

A higher proportion of aides than of teachers reported proficiency in the native language of their LEP students. Of all aides who worked with three or more LEP students, 53.4 percent described their ability to speak and understand the language of the largest numbers of their LEP students as "good" or "fluent," and 49.4 percent described their ability to read and write as "good" or "excellent" (as compared to 25.5 percent and 24.1 percent, respectively, for teachers).

Of those aides who worked with at least three LEP students, 27.0 percent reported that they used the non-English language "a significant amount" (25 percent or more) as part of their instruction; and 22.1 percent reported that they used the non-English language to "some extent" (2-24 percent). Comparing these findings with those for teachers, 49.1 percent of aides used their LEP students' native language some or to a significant extent, as compared to 28.8 percent of teachers.

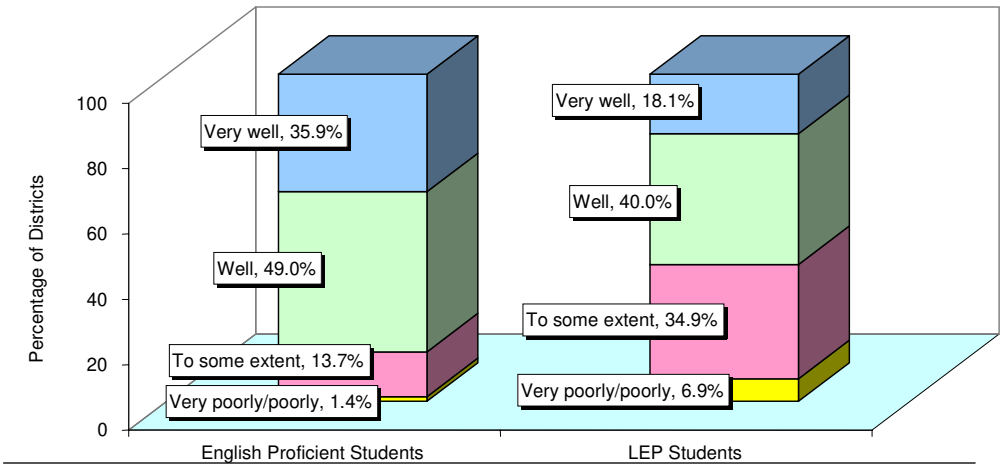
Policy Questions: Instructional Staff

1. **What are appropriate levels of training related to LEP students for teachers and instructional aides?**
2. **How should training resources be distributed across teachers/aides? For example, how should training resources be distributed across teachers/aides who work with few versus large numbers of LEP students?**

2.9 *To what extent have LEP students participated in reforms related to State standards and assessments?*

District and school LEP services coordinators were asked to rate on a five-point scale the extent to which instructional programs were aligned with State content/performance standards (see Figure 2.6). While a large majority (84.9 percent) of district LEP services coordinators reported that instructional programs for English proficient students were "very well" or "well" aligned with State content/performance standards, only approximately six of ten district respondents (58.1 percent) reported that instructional programs for LEP students were similarly aligned.

FIGURE 2.6
Extent of Alignment of Services with State Content/Performance Standards
(District LEP Services Questionnaire)



The number of respondents who provided data on this item was from 730 to 733. The item response represented 95.8% to 96.5% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the form level to be nationally representative.

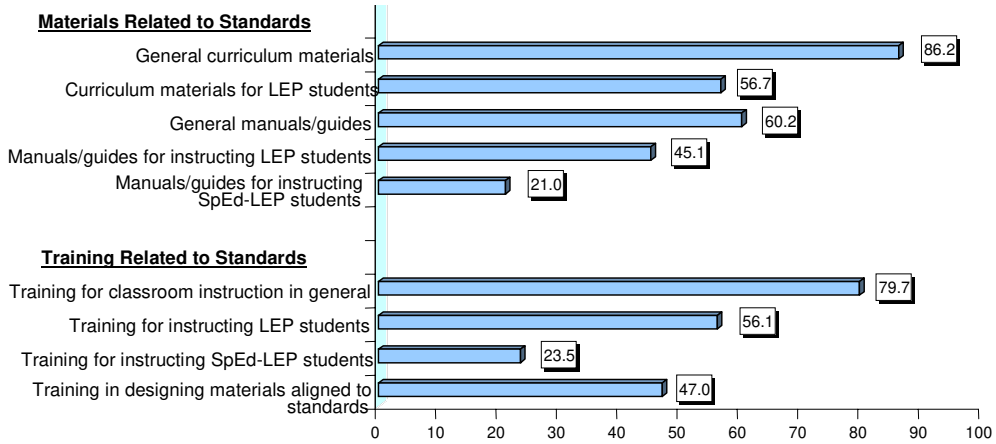
Key Finding:

District coordinators reported that the instruction LEP students received was less aligned with State standards than was instruction for non-LEP students.

In addition, materials and training for aligning instruction with standards were more commonly general in nature, and not specific to the instruction of LEP students. As shown in Figure 2.7, a large majority of district respondents (86.2 percent) reported that general curriculum materials were provided to teachers of LEP students to help them align their instruction with State standards. However, only 56.7 percent of district coordinators reported that curriculum materials for LEP students were provided to teachers of LEP students to help them align instruction. In 6.6 percent of districts, coordinators indicated that no materials specific to aligning instruction with standards were provided to teachers of LEP students.

The findings obtained regarding the types of training provided to teachers to assist them in aligning their instruction with State content/performance standards paralleled the findings on materials. District respondents reported that general training was provided to teachers of LEP students more frequently (79.7 percent) than training specifically related to applying standards to LEP students (56.1 percent). In 13.2 percent of districts, coordinators reported that no training on aligning instruction with standards was provided to teachers of LEP students.

FIGURE 2.7
Materials and Training Provided to Teachers of LEP Students to Help Them Align Instruction with State Content/Performance Standards
(District LEP Services Questionnaire)



The number of respondents who provided data on this item was from 738 to 740. The item response represented 97.1% to 97.5% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the form level to be nationally representative.

Key Finding:

Teachers of LEP students are more likely to receive general curriculum materials and general manuals/guides to help them align instruction rather than materials and guides specifically related to aligning instruction for LEP students.

Federal policy requires that all students including LEP students be included in assessments related to State content and performance standards. Data from district respondents indicated that in the 2001-2002 school year, 82.0 percent of LEP students in the grades in which these tests were administered were included in their most recent Statewide tests. This statistic, however, refers to assessments without reference to specific content areas; it may therefore include LEP students who were assessed in some but not all content areas tested.

One in four (25.4 percent) of LEP students received some form of accommodation on Statewide tests. The most frequently cited forms of accommodations provided to LEP students on Statewide tests were extra time for completion (76.5 percent of districts), individual or small group administration (71.4 percent), items read aloud to students in English (51.9 percent), use of dictionaries (44.9 percent), and interpretation of test directions in the students' native language (32.2 percent).

Policy Questions: Standards and Assessments

1. **What approaches/means will be most effective in assisting districts/schools/teachers to align instruction for LEP students?**
2. **Given findings suggesting less alignment to standards for instruction for LEP students than for instruction for non-LEP students, how should LEP students' outcomes on State tests of achievement to standards be used? What guidance should be provided to districts/schools regarding assessment for LEP students?**

2.10 *What are outcomes for LEP students?*

School LEP services coordinators provided summary descriptions of the performance of current and former LEP students. Coordinators in approximately three-fourths (76.0 percent) of elementary schools reported that third grade LEP students scored below grade level or well below grade level in English reading, and coordinators in 34.2 percent of elementary schools reported that third grade former LEP students were scoring below or well below grade level in English reading.

A majority (52.9 percent) of middle school LEP services coordinators reported that eighth grade LEP students were scoring below or well below grade level in mathematics, and 28.9 percent of coordinators reported that eighth grade former LEP students were performing below or well below grade level in mathematics.

Many district LEP services coordinators were unable to provide summary data on the achievement of former LEP students on Statewide/district tests, and on dropout rates and diplomas received by LEP and former LEP students. It is very difficult to obtain useful data on the long-term educational outcomes for LEP and former LEP students. In addition to record-keeping issues associated with all students, the issue for LEP students is complicated by: (a) the high mobility rate of LEP students between districts and schools; (b) the lack of a consistent operational definition of LEP status; and (c) the fact that former LEP status is not maintained as a variable in many districts' record-keeping systems.

Key Finding:

Districts had difficulty in providing long-term outcomes data for LEP and former LEP students.

An Example of Achievement Data on LEP Students:
English Language Learner Data Folders

To record instruction and testing information on LEP students, this large urban school district has developed two data folders. The "English Language Learner Data Folder," which travels with students between schools, is used for students in early childhood programs, elementary and middle schools. This folder contains information on the schools and special programs attended (e.g., extended day, summer program), teachers, ESL level, language proficiency and other language test scores, absenteeism, grade promotion, and exit from LEP status. The student's achievement on the district's ESL standards also is recorded in this folder, along with home language surveys, tests, student work samples, parent letters, and report cards. The "High School English Language Learner Data Folder" is used for high school LEP students. It is similar to the folder for elementary/middle school students, with the exception that the information is recorded by semester, only the ESL teacher's name is listed in the folder, and fewer records are kept in the high school students' folders.

Given the importance of tracking outcomes for former LEP students, district data systems should be structured to record both LEP and former LEP status, and the receipt of various types of LEP instructional services. With such systems in place, school districts would be able to track the long term achievement of former LEP students, including their performance on high stakes tests, dropout rates, and graduation rates.

Policy Questions: LEP Student Outcomes

1. **What types of guidance should be provided to districts to assist them in structuring database systems that include key LEP student variables?**
2. **How should the performance of LEP and former LEP students be presented in reports on student outcomes? Should these data be presented separately, should they be combined, or should another approach be used?**

3

FINDINGS RELATED TO SPED-LEP STUDENTS

The Descriptive Study collected a range of information about the numbers and characteristics of special education LEP (SpEd-LEP) students. SpEd-LEP students are students identified as limited English proficient who also are determined to have disabilities which qualify them for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and who thus receive instruction under an Individual Education Plan (IEP). There were three sources of information on SpEd-LEP students. District and school special education coordinators provided summary data related to SpEd-LEP students and instructional staff in their responses to the mail survey questionnaires. Also, in selected districts, teachers and instructional aides completed background questionnaires. A final source of information was the review of records conducted for a sample of SpEd-LEP students.

3.1 *What is the size of the SpEd-LEP student population?*

Many school districts and schools had considerable difficulty in providing a count of SpEd-LEP students since they did not identify these students as a distinct subgroup within their student information systems. In some cases, creating a count required special computer analyses. In other cases, the LEP services coordinator and special education coordinator compared their separate lists of special education students and LEP students in order to identify SpEd-LEP students. [1]

Key Finding:

Many school districts and schools had considerable difficulty in providing a count of SpEd-LEP students.

Based on the data provided by the school districts, there were an estimated 357,325 SpEd-LEP students in public schools in grades K-12 in 2001-2002. SpEd-LEP students represented an estimated 9.0 percent of all LEP students in U.S. public schools.

SpEd-LEP students constituted 8.2 percent of all special education students in districts with at least one SpEd-LEP student, and represented a greater percentage of all special education students in grades K-6 (9.5 percent) than in grades 7-12 (6.7 percent).

3.2 *What is the process for identification of SpEd-LEP students?*

A majority of the district special education coordinators reported that their districts determined that students were LEP before determining disability status (69.7 percent). Other district special education coordinators indicated that no typical sequence of LEP and disability determination

existed (14.1 percent) or that the identification occurred simultaneously (12.9 percent). A small number of districts determined students' disabilities before determining that they were LEP (2.6 percent).

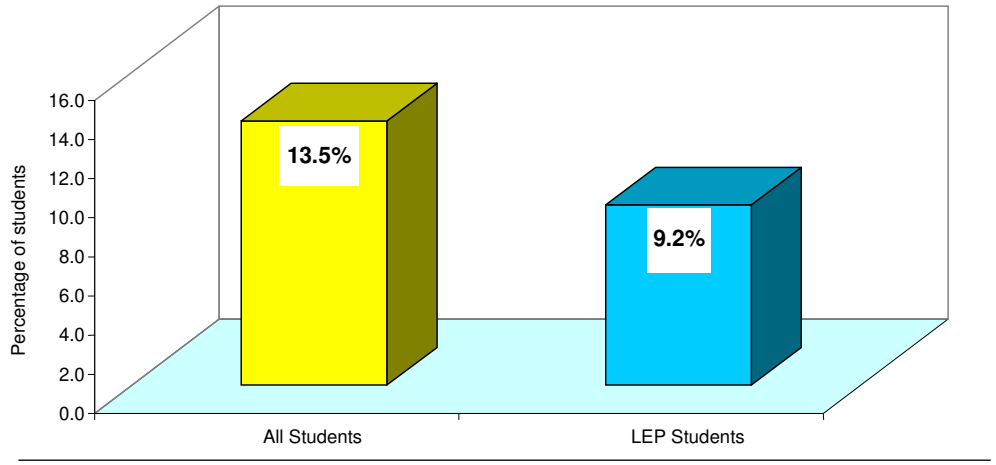
3.3 *What percentages of LEP students receive special education program services?*

The percentage of LEP students reported to be in special education was smaller than the percentage of all students in special education. In districts with at least one SpEd-LEP student, 13.5 percent of all students were receiving special education program services, while the equivalent percentage for LEP students was 9.2 percent (see Figure 3.1). [2]

The findings indicated that there is variation in the percentage of LEP students in special education services across districts and States. For example, in districts with smaller LEP student populations (99 or fewer LEP students), SpEd-LEP students represented on average 15.8 percent of their LEP students, while in districts with 100 or more LEP students, SpEd-LEP students represented 9.1 percent of LEP students. In addition, the Descriptive Study included separate analyses of data collected in 2000-2001 by the Office for Civil Rights;[3] these data indicated considerable variation in percentages of SpEd-LEP students by State. The sources of variation in percentages of SpEd-LEP students should be examined further.

The percentage of LEP students in each of the disability classifications was smaller than the percentage of the total population in each of those classifications. For districts with at least one SpEd-LEP student, Table 3.1 shows the percentages of all students and the percentages of LEP students within specific primary disability classifications. The largest percentage difference was in the "specific learning disability" classification, but the largest proportional differences were

FIGURE 3.1
Percentages of All Students and LEP Students in Special Education
(District Special Education LEP Services Questionnaire)



The number of respondents who provided data on this item was from 508 to 569. The item response represented 83.5% to 94.4% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the item level to be nationally representative.

for "emotional disturbance" and "other health impairment" classifications. (The "other health impairment" classification includes the attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)).

Key Finding:

The percentage of LEP students reported to be in special education was smaller than the percentage of all students in special education, both overall and within individual disability categories.

Data from student records indicated that SpEd-LEP students in elementary grades were more commonly in the "speech/language disability" classification than were SpEd-LEP students in the middle and high school grades. In contrast, SpEd-LEP students in the middle and high school grades were more commonly in the "specific learning disabilities" classification than were SpEd-LEP students in elementary grades.

TABLE 3.1
Percentages of All Students and LEP Students with Specific Disability Classifications
(District Special Education Services Questionnaire)

Disability	Percentage of All Students	Percentage of LEP Students
Specific learning disabilities	6.64%	5.16%
Speech/language impairments	2.72	2.17
Mental retardation	1.20	0.72
Emotional disturbance	1.00	0.23
Other health impairments	0.73	0.20
Developmental delay	0.32	0.15
Autism	0.26	0.12
Multiple disabilities	0.25	0.10
Hearing disabilities	0.18	0.16
Orthopedic impairments	0.16	0.14
Visual impairments	0.06	0.05
Traumatic brain injury	0.04	0.02
Deaf/blindness	0.01	0.005

The number of respondents who provided data on this item was from 518 to 534. The item response represented 84.8% to 90.1% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the form level to be nationally representative.

Policy Questions: SpEd-LEP Student Population

1. **What guidance should be provided to districts and schools regarding the identification and tracking of SpEd-LEP students within local databases? What level of resources is appropriate for such efforts?**
2. **What are the sources of the lower rates of identification of SpEd-LEP students?**
3. **What are sources of variation across districts in rates of identification of SpEd-LEP students?**

3.4 *What are the native languages of SpEd-LEP students?*

Spanish-language students make up a greater percentage of the SpEd-LEP population than of the overall LEP student population. Spanish-language students represented 80.4 percent of the SpEd-LEP student population, while they represented 76.9 percent of the LEP population. Two other language groups that had higher than average representation in the SpEd-LEP population were Navajo (1.9 percent of the SpEd-LEP population compared to 0.9 percent of the LEP population) and Lao (0.7 percent compared to 0.4 percent).

The finding that Spanish-language LEP students are more likely than other LEP students to be in special education programs may be attributed at least in part to the greater availability of staff with language skills and of appropriate assessment instruments.

3.5 *Where are SpEd-LEP students enrolled?*

SpEd-LEP students were enrolled in an estimated 4,774 public school districts in the U.S. (73.7 percent of the 6,471 school districts with LEP students). However, the majority of the SpEd-LEP student population was enrolled in a relatively small number of districts. Districts that reported 500 or more SpEd-LEP students represented only 3.4 percent of all districts with SpEd-LEP students, but accounted for 57.4 percent of the SpEd-LEP student population. In contrast, the majority (54.6 percent) of districts with SpEd-LEP students enrolled fewer than 10 SpEd-LEP students each; combined, these districts accounted for only 2.6 percent of the total SpEd-LEP population. The median number of SpEd-LEP students per district (for districts with SpEd-LEP students) was 8.0 students, and the mean was 74.1.

At the school level, SpEd-LEP students were enrolled in an estimated 33,713 public schools in the U.S. (72.8 percent of the 45,283 schools with LEP students). Of schools with at least one SpEd-LEP student, 62.2 percent had fewer than 10 SpEd-LEP students, and only 5.8 percent had 40 or more SpEd-LEP students. The median number of SpEd-LEP students per school was 5.0, and the mean number was 11.5. The differences between the medians and the means for number of SpEd-LEP students per district and per school reflect the fact that some districts and schools had very large numbers of SpEd-LEP students.

3.6 *What instructional services are provided to SpEd-LEP students?*

There has been no prior national study describing instructional services for SpEd-LEP students, and a literature search did not lead to the identification of any models for describing instructional services for SpEd-LEP students. Within special education programs under IDEA, one focus is to ensure that students are served within the least restrictive environment in which their needs can be met. States are required to report to the Federal government on educational settings in which special education students receive services, and there has been an emphasis on increasing the use of inclusion models of instruction, in which special education services are provided in regular classroom settings.

Instructional services for SpEd-LEP students were described in terms of four variables: two relevant to special education and two relevant to LEP services (See Figure 3.1). The first variable, extent of services in special education settings, was based on reporting required under IDEA on use of instructional settings that are outside of the "regular" or "general[4] classroom," and was defined using categories to parallel the data reported to the Federal government on the implementation of IDEA. The second variable was developed for the Descriptive Study as an indicator of the extent of use of inclusion approaches for special education instruction. The two setting variables do not represent mutually exclusive settings. A student may receive special education services in a resource room, for example, for 50 percent of the time, and also receive services within a general classroom for a portion of the remaining half of instructional time.

FIGURE 3.1
Variables Used in Describing Services to Special Education LEP Students

Special Education Services	LEP Services
1. Special education services in a separate setting… • 0-20% of the week • 21-60% of the week • More than 60% of the week	3. Extent of LEP services • None • Some • Extensive
2. Special education services in a general classroom… • 0 hours per week • 1-3 hours per week • 4 or more hours per week	4. Use of native language for instruction • None (less than 2%) • Some (2-24%) • Significant (at least 25%)

The third and fourth variables, extent of LEP services and extent of use of the native language, were the two key variables underlying the set of eight instructional service types defined for LEP students in the Descriptive Study.

This approach made it possible to link the data on services received by SpEd-LEP students with the Federal IDEA annual report data on the extent of services in special education settings, and with the overall LEP student data on services, in terms of extent of LEP services and extent of native language use. School special education coordinators used the above four variables to provide descriptions of instructional services for students within each of six separate disability categories: specific learning disabilities; speech and language impairments; mental retardation; emotional disturbance; developmental delay; and, all other disabilities. These were based on the thirteen categories defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, but collapsing across the low-incidence categories.

Services for SpEd-LEP Students: A Range of Service Options

In this large city school district, SpEd-LEP students are generally included in the same types of LEP services as other LEP students. The specific service is determined in part by the outcomes of standardized language assessments of English and Spanish skills. Spanish-language SpEd-LEP students with the lowest levels of English proficiency receive instruction using their native language. SpEd-LEP students who are assessed as more proficient in English do not receive any instruction in the native language and are included in all-English LEP services. Special education services are provided to the students through interventions such as team teaching, tutoring, and pull-out to a special resource classroom. SpEd-LEP students in middle and high school grades are included in mainstream classes. Since monolingual teachers provide most of the instruction in these grades, bilingual aides are placed in the mainstream settings to assist students as necessary. SpEd-LEP students who are exited from LEP services are monitored for their English language needs through the IEP annual review process. Students can be returned to ESL services if additional support is needed.

Overall, 55.0 percent of SpEd-LEP students received special education services in separate special education settings 21 percent or more of the time. This is higher than the 48.6 percent of special education students ages 6-21 reported to be in separate settings for 21 percent or more for school year 1999-2000 (U.S. Department of Education, 2002, Table AB2). It may be that the difference in use of separate settings is at least partly attributable to receipt of services that incorporate the SpEd-LEP students' native language. The percentage of SpEd-LEP students receiving services within separate special education settings for 21 percent or more of instruction varied from 84.1 percent for students within the mental retardation category to 18.6 percent for students identified with speech and language impairments (see Table 3.2).

TABLE 3.2
Special Education Services Received by Special Education LEP Students
(School Special Education Services Questionnaire)

	Percentage of SpEd-LEP Students by Disability Classification						
Receipt of services within a separate special education setting …*	**Specific Learning Disabilities**	**Speech/ Language Impairment**	**Mental Retardation**	**Emotional Disturbance**	**Develop-mental Delay**	**All Others**	**All Disabilities**
0-20% of the week	37.9%	81.4%	15.8%	25.4%	31.2%	24.0%	45.0%
21-60% of the week	35.1	10.1	19.4	31.6	31.8	21.4	26.5%
More than 60% of the week	27.0	8.5	64.7	43.0	37.1	54.6	28.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Receipt of special education services in a general classroom …**	**Specific Learning Disabilities**	**Speech/ Language Impairment**	**Mental Retardation**	**Emotional Disturbance**	**Develop-mental Delay**	**All Others**	**All Disabilities**
0 hours per week	36.8%	68.7%	35.5%	37.0%	40.5%	33.3%	44.9%
1-3 hours per week	28.2	17.9	17.7	21.6	41.3	22.2	24.3%
4 or more hours per week	35.1	13.4	46.8	41.4	18.2	44.6	30.7%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*The number of respondents who provided data on this item was from 790 to 868. The item response represented 86.3% to 96.4% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the form level to be nationally representative.

** The number of respondents who provided data on this item was from 664 to 856. The item response represented 66.6% to 93.8% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the form level to be nationally representative.

School special education coordinators reported that 55.0 percent of SpEd-LEP students received at least some special education services within the general classroom: 24.3 percent received such services for 1-3 hours per week in the general classroom, and 30.7 percent received 4 or more hours per week. Across disability categories, the percent of students receiving no special education services within the general class ranged from 33.3 percent (all other disabilities) to 68.7 percent (speech/language impairments) of SpEd-LEP students.

Key Finding:

Over half of SpEd-LEP students received special education services outside of the general classroom 21 percent or more of the time, and over half received at least some special education services within the general classroom.

The majority of SpEd-LEP students received services for LEP students that supported or supplemented instruction. The school special education coordinators reported that 56.2 percent of SpEd-LEP students received services described as *some LEP services*, 27.7 percent received *extensive LEP services,* and 16.1 percent of students received *no LEP services*. Comparing these data with those for all LEP students, SpEd-LEP students were less likely to receive LEP instructional services. As shown in Table 3.3, the extent of LEP services received by a SpEd-LEP student varied by the primary disability category.

TABLE 3.3
LEP Services Received by Special Education LEP Students
(School Special Education Services Questionnaire)

	Percentage of SpEd-LEP Students by Disability Classification						
Extent of LEP services *	**Specific Learning Disabilities**	**Speech/ Language Impairment**	**Mental Retardation**	**Emotional Disturbance**	**Develop-mental Delay**	**All Others**	**All Disabilities**
None	15.8%	14.2%	17.9%	14.0%	11.4%	24.1%	16.1%
Some	57.9	55.2	39.0	52.9	78.5	61.5	56.2
Extensive	26.3	30.6	43.1	33.0	10.1	15.3	27.7
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Extent of use of the native language**	**Specific Learning Disabilities**	**Speech/ Language Impairment**	**Mental Retardation**	**Emotional Disturbance**	**Develop-mental Delay**	**All Others**	**All Disabilities**
All English	64.9%	57.6%	57.1%	78.5%	56.2%	68.0%	63.0%
Some native language use	25.7	21.8	19.7	17.2	30.1	21.6	23.9
Significant native language use	9.4	20.6	23.2	4.3	13.7	10.4	13.1
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*The number of respondents who provided data on this item was from 778 to 868. The item response represented 84.5% to 96.4% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the form level to be nationally representative.

** The number of respondents who provided data on this item was from 805 to 870. The item response represented 85.4% to 96.4% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the form level to be nationally representative.

School special education coordinators indicated the language used for instruction for SpEd-LEP students as either: *All English* (less than 2 percent)*, some native language use* (2-24 percent)*,* or *significant native language use* (at least 25 percent). The coordinators reported that 63.0 percent of SpEd-LEP students received instruction all in English, 23.9 percent received some use of the native language, and 13.1 percent received significant use of the native language. Comparing

these data to the data on language used in instruction for all LEP students, SpEd-LEP students were somewhat more likely to receive instruction all in English, and less likely to receive instruction involving significant use of the native language. Also, as shown in Table 3.3 above, there were differences in language use across disability categories.

Key Finding:

Compared to LEP students, SpEd-LEP students are less likely to receive LEP instructional services, and more likely to receive instruction in English.

Using the individual student record data, instructional services were compared for SpEd-LEP students from Spanish-language versus other-language backgrounds. Spanish-language SpEd-LEP students in comparison to those from other language groups were more likely to receive instruction in a separate setting 21 percent or more of the time (47.8 percent versus 32.7 percent), were more likely to receive special education services in general classrooms (43.3 percent versus 29.2 percent), were more likely to receive *extensive LEP services* (22.0 percent versus 11.4 percent), and were more likely to receive services involving *some or significant native language use* (41.1 percent versus 10.4 percent).

Key Finding:

Instructional services for Spanish-language SpEd-LEP students differed from services received by SpEd-LEP students from other language backgrounds.

District coordinators provided descriptions of services for SpEd-LEP students. Three-quarters (75.7 percent) of coordinators in districts with SpEd-LEP students reported that they did not provide services specifically designed for these students. Most appeared to provide services for SpEd-LEP students by combining the separate efforts of LEP program staff and special education program staff.

Policy Questions: Instruction of SpEd-LEP Students

1. **Should efforts be initiated to ensure greater coordination and collaboration among LEP services and special education services staff in serving SpEd-LEP students? What would be the most effective approaches?**
2. **What guidance should be provided to districts and schools regarding the structure of instructional services for SpEd-LEP students?**

3.7 *How many instructional staff in grades K-12 work with SpEd-LEP students?*

An estimated 729,603 teachers in public schools in the U.S. worked with at least one SpEd-LEP student in 2001-2002. This number represented 24.4 percent of all public school teachers who

taught grades K-12. In addition, the data showed that an estimated 156,292 instructional aides worked with at least one SpEd-LEP student in public schools across the country in 2001-2002.

District special education coordinators reported that three-quarters of districts lacked at least to some extent sufficient numbers of teachers with the necessary qualifications to serve special education students who are LEP. Coordinators in districts with larger numbers of LEP students were more likely to report a lack of sufficient numbers of qualified teachers for their SpEd-LEP students compared to coordinators in districts with smaller numbers of LEP students.

3.8 *What are the backgrounds and training of instructional staff who work with SpEd-LEP students?*

Data on individual teachers' backgrounds were obtained from teachers who worked with at least three LEP students and who reported that their primary teaching responsibility was special education. Special education certification was held by 87.8 percent of these teachers, and over half (53.9 percent) had a graduate degree; also, 11.4 percent held ESL certification, and 2.3 percent were certified in bilingual education. Six in ten (60.5 percent) of these teachers reported that they had received in-service training related to the teaching of LEP students in the past five years; the median was 3 hours of training (the median included those with no training). The median number of hours of in-service training received in the past five years related specifically to the teaching of SpEd-LEP students was zero. On the other hand, almost all (94.3 percent) of the responding teachers indicated that they received in-service training related to the teaching of students with disabilities in the past five years, with a median of 40 hours of this training.

Key Finding:

Special education teachers who worked with at least three LEP students received a median of 3 hours of in-service training related to the teaching of LEP students over the past five years.

Among aides who worked with three or more LEP students and who described their primary responsibility as a special education aide, 39.4 percent reported that they had at least a Bachelor's degree, 46.5 percent had an Associate's degree or some college, and 14.0 percent had a high school diploma or GED. One quarter of these classroom aides (26.5 percent) reported that they had received in-service training in the past five years on the teaching of LEP students. On the other hand, 62.0 percent reported that they had received in-service training in the past five years on the teaching of students with disabilities. The median number of hours of special education training was 6 hours (the median included those with no training), with elementary school aides receiving more hours of training than middle and high school aides.

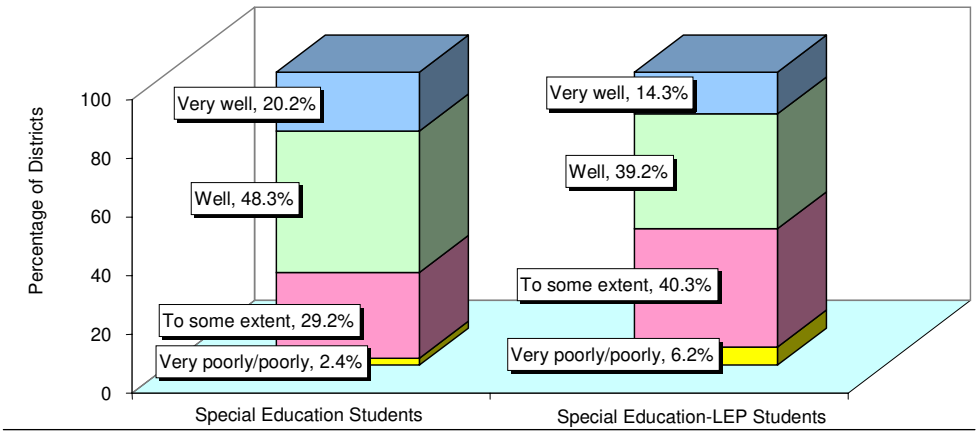
Policy Questions: Instructional Staff for SpEd-LEP Students

1. **What are appropriate levels of resources to be devoted to the training of teachers and of instructional aides who work with SpEd-LEP students?**
2. **What is the most appropriate content of training for teachers and instructional aides who work with SpEd-LEP students?**
3. **How should different circumstances in districts with larger and smaller SpEd-LEP student populations affect the intensity and content of training provided to teachers and aides who work with SpEd-LEP students?**

3.9 *To what extent is instruction for SpEd-LEP students aligned with State standards?*

The findings indicate that instructional programs for SpEd-LEP students are not aligned with State content/performance standards to the same extent as are instructional programs for special education students in general. As shown in Figure 3.3, two-thirds of district special education coordinators (68.5 percent) reported that instructional programs for special education students were "very well" or "well" aligned with State content/performance standards, while only a little more than half of those coordinators (53.5 percent) reported that programs for SpEd-LEP students were similarly aligned with State standards.

FIGURE 3.3
Extent of Alignment with State Content/Performance Standards of Instructional Programs for Special Education Students
(District Special Education Services Questionnaire)



The number of respondents who provided data on this item was from 494 to 495. The item response represented 97.1% to 97.2% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the form level to be nationally representative.

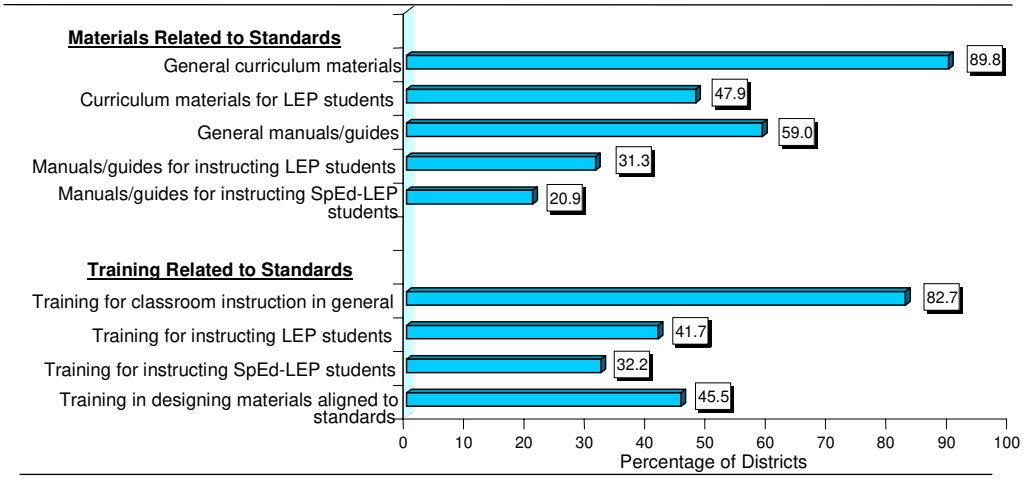
Key Finding:

Instructional programs for SpEd-LEP students are not aligned with State content/performance standards to the same extent as are instructional programs for special education students in general.

General curriculum materials and training are more often provided to teachers to align instruction with State standards than are curriculum materials and training for LEP or SpEd-LEP students. As shown in Figure 3.4, 89.8 percent of district special education coordinators reported that general curriculum materials were provided to teachers of SpEd-LEP students to help them align instruction with State standards, while only 47.9 percent of coordinators reported that materials for LEP students were provided. In 4.0 percent of districts, no materials specific to aligning instruction with standards were provided to teachers of SpEd-LEP students.

Similar findings were obtained with respect to the training on alignment provided to teachers of SpEd-LEP students. As shown in Figure 3.4, 82.7 percent of district coordinators reported that general training was provided to teachers of SpEd-LEP students to help them apply State standards to classroom instruction, while only 41.7 percent reported that training was provided in applying standards to instructing LEP students. In 10.0 percent of districts, there was no training provided to teachers of LEP students in aligning instruction to standards.

FIGURE 3.4
Materials and Training Provided to Teachers of Special Education LEP Students to Align Instruction with State Content/Performance Standards
(District Special Education Services Questionnaire)



The number of respondents who provided data on this item was from 492 to 495. The item response represented 96.7% to 97.0% of the weighted cases on this form. The responses were weighted at the form level to be nationally representative.

Policy Questions: Standards and Assessment for SpEd-LEP Students

1. **The findings indicate that instruction for SpEd-LEP students is less aligned to standards than is instruction for special education students in general. How should SpEd-LEP students' outcomes on State assessments related to standards be used, and what guidance should be given to districts/schools/teachers regarding assessment for SpEd-LEP students?**
2. **What approaches/means will be most effective in assisting districts/school/teachers to align instruction for SpEd-LEP students?**
3. **How should policies on alignment and assessment be structured for SpEd-LEP students in different disability categories?**

3.10 *To what extent have SpEd-LEP students participated in Statewide assessments?*

District coordinators reported that 75.4 percent of SpEd-LEP students in the grades in which students were tested were included in the most recent Statewide testing. Three-quarters of district coordinators (75.3 percent) reported that some SpEd-LEP students were exempted from Statewide tests based on their IEP. Coordinators also reported that specific criteria used to exempt SpEd-LEP students included: severity of disability (45.3 percent of districts), level of English proficiency (38.0 percent of districts), length of time in U.S. schools (32.9 percent of districts), and length of time in the U.S. (29.0 percent of districts).

The majority of SpEd-LEP students received accommodations on Statewide tests. District coordinators' responses indicated that 63.0 percent of the SpEd-LEP students who took the most recent Statewide tests received some form of accommodation. SpEd-LEP students in districts with the largest numbers of LEP students (10,000 or more students) were less likely to receive accommodations on Statewide tests (50.5 percent) than were SpEd-LEP students in districts with fewer than 10,000 LEP students (64.7 percent). District coordinators reported that determination of whether a SpEd-LEP student received an accommodation was based on the student's IEP (98.1 percent), on the severity of the disability (43.6 percent of districts), level of English proficiency (33.0 percent of districts), teacher judgment (30.9 percent), and on the type of disability (29.9 percent).

The most frequent types of accommodation provided by districts to SpEd-LEP students were individual or small group administration (86.7 percent of districts), extra time to complete the test (81.0 percent), reading the test aloud to students in English (69.5 percent), use of a scribe (34.3 percent), interpretation of directions into students' native languages (32.0 percent), assistive technology (24.5 percent), and use of dictionaries (20.4 percent of districts).

Approximately one-quarter of SpEd-LEP students received alternate or alternative testing in place of the regular Statewide examinations. Almost one-quarter (22.8 percent) of SpEd-LEP students were reported to have received alternate/alternative testing in English language arts; 20.2 percent received alternate/alternative testing in math; and 14.5 percent received alternate/alternative testing in each of social studies and science.

When asked about the administration of high stakes tests (high school exit exams and grade promotion tests) to SpEd-LEP students at the middle and high school levels, two-thirds of district special education coordinators (63.0 percent) reported that SpEd-LEP students took the same tests with accommodations (extra time, use of English dictionaries, translators). A quarter of respondents (22.9 percent) stated that their districts had different rules for different groups of SpEd-LEP students and for different tests. A small group (7.1 percent) reported that middle and high school SpEd-LEP students took different tests or were exempted from high stakes tests.

The responses from district coordinators indicated that assessment data for SpEd-LEP students were most commonly combined with data for other special education students (37.4 percent of districts), and were reported separately by only 4.4 percent of districts.

Key Finding:

Assessment data for SpEd-LEP students most commonly are combined with data for other special education students.
Only a small percentage of districts report SpEd-LEP student data separately.

3.11 *What are outcomes for SpEd-LEP students?*

Not enough district special education coordinators provided data to draw conclusions about dropout rates and diplomas received by SpEd-LEP students. For example, only 12.3 percent of respondents (weighted) could provide diploma data for both the special education population in general and the SpEd-LEP population. Given that the SpEd-LEP population is relatively small, and given that there have been very few research or evaluation efforts or data reporting systems that have focused on SpEd-LEP students as a distinct population, the findings of the Descriptive Study with regard to the difficulty of obtaining outcome data on SpEd-LEP students as a distinct population are not surprising. Policy-makers and program specialists in Federal and State LEP and special education programs should identify and further study key issues relating to the needs of SpEd-LEP students. However, in order to track progress of SpEd-LEP students, it will be important for school district administrators to develop record-keeping and database systems that incorporate identification of SpEd-LEP students.

Policy Questions: SpEd-LEP Student Outcomes

1. **How should data for SpEd-LEP students be reported?**
2. **What guidance do districts and schools require regarding reporting outcomes for SpEd-LEP students?**
3. **What level of resources is appropriate for developing reporting systems for SpEd-LEP students?**

4

IMPLICATIONS OF KEY FINDINGS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

4.1. What Are the Key Findings and Implications Related to LEP Students?

(1) There has been a dramatic increase in the number of LEP students in U.S. public schools.

The results of the Descriptive Study indicate that the number of LEP students in the U.S. continues to grow. Not only has the population increased, but LEP students represent a growing proportion of all students. Thus, it is important that educational policy-makers take into account the characteristics and needs of LEP students in developing educational policies and regulations.

(2) Spanish-language LEP students make up over three-quarters of the LEP student population.

The Spanish-language LEP student population outnumbers all other groups, and has increased as a proportion of all LEP students. The challenge of meeting the needs of the large Spanish-language LEP student population brings with it also the potential for using the resources of the Spanish-language community (e.g., persons, materials). At the same time, it is important to recognize that districts and schools also face the challenge of meeting the needs of LEP students from a wide range of language groups.

(3) There has been a substantial shift in the instructional services received by LEP students. Compared to prior years, LEP students are now more likely to receive instructional services provided in English, and less likely to receive *extensive LEP services*.

The observed shift in the types of instructional services received by LEP students implies that students in mainstream classes are becoming more diverse. Such diversity presents additional challenges for mainstream teachers, and it is likely that these teachers will increasingly require the training and expertise required to work effectively with LEP students.

(4) The number of teachers who instruct at least one LEP student has more than tripled; teachers of LEP students now represent more than 40 percent of all teachers in public schools in grades K-12.

Similarly, the number of instructional aides working with LEP students has increased by a factor of three. These increases in numbers of instructional staff most likely can be attributed not only to the growth in the LEP student population but also to the shift in instructional services received by LEP students. These teachers and aides are likely to require additional training and guidance to assist them in effectively serving the needs of LEP students.

(5) Many teachers and instructional aides who work with LEP students have not received training related specifically to instruction of LEP students.

The findings on extent of training received by teachers and aides who work with at least one LEP student indicated that many have received no specific training or very limited training related to the instruction of LEP students. Some of these staff work with small numbers of LEP students; others work with many. An issue to be addressed is how to best allocate resources for training to meet the needs of teachers and their LEP students.

(6) Instruction for LEP students is less aligned with State content/performance standards than is instruction for other students.

The findings of the Descriptive Study indicate that additional efforts are needed to ensure alignment of instruction for LEP students. Differences in extent of alignment of instruction for LEP students should be considered when reviewing LEP student data on Statewide assessments of achievement related to standards.

(7) Most materials and training for aligning instruction with standards are general in nature and not specific to the instruction of LEP students.

Without materials and training that specifically address alignment of instruction for LEP students, teachers must adapt the general materials and training content in order to ensure alignment of instruction for their LEP students. However, the findings also indicate that many teachers have not had extensive training related to the instruction of LEP students. Thus, for many teachers, effective adaptation of general materials/training to classroom instruction of LEP students may be difficult.

(8) Many district LEP coordinators were unable to provide summary data on the achievement of former LEP students on Statewide/district tests, and on dropout rates and diplomas received by LEP and former LEP students.

In order to have long-term outcomes data on LEP students, districts should retain information on former LEP status in record-keeping systems, and should include that information in records sent with students to new districts and schools. With such systems in place, school districts would be able to track the long-term achievement of former LEP students. In examining student outcomes, data on both LEP and former LEP students should be analyzed.

4.2. What Are the Key Findings and Implications Relating to Special Education LEP Students?

(1) The Descriptive Study's request for information about the subgroup of SpEd-LEP students challenged many district and school administrators.

Given that there have been very few research or evaluation efforts or data-reporting systems that have focused on SpEd-LEP students as a distinct population, these findings with regard to the data systems are not surprising. However, policy-makers and program specialists in Federal and State LEP and special education programs should identify and further study key issues related to the needs of SpEd-LEP students. To assist in this effort, record-keeping and database systems that incorporate identification of SpEd-LEP students will be needed.

(2) Smaller proportions of LEP students than of students in general were enrolled in special education services. Smaller proportions of LEP students than of students in general were reported for each of the special education disability categories.

Lower representation does not necessarily mean under-identification, (e.g., the results may be based on under-reporting of LEP students in special education). However, the results do suggest the need for further study. It would be important to examine further the sources of this lower rate of LEP students reported in special education programs. A number of school and district staff in interviews noted that there are major issues involved in attempting to determine whether a student's difficulties in the classroom stem from second language learning or from a disability. However, it is important to identify the existence of a disability and provide special education services as early as possible when such services are needed by a student.

(3) There is variation in the rates at which individual districts enroll LEP students in special education.

Districts with larger LEP student populations reported lower percentages of LEP students in special education than did districts with smaller LEP student populations. Further understanding of differences in rates of identification of SpEd-LEP students is needed.

(4) Three-quarters of districts do not have services designed specifically for SpEd-LEP students.

There are special challenges in serving students who have both limited English skills and a disability. However, most districts appear to assign SpEd-LEP students to the separate services provided by LEP program staff and special education program staff, and most collaboration between the two programs appears to be informal in nature. Further efforts are needed to define effective instruction for SpEd-LEP students, and to promote increased collaboration across the LEP and special education programs in providing SpEd-LEP services.

(5) There appears to be a need for LEP and special education teachers to have broader cross-training.

It is very difficult to find teachers who have the sets of knowledge and skills required to most effectively work with SpEd-LEP students, and it would be a very heavy burden to expect teachers to have dual credentialing in LEP services and special education. However, there is apparently a need for greater training in these two areas for all those who work with SpEd-LEP students.

(6) Data from district special education coordinators indicated that instructional programs for SpEd-LEP students are not aligned with State content/performance standards to the same extent as are instructional programs for special education students in general.

General curriculum materials and training are more often provided to teachers of SpEd-LEP students to align instruction with State standards than are curriculum materials and training specific to LEP or SpEd-LEP students. Thus, teachers who have had limited training related to the instruction of LEP students may have difficulty in developing effective adaptations of the general information on standards to instruction of their SpEd-LEP students.

NOTES

Chapter 1 Notes:

[1] The sample included 1,315 school districts that served at least one LEP student, and 3,424 schools that served at least one LEP student. Responses to the questionnaires on LEP students were obtained from 1,064 school districts (80.9 percent response rate), and from 2,361 schools out of 2,952 schools remaining in the sample after higher level (district) refusals (80.0 percent response rate). Responses to the questionnaires on SpEd-LEP students were obtained from 939 districts (71.4 percent response rate) and 1,942 schools (65.8 percent).

[2] There were 105 of an initial sample of 135 districts that participated (77.8 percent participating). In these districts, 479 forms were distributed to district staff and 350 were received (73.1 percent response). A total of 321 schools out of the initial sample of 453 participated (70.9 percent); within these schools, of 7,351 forms distributed to teachers, there were 4,196 forms returned (57.1 percent response), and of 1,061 forms distributed to instructional aides, 655 forms were returned (61.7 percent response rate). Student information forms were completed for 5,525 LEP students from 331 schools and 940 SpEd-LEP students from 324 schools.

Chapter 2 Notes:

[1] Most States utilize the federal definition of LEP (Kindler, 2002); however, the specific criteria used to identify a LEP student are not consistently defined across States, nor across districts within a State (Fleischman and Hopstock, 1993). The study used the same definition of LEP student as was used in the 1993 Descriptive Study:

"Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students: Individuals not born in the United States or whose native language is other than English, and individuals who come from non-English dominant environments, whose skills in English are so limited that they derive little benefit from regular school instruction. 'Limited English Proficient' also refers to students who have no proficiency in English.

NOTE: *If your school district has an operational definition for limited English proficient students, then use your district's definition in responding to this questionnaire. "*

Thus, administrators/coordinators responded to the study questions on LEP students by referring to those students formally identified as LEP within their district, based on their district's criteria.

Chapter 3 Notes:

[1] When asked questions about services, coordinators from the two program areas did not appear to be mutually aware of services each provided. However, anecdotal observations during the data collection process indicated that some districts do have specific categories established within their district databases for identifying SpEd-LEP students. The extent to which districts have established specific systems for maintaining data on SpEd-LEP students as a separate category was not a focus of the study, however, and this would be an area for further study.

[2] These data on the lower percentage of LEP students in special education are similar to data from the U.S. Department of Education (Office of Special Education Programs Data Analysis System) for the 1999-2000 school year in which special education enrollment is analyzed by race/ethnicity. The Department of Education data indicated that although Hispanics represented 16.2 percent of the resident population ages 6-21, they represented only 13.7 percent of students in special education.

[3] See Hopstock and Stevenson (2003), Special Topic Report #2, *Analysis of Office for Civil Rights (OCR) Data Related to LEP Students*, which analyzes data from the 2000 Elementary and Secondary School Civil Rights Compliance Report.

[4] In IDEA reporting, the term "regular classroom" is used to refer to non-special education environments. In the Descriptive Study, the term "general classroom" was used, and defined as including all non-special education settings, including regular classrooms and classrooms in which there is use of the student's native language, or special use of English and instructional strategies adapted to the LEP students' needs.

REFERENCES

Hopstock, P.J. and Stephenson, T.G. (2003). *Descriptive Study of Services to LEP Students and LEP Students with Disabilities. Special Topic Report #2: Analysis of Office for Civil Rights (OCR) Data Related to LEP Students.* Submitted to U.S. Department of Education, OELA. Arlington VA: Development Associates, Inc.

Fleischman, H.L, and Hopstock, P.J. (1993). *Descriptive Study of Services to Limited English Proficient Students: Volume I. Summary of findings and conclusions.* Report submitted to the U.S. Department of Education. Arlington, VA: Development Associates, Inc.

Kindler, A. (2002). *Survey of the States' Limited English Proficient students and available educational programs and services: 2000-2001 summary report*. Report prepared for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA). Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. (2002). *To assure the free appropriate public education of all children with disabilities: Twenty-fourth annual report to Congress on the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Act.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

APPENDIX A

Definitions of Instructional Service Types for LEP Students

Instructional Services for LEP Students

Type 1 – **No** LEP services/ Mainstream instruction only. This type is defined by regular instruction without any additional instructional services.

Type 2 – **No** LEP services/ Instructional support. This type includes a range of support services that are not specifically designed for LEP students. These include classroom aides, Title I or other resource teachers, tutoring, and/or special education services.

Type 3 – **Some** LEP services/All English. This type includes LEP services designed to support or supplement regular instruction; such LEP services include aides for LEP students, LEP Title I resource teachers, and/or ESL instruction provided for fewer than 10 hours per week. In this service type, all instruction is provided in English, i.e., there is *less than 2%* native language use in instruction.

Type 4 – **Some** LEP services/ Some native language. This type includes LEP services designed to support or supplement regular instruction; such LEP services include aides for LEP students, LEP Title I resource teachers, and/or ESL instruction provided for fewer than 10 hours per week. In this service type, there is *2-24%* use of the native language in instruction.

Type 5 – **Some** LEP services/ Significant native language. This type includes LEP services designed to support or supplement regular instruction; such LEP services include aides for LEP students, LEP Title I resource teachers, and/or ESL instruction provided for fewer than 10 hours per week. In this service type, there is *at least 25%* use of the native language in instruction.

Type 6 – **Extensive** LEP services/ All English. This type includes LEP services in which a significant amount of instruction is designed for LEP students; such LEP services include 10 or more hours per week of ESL instruction and/or content instruction that is specifically designed for LEP students. In this service type, there is *less than 2%* use of the native language in instruction.

Type 7 – **Extensive** LEP services/ Some native language. This type includes LEP services in which a significant amount of instruction is designed for LEP students; such LEP services include 10 or more hours per week of ESL instruction and/or content instruction that is specifically designed for LEP students. In this service type, there is *2-24%* use of the native language in instruction.

Type 8 – **Extensive** LEP services/ Significant native language. This type includes LEP services in which a significant amount of instruction is designed for LEP students; such LEP services include 10 or more hours per week of ESL instruction and/or content instruction that is specifically designed for LEP students. In this service type, there is *at least 25%* use of the native language in instruction.

APPENDIX B

List of Descriptive Study Reports

Main Study Reports:

Zehler, A.M., Fleischman, H.L., Hopstock, P.J., Stephenson, T.G., Pendzick, M.L., and Sapru, S. (2003). *Descriptive Study of Services to LEP Students and LEP Students with Disabilities. Volume I: Research Report*. Submitted to U.S. Department of Education, OELA. Arlington VA: Development Associates, Inc.

Zehler, A.M., Hopstock, P.J., Fleischman, H.L., and Stephenson, T.G. (2003). *Descriptive Study of Services to LEP Students and LEP Students with Disabilities. Volume II: Methodology*. Submitted to U.S. Department of Education, OELA. Arlington VA: Development Associates, Inc.

Zehler, A.M., Voight, J., Hopstock, P.J., Sapru, S., and Pendzick, M. (2003). *Descriptive Study of Services to LEP Students and LEP Students with Disabilities. Volume III: Report on Case Study Interviews.* Submitted to U.S. Department of Education, OELA. Arlington VA: Development Associates, Inc.

Zehler, A.M., Fleischman, H.L., Hopstock, P.J., Stephenson, T.G., Pendzick, M.L., and Sapru, S. (2003). *Descriptive Study of Services to LEP Students and LEP Students with Disabilities. Policy Report: Summary of Findings Related to LEP and SpEd-LEP Students.* Submitted to U.S. Department of Education, OELA. Arlington VA: Development Associates, Inc.

Special Topic Reports:

Hopstock, P.J. and Stephenson, T.G. (2003). *Descriptive Study of Services to LEP Students and LEP Students with Disabilities. Special Topic Report #1: Native Languages of LEP Students.* Submitted to U.S. Department of Education, OELA. Arlington VA: Development Associates, Inc.

Hopstock, P.J. and Stephenson, T.G. (2003). *Descriptive Study of Services to LEP Students and LEP Students with Disabilities. Special Topic Report #2: Analysis of Office for Civil Rights (OCR) Data Related to LEP Students.* Submitted to U.S. Department of Education, OELA. Arlington VA: Development Associates, Inc.

Hopstock, P.J. (2003). *Descriptive Study of Services to LEP Students and LEP Students with Disabilities. Special Topic Report #3: Issues in Studying Outcomes for LEP Students.* Submitted to U.S. Department of Education, OELA. Arlington VA: Development Associates, Inc.

Zehler, A.M., Fleischman, H.L., Hopstock, P.J., Pendzick, M.L., and Stephenson, T.G. (2003). *Descriptive Study of Services to LEP Students and LEP Students with Disabilities. Special Topic Report #4: Findings on Special Education LEP Students.* Submitted to U.S. Department of Education, OELA. Arlington VA: Development Associates, Inc.