

Generation 1.5

What do we need to know? What are the issues? What are the implications?

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Language Minority Students

- ESOL – students studying English language in the country where it is the dominant language
- EFL - students studying English language in a country where it is not the dominant language.
- International visa students
- Immigrant/Refugee students

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Generation 1.5 Definition

*"Immigrants who arrive in the U.S. as school-age children and share characteristics of both first and second generation immigrants" (Harklau, 1999).*

First Generation Immigrants:

- Foreign born
- Foreign educated
- L1 dominant

Second Generation Immigrants:

- U.S. born
- U.S. educated
- L1 and/or English dominant

Generation 1.5 Immigrants:

- Foreign born
- Partly foreign education/  
partly U.S. education
- L1 and/or English dominant

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### Generation 1.5 Characteristics

- Interrupted literacy development
- Ear Learners
- Lack of reading & academic vocabulary skills
- Incipient Bilinguals
- Functional Bilinguals
- Linguistic self-identification

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### Generation 1.5 Characteristics (2)

- Ages 8 -- 15
- Marginalized
- Home vs. American Culture
- Cultural grouping
- Lack of acculturation
- Allegiance - home or school?
- Identification with lower level peers
- Parental input

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### Issues Related to Age of Arrival

- Academic preparation
- Literacy background : L1 and English
- Life experiences & knowledge of the world
- Identity formation
- Instrumental vs. integrative motivation

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### Issues Related to Age of Arrival (2)

- Unexpected cognitive demands in school
- "Gap" to catch up
- Exposure to English? Use in natural settings?
- Exposure to U.S. educational system
- Life responsibilities or distractions

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### Prior Language Learning Experiences: Aural Skills

- Passive listening
- Minimal interaction with English speakers
- Inability to understand input from teachers
- Non-salient grammar features often missing
- Reliance on their own aural "sense" of syntax

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### Aural English Learners Challenges

- How can we help them learn what they didn't hear or still don't hear?
- How can we give students the complex, interactive input they didn't get as language learners and are not getting in their courses?

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Prior Language Learning Experiences:  
Oral Skills

- English acquired orally
- Functional production but gaps, fossilized errors & minimal vocabulary
- Restricted oral interactions
- Writing = Oral language
- Lack of meta-language to discuss L2 difficulties

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Oral Language Learners  
Challenges

- How can we help students understand the differences between oral & written language?
- How can we give them revising and editing skills?
- How can we help students, both oral and aural learners, examine their own English & compare it to standard English to discover the differences?

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College Transition (I)

- Upward mobility
- "Good Kids" in High School
- Papers in H.S. vs. Papers in College
- Feel confident communicating/writing in English
- "Entitled" to attend College

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### College Transition (2)

- High school /College Culture shock
- Share ESOL classes with international students
- Identify more with Americans than Internationals
- New academic writing demands
- Mainstream or ESOL?
- Marginalized and stigmatized by ESOL placement
- Orally competent but lacking in academic skills

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### College Transition (3)

- ESOL teachers teach toward incipient bilinguals
- Try to beat the system if placed in ESOL class
- Professors expectations may encourage plagiarism
- Living at home = less campus involvement
- Less assertive in asking questions or advice

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### Suggested Programmatic Strategies

- Diagnostic Testing: interview, language background questionnaires
- Peer tutorial program
- "Persuading" students to use tutorial program
- More articulation between
  - ESOL /mainstream classes
  - H.S & college teachers
- De-stigmatize ESOL classes

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### Strategies for Assessing Gen 1.5 Writing

- Teach revision & editing strategies
- Multiple drafts
- Teach academic vocabulary early
- Learning to write never ends
- Controlled to guided to free writing
- Go beyond narrative/descriptive
- One ESOL error at a time

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### Discussion

1. What kinds of writing need to be taught in high school to prepare for college level work?
2. How can teachers promote interest in critical literacy skills in their classes?
3. Could there possibly be a "bridge" class between ESOL and mainstream? What would it look like?

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### Discussion

4. Suggest ways in which mainstream teachers could become more aware of the language and cultural issues related to Gen 1.5.
5. How can schools assist in reducing the "stigma" that Gen 1.5 students feel taking ESOL classes?
6. How do we convey to Gen 1.5 the cultural and academic expectations of U.S. public schools?

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