DOCUMENT RESUME

ABSTRACT
        The paper surveys a number of projects and documents
that are attempting or have claimed to describe a "long-term view" of
English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) learning in schools. A long-term
approach involves mapping needs and common pathways and measuring
(assessing and reporting on) progress across learners, classes, and
year levels. Long-term mapping provides reference points for teachers
in teaching and discussing progress, provides a common language, and
facilitates continuity of teaching and learning. Current approaches
to long-term mapping and measurement are reviewed, including those
with an ESL focus and those with a subject-English or general
literacy focus. Canadian and British curriculum models are described
briefly. Educational, assessment, pragmatic, and political issues in
long-term ESL mapping and measurement are then outlined, particularly
as they apply in the Australian context. Integration of ESL planning
with overall subject-English and literacy education planning is
urged. A brief bibliography is included. (MSE)

ED 386 958

B5

Long-term Mapping And Measurement in School ESL—Some Perspectives

Penny McKay
NLLIA-Language Testing and Curriculum Centre
Griffith University

Paper presented at ACTA/VATME National
Conference, University of Melbourne, 13-17
January 1992.

This paper surveys a number of projects and documents which are attempting or have claimed to describe a "long-term view" of ESL learning in schools.

A long-term approach to ESL involves what might be called "stepping back", mapping needs and common pathways, and measuring (that is, assessing and reporting on) progress across learners, across classes and across year levels. Long-term mapping and measurement builds on good planning and assessment practices in day-to-day teaching, and can help to supplement ESL teaching by:

• Providing reference points for teachers to consider in their teaching

• Providing a "common language" with other teachers

• Providing reference points for teachers to discuss progress and needs with parents and students

• Facilitating continuity of teaching and learning across classes, teachers, and year levels

A wider view of ESL learning such as this can only contribute to efforts to include ESL learner skills in the future contribution to the "clever country" we are seeking for our school learners.

Long-term mapping can be done through:

• Descriptions of content (what to teach)

• Descriptions of growth

across learners, classes and phases of schooling.

Long-term measurement involves assessment and reporting on progress or growth. Generally this is done in conjunction with the map, and is usually carried out by classroom teachers who are given varying degrees of guidance on assessment and reporting procedures.

Current Approaches to Long-term ESL

Recent trends in   ucation have been very quickly superimposing long-term views on education, (see a summary of national and international trends in Masters 1990). There is a theme creeping into long-term mapping and measurement, of monitoring in the sense of

DESCRIPTIONS OF GROWTH?	TIED TO GRADE LEVEL	MEASUREMENT	REPORTING
Through characteristics of learners at each Stage. Through nature of objectives, activities of each Stage.	JP, MP Sec. Otherwise no	Teacher observes and selects tasks according to sample tasks provided for each Stage. Teacher uses key indicators of progress in tasks as reference points	Learners assigned to Stage (for teaching and reporting purposes). Accompanied by profiles.
Through nature of objectives, activities at each level.	No	Teacher follows assessment scheme provided to assess learner performance within the level.	Through profile.
Indirectly through changes in tasks and criteria at different phases of schooling.	Yes	Teacher observes and selects tasks using guidelines, including criteria provided.	Learner assigned 1-5. Accompanied by profile.
Through proficiency bands and (possibly) through indicators of performance in a variety of tasks.	JP, MP Sec. Otherwise no	Teacher observes and selects assessment tasks using guidelines.	Learner assigned to band. Accompanied by profile.
Through 6 levels of profiles or achievement statements, with observable outcomes.	No	Teacher observes (?)	Learner assigned a level of achievement. Accompanied by profile(?).
Through 6 attainment levels, with observable outcomes and exemplars.	No	Teacher observes (?)	Learner assigned a level of attainment. Accompanied by profile(?).
Through developmental continua (indicators of growth) in each skill.	Primary: Otherwise no	Teacher observes	Through profiles.
Through progressive indicators of growth within and across tasks.	Yes	Teacher observes	Through profiles.
Through 5 levels of indicators of growth (based on research) described in a range of selected tasks.	Yes	Teacher observes using assessment tasks and accompanying indicators and videos as a guide	Through profiles. Checked against percentage norms.
Through nature of objectives in statements of attainment.	No	Teacher assesses at key stages through standardised assessment tasks following clear guidelines	Learner assigned an attainment level. Accompanying profiling.

Diagram 1a: List of approaches to long-term mapping and measurement (assessment and reporting) in school ESL.

B5.2

3

PROJECT/DOCUMENT	DESCRIPTION	PURPOSE
1. ESL-focused		
ESL Framework of Stages	Curriculum statement. Detailed goals, objectives and activities. Organised into Stages according to learner growth towards independent/successful mainstream learning. Accompanying assessment schemes to ascertain learner Stage. (Mapping through curriculum).	*Teaching and learning
S.A. New Arrivals Curriculum (draft)	Curriculum statement. Detailed goals, objectives and activities (organised into modules). Organised into three levels of Intensive Language Centre. (Mapping through curriculum).	*to inform teaching and learning
SNAP (SA) draft	Sets of suggested mainstream-related assessment procedures tied to phases of schooling K - 12; accompanying criteria for assessment of ESL learners against mainstream expectations. (Assessment - focused - not mapping).	*to identify ESL learners with needs *to inform resource allocation
ESL Development: Language and Literacy in Schools Project (in progress)	Sets of proficiency bands with accompanying assessment and reporting guidelines. (Mapping through proficiency).	*to research and describe ESL learner growth *(to inform teaching/learning; resource allocation)
NSW Ministry of Education Project (details unavailable)		

2. Subject English/general literacy-focused		
National Statement on English in Australian Schools (AEC:draft)	Subject profile statement of subject English (6 bands), and 8 levels of achievement (with observable outcomes). (Mapping through curriculum outcomes).	*to inform teaching/learning *to renew English curriculum *to improve reporting to parents *to monitor
S.A. Attainment Levels (draft)	Sets of attainment levels - 8 broad levels (with observable outcomes). (Mapping through curriculum outcomes).	*to inform teaching/learning *to improve reporting *to monitor
First Steps (WA) (in progress)	Detailed descriptions of primary-age learner growth in reading, writing, spelling, and oral language. With accompanying teaching implications. (Mapping through indicators of growth).	*to inform teaching/learning
Telling the Whole Story (McGregor & Meirs)	Teaching guidelines for subject English accompanied by detailed indicators of growth within and across tasks. (Mapping through grade levels and indicators of growth).	*to inform teaching/learning
Benchmarks (Toronto Board Education, Canada)	Concise descriptions with examples of of standards of achievement in language at selected grades (3,6,8). (Mapping through grade related indicators of growth).	*to inform teaching/learning
English in the National Curriculum (England & Wales)	Attainment targets (objectives and suggested activities) in speaking & listening, reading, writing, spelling, handwriting and presentation. Accompanying teaching guidelines and assessment and reporting procedures (Mapping through curriculum and outcomes).	*to inform teaching/learning *to renew English curriculum *to monitor

Diagram 1b: List of approaches to long-term mapping and measurement (assessment and reporting) in school ESL.
(continued from page B5.2)

4

"checking up", for example the National Statement on English documents state that the profiles will be "used as a basis of reporting to parents at school level, and monitoring at State or national level" (AEC, 1990). The English in the National Curriculum documents (England and Wales) state one of the purposes to be "to ensure comparability". However, the purposes of improving and informing teaching and learning are clearly still central objectives. A range of attainment levels, benchmarks, pathways, and profiles with related assessment and reporting procedures have come into being in the last few years.

Diagram 1 sets out a list of some recent project documents which I have classified as long-term approaches. There are a number of ESL-focussed approaches, that is approaches developed with ESL-learner needs and pathways in mind; others are subject English/general literacy approaches which may or may not state in their introductory sections that their mapping and assessment practices are designed to monitor the development of all learners, including ESL learners.

ESL-Focussed Approaches

ESL Framework of Stages
The *ESL Framework of Stages* was developed over four years of national professional development activities through the Australian Language Levels (ALL) project. It has tapped into the consensus of teacher experience of ESL learner needs, and indirectly of ESL learner growth. It provides an interlocking Stage-related map of ESL-focussed goals, objectives and suggested activities from K - 12, using the ALL curriculum framework as a base. The content, based on the five ALL goals, is derived from the ESL specialists' experience of general and mainstream needs through broad phases of schooling K - 12.

There are two fundamental premises behind the *ESL Framework of Stages* which facilitate a long-term map to be described:

- That it is assumed that individual learner differences will be accounted for through teacher programming at the classroom level as teachers interpret the map and use it to inform and affirm their teaching and to enhance learning processes

- That in order to interpret, use, refine the maps and monitoring procedures, teachers must

have the skills and the flexibility to adapt and refine the map to provide for the individual needs and interests of learners in their classroom

Alongside each Stage is a suggested assessment scheme through "Stage determiner procedures" which, through indicators of performance in tasks, provides a beginning indication of the "level" at which learners, working independently, are performing. Assessment activities at each Stage are provided as examples, and teachers build on these with ongoing observation and with further refinement as needed. Case studies of individual learner pathways are provided to illustrate what has been seen by teachers as common pathways through the Framework of Stages.

Stages are "referenced" to phases of schooling and also to age, in that they take these factors into account, but the Stages and the Stage determiner procedures are not tied directly to age or grade level.

SA Curriculum Materials
The SA curriculum materials include, among a range of valuable guidelines for ESL, detailed curriculum content statements, organised into modules, for the New Arrivals Program (that is, for intensive language centres attended during the first year after arrival) over three levels. The SA materials follow the ALL curriculum model, and have incorporated insights from the genre approach. Assessment schemes are provided to assess progress through the three levels. The approach is long-term since it maps teaching and assesses across the three levels of classes in the New Arrivals program. Characteristics of learner growth are not provided though the level and assessment is grade (level) related.

SA SNAP Project
The purpose of the SNAP (Student Needs Assessment Procedures) Project has been to provide procedures to identify ESL learners with needs, to establish the extent of their needs, and thereby to establish resource needs. SNAP does this through comparison of ESL learner performance in mainstream tasks with mainstream "averages", using criteria established during the Project. Learners are assessed on a set of mainstream tasks chosen by the teacher using the guidelines, and through observation and collection of folios of work, and are given a rating of 1 to 5 (5 being "very competent"). SNAP began

by developing a very broad map of learner needs on which to tie the assessment procedures but this is not the focus of the project. SNAP is not intended to monitor progress, that is, it does not provide a picture of learner growth over time, and therefore does not provide a long-term view in the fullest sense. However, SNAP take its perspective beyond the immediate classroom teaching, and across classes, and can in fact monitor growth in the sense of "how far away from mainstream norms" the student is at this assessment; how far he/she was at the last assessment.

ESL Development: Language and Literacy in Schools

The ESL Development: Language and Literacy in Schools project is a current project which commenced in September 1991. It is a DEET funded NLLIA project concerned with the development of proficiency descriptions of learner growth in ESL, and the development of assessment and reporting procedures to accompany the descriptions. The descriptions will provide profiles of proficiency development made up of key indicators of ESL learner growth provided by expert ESL teachers and validated through statistical calibration and observations in classrooms. The descriptions are likely to be accompanied by descriptions of learner performance at that level on key tasks. It is possible that the descriptions will be tied to a curriculum map through the ESL Framework of Stages.

The purpose of the descriptions is primarily to research ESL learner development in schools. The outcomes will contribute towards informing and affirming ESL teaching in schools, and may also be used in resourcing decisions. It appears likely that there will be three descriptions — junior primary, middle primary and upper primary/secondary. This is based on information gained in the ALL/ESL work, but is not yet finally decided.

Work on this project is in its early stages and the nature of the final descriptions and assessment and reporting guidelines is being formulated as the research and consultation proceeds.

NSW Project

A project in NSW is underway which aims to develop a proficiency scale along similar lines to the ESL Development Project. Information on this project is not yet available.

Subject English/General Literacy-Focussed

A number of long-term mapping and measurement initiatives have occurred recently at systems level, designed to be applied to subject English and to all literacy development in schools. ESL learners' needs and characteristics of growth are expected to be part of these descriptions, with ESL learners being taught, monitored, and reported upon according to the descriptions and the accompanying assessment and reporting procedures.

The National Statement on English

The National Statement on English for Australian Schools has been commissioned by the Australian Education Council (AEC) through the Directors of Curriculum and Assessmen   mmittee.

The area of concern is Subject English. The Statement, describing what should be taught, is currently being circulated for consultation. Its descriptions of the content of the English Curriculum are organised into six bands of schooling Band A (Years K to 4); Band B (Years 4 to 7); Band C (Years 7 to 10) and Band D (Years 10 to 12). The framework used is Reading/viewing, Speaking and Listening, and Writing. The second section, the Profile, which is not yet available, is in draft, organised into six levels of achievement (with two further levels envisaged for the post-compulsory years of schooling, Years 11 and 12); each level of achievement is further described through detailed lists of observable outcomes.

> The Profile materials ... offer a way of making finer distinctions for teachers' purposes of tracking student progress, monitoring classroom programs and reporting to parents and caregivers.

The National Statement draft does not as yet provide guidelines for assessment and reporting. I presume it will be through observation against the levels, and through profile reporting with a reference to the level at which the learner is progressing.

SA English Attainment Levels

The SA English Attainment Levels are part of a large attainment levels project in South Australia aiming to provide "attainment levels statements and observable outcomes" in a range of curriculum areas. Attainment levels are being accompanied by "richly described and illustrated

exemplars". They are considered an extension or elaboration of the policy documents, and are therefore considered to be curriculum documents (SA Education Dept, 1991, 6). There are six broad levels of attainment, the six levels ranging from Reception to Year 10. The framework of these attainment levels is very similar to the national framework, using bands, and attainment levels with observable outcomes.

English Profiles (Ministry of Education and Training, Victoria)

The English Profiles are sets of proficiency bands for reporting on a student's progress and achievements in English. They address measurement without reference to any kind of map. Profiles are in spoken language, reading and writing. Each of these profiles contains nine bands. Appropriate "assessment contexts" are provided alongside the bands. No specifically described assessment activities are provided or prescribed. Teachers choose their own formative and summative assessment activities.

ESL learners are not mentioned in the introduction or in the text around the bands. In the development of the Profiles it was found on analysis of the data that data on ESL learners did not follow the general patterns, and further research is being undertaken (see ESL Development Project).

First Steps

First Steps is a Western Australian initiative in primary language. Developmental continua "map the territory of reading, writing, spelling and oral language". They will enable teachers to:

*   Evaluate children's level of understanding and skills

*   Report systematically and accurately on children's current understandings and skills:

*   Monitor children's progress

*   Enable teachers to select from banks of strategies which are directly linked to a child's present level of functioning, as mapped on the continua, to ensure that satisfactory progress is maintained

*   Provide continuity of teaching and learning throughout the school and from year to year.

The developmental continua provide indicators of growth, with exemplars and detailed teaching

guidelines. Assessment and reporting is through teacher observation and profiling.

ESL personnel in Western Australia have had input to the project, and see that the project can have great value for ESL learners, since the teaching guidelines, if followed, will provide teachers with ways to teach ESL learners, as well as English speaking background learners, more effectively. Some ESL teacher reactions, however, are that the descriptions themselves do not describe ESL learner growth sufficiently.

Telling the Whole Story: Assessing Achievement in English (McGregor and Meiers)

This publication provides a treatise on English teaching, assessment and reporting, providing "signs of achievement" within particular tasks, and banks of criteria as

> growth points, signs, signals and trends by which to chart individual development, and as a data base upon which teachers might build their own 'kidwatching' signs and signals appropriate to their particular classrooms.

The thoroughness of this book, together with its comprehensive approach to description using both general banks of indicators and indicators specific to tasks, provides a useful model for long-term descriptions in school language endeavours. Although many ESL learners would be catered for to some extent within the descriptions and procedures, there is no explicit reference to ESL specific characteristics or needs and ESL learners are not actually referred to in the text, even in the introduction.

Overseas Documents

Benchmarks: Toronto Board of Education, Canada

The Toronto Board of Education provides a useful model for long-term mapping and measurement through its Benchmarks. Benchmarks are tightly tied to Ministry curriculum objectives. They relate to the language (and mathematics) learning of all learners in the system. They are "concise descriptions, with examples, of the standards of achievement in Language and Mathematics of the student population in selected grades (Grades 3,6 and 8) of the Toronto Board of Education". Videotapes and print examples provide exemplification of what students can do. Selected Benchmark tasks are presented, giving the key

objectives, the description of the task, and holistic scoring criteria at five levels. The percentage of students who achieve the different levels at this grade is given. Thus the Benchmarks are tied to grade level and age rather than describing progress unrelated to grade. Description of growth is within tasks, and is through five performance levels tied to the tasks.

English in the National Curriculum - England and Wales

The English in the National Curriculum (England and Wales) document sets out attainment levels within attainment targets (speaking and listening, reading, writing, spelling, handwriting and presentation). The attainment levels describe objectives and sample activities for the level. The targets are accompanied by programs of study or guidelines for teaching, related to key stages (key stage 1 : ages 5 - 7; key stage 2: ages 7-11) . Assessment tasks (SATS or Standard Assessment Tasks) are developed "to moderate teachers' own continuous assessment and ensure comparability of standards". Content-free SATS produced by the authorities will have the content (eg, the topic areas) added to them locally. SATS will be the predominant means of assessment in the final year of each key stage.

Diagram 2 summarises the stated purposes behind these projects/documents, and categorises the different mapping and measurement approaches.

Issues in Long-term Mapping and Measurement in ESL

Diagram 3 sets out issues in long-term approaches to mapping and measurement, viewed from the ESL perspective, which I shall comment on briefly.

Issues In Providing Long-term Descriptions

Which approach?

The range of long term approaches described here highlights the choices to be made in long-term mapping and measurement; choices will depend to a large extent on the specific purposes behind the map but also on the philosophical approach. Philosophical decisions relating to the description and subsequent assessment, course-related achievement, attainment or proficiency have to be made. Most approaches are achievement/attainment focussed, though the direct connection to curriculum objectives

becomes rather tenuous in a number of projects, especially in attainment projects. The use of the terms "achievement" and "attainment" in some projects seems to hide an underlying proficiency approach. Whichever approach is taken needs careful validation through research, especially because of its potential influence on the teaching of language and literacy in schools.

How much is it possible to generalise across learners?

A fundamental consideration in a long-term view of ESL is whether it is possible to generalise across learners, to describe common needs and growth. There is little debate about whether common objectives and needs can be described in curriculum documents; there is contention however about commonality in learning pathways. My position is that there are broad commonalities, and there are, of course, individual differences. Individual differences must be acknowledged and catered for in the application of the descriptions and assessment procedures.

Most approaches provide statements which acknowledge individual learner differences within the broad map. First Steps for example contains the following statement:

> while all children will progress along the developmental continua the rate of individual progress will var,. A child may display behaviours from more than one phase at any given time. This development will not necessary be a steady progression, but may recur, plateau and accelerate. A child will not necessarily display all behaviours listed in a phase therefore behaviours exhibited will vary from child to child (Ministry of Education, WA, 1990, Introduction).

Without acknowledgement of this type of individual difference within the broad map, the long term mapping would be a nonsense. The responsibility for the classroom teacher to be a flexible and expert interpreter of the maps is great.

Garth Boomer in *Meanings and Metaphors* has written: "the picture I paint is one of infinite embeddedness (Green 1988, 89), which illustrates well the nature of the picture beneath long-term maps."

Issues in producing long-term description

- which approach?
- how much is it possible to generalise across learners, across contexts?
- is too much lost in the writing? (perhaps leading to a "shrunken curriculum") (can we afford not to try?)

ESL learners - where do they belong?

- will subject English/general literacy mapping and measurement procedures cater for ESL learners who bring a cultural, educational, first language background to their learning (at a range of levels of maturity) and who are learning English as a second language across the curriculum
- can all ESL learners realistically share levels with ESB learners? (eg mature beginning ESL learners should not share a band with young learners "at play")
- can the tension between ESB-similar and ESL-specific needs be catered for in any one map (ie either in a general literacy map or in an ESL-focused map?)
- can the tension between ESB-similar and ESL-specific needs be catered for in any one map (ie either in a general literacy map or in an ESL-focused map?)

Issues in long-term assessment procedures

- which approach?
- should ESL learners be compared against ESB norms with ESB criteria? (will this result in a deficiency view?) or should they be assessed according to "stages" of growth? (will this raise practical problems?)
- at what point are ESL learners best integrated with ESB assessment.
- do mainstream teachers have the skills to assess ESL learner growth?
- the benefit of an increased focus on assessment

ESL learners will benefit from:

- a shared reference point for ESL teaching providing continuity across classes and phases of schooling
- continuing development of understanding in the field about teaching and learning in ESL
- "ESL - friendly" mapping and measurement in all areas of the curriculum, (backwash effect on teaching and awareness)
- a continuing dialogue with developers of subject English/general literacy mapping projects

INTERRELATED ISSUES

The ESL field:

- needs to argue for ESL-friendly mapping and measurement in all areas of the curriculum particularly subject English
- needs to continue to work on developing a range of ESL-focused mapping and measurement to further understandings, and inform/affirm ESL teaching
- needs to continue to develop flexibility and expertise to develop, interpret, test and refine mapping and measurement procedures in the classroom

Issues in reporting

- will level - names/numbers be used without reference to profiles? is this a problem if used in an informed way?
- the benefit of an increased focus on reporting
- the strong emphasis on profiling

Issues of practicality

- will ESL learners be marginalised if ESL-focused mapping and measurement is developed and used? Will ESL learners be disadvantaged if they are not?
- can mainstream teachers handle ESL-focused mapping and measurement?
- should the lack of ESL specialists in some schools mean that no ESL-focused mapping and measurement?
- should the lack of ESL specialists in some schools mean that no ESL-focused mapping and measurement should be developed and used?
- can we continue effectively without long-term ESL map and measurement?

Political Issues

- should ESL-focused mapping be excluded at national and system levels?
- will mapping and measurement procedures be used to exclude learners from resources (eg. after "Level 2" no more funding available)? (how is this different from time-based allocations?)
- influence of DEET/AEC/State/System relationships

Diagram 2: Overview of issues in long-term mapping and measurement (assessment and reporting) in school ESL.

B5.8

PURPOSES OF LONG-TERM MAPPING AND MEASUREMENT

Projects/document surveyed have stated their purposes as follows:

* to improve and inform teaching and learning (e.g., to facilitate continuity; to improve reporting; to prove common reference points)
* to identify needs
* resource allocation
* to renew and define curriculum (system level)
* to monitor (system level)
* to ensure comparability (system level)

APPROACHES TO LONG-TERM MAPPING
(*denotes combination of approaches)

Projects/documents surveyed have approached long-term mapping in the following ways.

* through curriculum statements: describing goals, objects, etc, in levels:

    (a) according to grade
        SA NEW ARRIVALS CURRICULUM

    (b) According to growth in learning
        *ESL FRAMEWORK OF STAGES: ENGLISH IN THE NATIONAL
        CURRICULUM (ENGLAND AND WALES)

* through attainment levels: describing expected learning, tied to broad curriculum
  statement/policy, usually in paragraphs and then "outcomes" developed out of
  curriculum statements or policies
  NATIONAL STATEMENT ON ENGLISH IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS;
  SA ATTAINMENT LEVELS

* through proficiency scales or indicators of growth
  ESL DEVELOPMENT: LANGUAGE AND LITERACY IN SCHOOLS (NLLIA);
  NSW PROJECT; ENGLISH PROFILES; *TELLING THE WHOLE STORY;
  FIRST STEPS.

* through indicators of growth tied to tasks
  *ESL FRAMEWORK OF STAGES; *TELLING THE WHOLE STORY (not-grade-
  related);
  *BENCHMARKS; (SNAP) (grade related)

APPROACHES TO LONG-TERM MEASUREMENT

Projects/documents surveyed have approached long-term measurement in the following
ways:
* assessing achievement (assessing objectives of curriculum)
* assessing attainment (assessing learning which is tied to broad curriculum
  statements)
* assessing proficiency (not necessarily related to objectives of curriculum)
* assessing through tasks set at grade/phase of schooling
* assessing through tasks at level of learning
* teacher-selected tasks with strong guidance
* teacher-selected tasks with minimum guidance
* standardized tasks

Diagram 3: Purposes of long-term mapping and measurement.

How much is it possible to generalise across contexts?

Some maps describe language growth in a generalised sense across contexts, and across tasks (eg, National Statement in English; ESL Development Project; SA Attainment Levels). Others provide indicators of growth according to specific contexts or tasks (eg, ESL Framework of Stages, SNAP, Benchmarks). An argument in the language field is that it is not useful to talk about general language proficiency as the language we use varies from context to context (Derewianka, draft 1991). In the ESL Development Project workshops, teachers are describing, through their own choice, indicators of growth both within and across tasks. It seems to me that some aspects of proficiency can be described across tasks, and some need to be exemplified in specific tasks. The debate on this will no doubt continue.

Is too much lost in the writing? (perhaps leading to a "shrunken curriculum"?)

Is it possible to write down the complexities of the language learning process without losing something? The answer is of course no, it is not; something will always be lost since descriptions must inevitably provide the essence of growth, the "key" indicators.

This factor has to be compensated for through, for example: ..

- careful selection of language model and framework

- the provision of support documents (eg exemplars, videos)

- flexibility and expertise in the use of descriptions

- teacher inservice.

Teachers need to be very careful that they do not take the maps (whether curriculum or proficiency based) as their only teaching and assessment reference for in-class teaching, as there is no doubt that there is a simplification of learning and teaching processes as indicators and outcomes are put into writing. This approach can lead to what is being called "the shrunken curriculum" (Barr 1990).

ESL Learners — Where Do They Belong?

Will subject English/general literacy mapping and measurement procedures cater for ESL learners?
ESL learners bring a cultural, educational, and first language background to their learning. They also move into ESL learning at a range of maturity levels. In this survey of the literature I have seen little reference to ESL learners in introductions to subject English/general literacy mapping documents. However, the characteristics of ESL learner growth and needs, particularly of beginners, is not clearly evident in the maps or descriptions. Mature beginning ESL learners are often expected to share "Level 1" with young learners "at play".

Since ESL learners have needs which can and should be catered for in mainstream learning, have specific needs within these and yet sometimes separate from them, and since ESL learners needs and optimal learning context change as they progress, the arguments for or against inclusion are hardly clear-cut and certainly not easy to present in discussions with subject English/general literacy personnel, and indeed, within the ESL field.

Issues In Long-term Assessment Procedures

Which approach?
The approach to assessment which is adopted in projects is related to the specific purpose for the assessment. The distinction between achievement and proficiency is a distinction which is not clear-cut either in everyday in-class assessment or in these long-term mapping and measurement activities. I have already mentioned my suspicions about "achievement" and "attainment" statements having moved closer to "proficiency" descriptions in the way they are being presented. The construct of proficiency and its description through scales stimulates a lively debate in the literature (eg Brindley, 1989; Nunan 1990; Ingram & Wylie, 1989) and needs to be supported by well-considered frameworks and backed up by research especially in child ESL where there are few, if any, scales available at present.

Some projects provide sample tasks for teachers, with accompanying criteria (ESL Framework of Stages; SNAP; Benchmarks). Other projects ask teachers to observe through the range of their teaching activities. Some of the projects which provide tasks provide them at the level of the mainstream, and assess against expected norms (SNAP, Benchmarks). The latter approach may cause a deficiency view of ESL learners. We do not, for example, consider assessing Year 8 learners against Year 12 norms in Year 12 tasks with Year 12 criteria, in order to place them at the Year 8 level. The ESL Framework of Stages has suggested tasks which are appropriate to the general level of ability/achievement of the learner

thereby hoping to ascertain a positive level of progress. However issues of practicality in the classroom emerge at this point.

Long-term mapping and measurement has provided benefits to the field in that it has brought an increased focus on assessment, alongside valuable ongoing in-class assessment projects such as Queensland's Curriculum Centred Language Assessment Project (Department of Education, Queensland, 1990).

Issues in Reporting

Reporting procedures do not appear to be a major issue since most projects assign a strong role to the teacher and to profile reporting. The overt use or misuse of the assigned level "name" or number is however an issue in reporting. The quick reference to a level is only helpful as long as a proper understanding of the complexity of the level and the concept of level is held by the users. The use of the name or number only in resourcing and in evaluation needs to be argued against strongly, since other factors (eg, personal program factors) need to be considered.

Issues of Practicality

Will ESL learners be marginalised?

A common concern in ESL, and rightly so, is that ESL learners will be marginalised. If we have a separate ESL description and assessment and reporting procedures, will we be disadvantaging ESL learners by making them appear different? We can also ask whether we will disadvantage ESL learners by not providing ESL descriptions and assessment procedures.

Can teachers handle separate ESL profiles and assessment and reporting procedures? ESL specialists are able to do separate monitoring, but ESL specialists are not always available. The presence of ESL specialists means that ESL learners can be provided with the best advantages of long-term mapping and measurement. However, should the lack of ESL specialists in some schools mean that no ESL-focussed mapping or measurement procedures are developed?

The classroom practicalities should not be forgotten, but the constraints should not deter the development and use of appropriate procedures where they can be used effectively.

Political Issues

Should ESL-focussed mapping be excluded at national and systems levels?

On the national and State level, ESL has tended to be placed as a subset of the subject English in attainment level projects. One of the arguments is that since there can only be a limited number of subject areas that can be mapped and profiled, ESL should be part of English. I regret that there also appears to be a gap in higher-level administrators' understandings about ESL and ESL learners in schools This is an area which needs constant attention. ACTA and the Australian Literacy Federation are well-placed to have some effect in this area.

Issues already raised above and the question of the influence of ESL learners' first language background, greater maturation, and experience, on learning seem to inevitably cause difficulty with the successful inclusion of ESL learners in subject English and general literacy maps.

A key question is one of backwash on teaching and learning. That is, will an awareness of the particular characteristics of learning and needs of ESL learners be raised in the consciousness of teachers by the subject English/general literacy maps and measurement procedures? Will the reference points in the descriptions, assessment and reporting procedures push teachers towards a deficiency view of learners since they are not exhibiting those characteristics the teachers are being guided to look for?

Will mapping and measurement procedures be used to exclude learners from resources?

The Adult Migrant Education Service (AMES) experience recently has been that a cut-off point for funding has been set by DEET related to the measurement of learner progress. There is some concern about system-endorsed long-term mapping and measurement procedures being used to do this in school ESL. However, the use of such procedures can only serve to highlight and provide evidence of the need for an increase in funding for the education of ESL learners. We do need to argue strongly, however, that an achievement or proficiency measure used for resourcing and for evaluation or accountability purposes needs to be supplemented by a range of other program information (Nunan, 1990).

On the political scene there continue to be DEET/AEC/State/system tensions which impinge on research and development in ESL. This

has to be an accepted part of life on the national scene. Concerns about territory (where does ESL fit in the National English Profile?), about power (DEET/States and systems) are rife, for example, in relation to the ESL Development Project. These tussles are sometimes circular, often tiresome and can in the end, contribute little towards our understanding about ESL learners' needs and growth patterns. However, the reality is that it is these interactions which influence policy decision and funding. Therefore we need people who can look beyond State/system needs and contribute a strong ESL perspective to this debate.

Conclusion

It is clear that long-term mapping and measurement procedures raise a number of important questions and create a range of tensions, which, because of the complexity of the ESL field, are not easy to resolve.

First, we have to keep arguing for a place for ESL within the subject English/general literacy maps and assessment procedures. All curricula maps, not just subject English and literacy maps, should be "ESL-friendly".

Second, to argue for "ESL-friendliness", we need to work together towards providing good maps or descriptions of long-term ESL, so that we have a clear understanding of our position. If subject English/general literacy maps are not incorporating ESL learners, perhaps it is because ESL does not have a clear enough vantage point to argue from yet.

Third, we need to learn from the different ESL and ESL-related approaches to long-term mapping and measurement, and to use our own expertise and flexibility to research them in the classroom, to refine them and to argue for long-term mapping and measurement which reflects the learning pathways and needs of ESL learners as they move through our schools.

References

Australasian Cooperative Assessment Program. 1990. Subject Profiling. *The development of subject profiles for mathematics and literacy/English.* ACAP Project Proposal to the Directors General of Education.

Australian Education Council. 1991 (November). *A National Statement on English for Australian Schools.* (Draft.)

Barrs, M. 1990. *Words for numbers: assessment in English.* Britain: National Association of Advisers in English.

Brindley, G. 1989. *Assessing achievement in the learner-centred curriculum.* Sydney: NCELTR Department of Education, Queensland. 1990. *Curriculum Centred Language Assessment project.* Immigrant Education Services Division of Special Services.

Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office. 1990. *English in the National Curriculum (No. 2).*

Derewianka, B. 1991. *Assessing Second Language Proficiency* (Draft).

Green, B. 1988. *Metaphors and Meanings. Essays on English teaching by Garth Boomer.* Hawthorn, Vic.: Australian Association for the Teaching of English.

Griffin, P. and P. McKay. 1991. *ESL Development: Language and Literacy Project. A position paper.* NLLIA.

Ingram, D.E. and E. Wylie. 1991. *Developing Proficiency Scales for Communicative Assessment. Language and Language Education: Working Papers of the National Institute of Australia.* Vol 1 No. 1 (Abridged).

Masters, G. 1990. *Subject Profiles as Frameworks for Assessing and Reporting Student Achievement.* Discussion paper commissioned by the Management Committee of the Australasian Cooperative Assessment Project. ACER.

Ministry of Education and Training, Victoria. 1991. *English Profiles Handbook: Assessing and Reporting Students' Progress in English.*

McGregor R. and M. Meiers. 1991. *Telling the Whole Story. Assessing Achievement in English.* Hawthorn, Vic.: Australian Council for Educational Research.

McKay, P. 1992. *The ESL Framework of Stages: towards a more informed approach to long-term ESL teaching and learning in schools.* Vox. Issue 6. AACLAME.

McKay, P. and A. Scarino. 1991. *ESL Framework of Stages: An Approach to ESL Learning in Schools: K-12.* Melbourne: Curriculum Corporation.

Ministry of Education, Western Australia. 1990. *First Steps. Spelling: Developmental Continuum* (and other drafts).

Nunan, D. 1990. *Second language proficiency assessment and program evaluation.* Paper presented at the RELC Regional Seminar, Singapore.

Scarino, A., D. Vale, P. McKay and J. Clark. 1988. *The Australian Language Levels Guidelines.*

14

Canberra. Curriculum Development
Centre.

South Australian Education Department. 1991.
*ESL Student Needs Assessment Procedures R -
10 (Draft).*

South Australian Education Department. 1991.
ESL Curriculum Materials (Draft).

South Australian Education Department. 1991a.
*Attainment Levels: Teachers' Newsletter
Numbers 3 and 4.*

South Australian Education Department. 1991b.
English Attainment Levels. Drafts.

Toronto Board of Education, Canada.
Benchmarks. Standards of Student
Achievement.