

Guide to the NCELA Resource Collection

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition
& Language Instruction Educational Programs

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CONTENTS

Introduction

About NCELA

The NCELA Resource Collection and Scope Areas

Managing the NCELA Resource Collection

Searching the NCELA Resource Collection

Appendix I: Resource Pages

Appendix II: NCELA Quick Reference Guide

Introduction

This *Guide to the NCELA Resource Collection* is designed to serve as an overview of the Resource Collection of the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs (NCELA) – a special collection of over 22,000 items addressing the education of English language learners (ELLs). Specifically, it addresses the Collection's contents, its organization and maintenance, and how to use it.

This *Guide* is not meant as an introduction to the entirety of the Clearinghouse's activities or its website capabilities. If you want to learn more about NCELA's activities or its wealth of offerings on the web, visit <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/about/>. There you can download the *Guide to the NCELA Website*, and learn more about NCELA and the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA).

NCELA offers you this *Guide* in the hope that it will help your research, your studies, and your practice, for the effective education of limited English proficient students and in support of the quality education of all children. We welcome your feedback and suggestions.

About NCELA

Authorized under Title III of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB), the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instructional Educational Programs (NCELA) supports the Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA) of the US Department of Education in its mission to respond to Title III educational needs and implement NCLB as it applies to English language learners (ELLs). OELA's National Clearinghouse is authorized to collect, analyze, synthesize, and disseminate information about language instruction educational programs for limited English proficient children, and related programs.

Information is disseminated by OELA's National Clearinghouse to the language education field through a variety of mechanisms including:

- The **NCELA website** – the primary means of providing information to NCELA's clientele. It contains pathways (information guides), Resource highlight lists, state resource pages, events calendar, frequently asked questions, weblinks, full-text publications, and the Resource Collection database – an online database that lets NCELA users search the entire Resource Collection independently. (For more information on the website, read the *Guide to the NCELA Website* and visit <<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu>>.)
- **OELA Newslines** – a weekly electronic newsletter of NCLB updates and related news, resources, and events, sent via email and archived on the website; and
- **AskNCELA** – an electronic “ask an expert” option that allows users to email queries to NCELA staff. Questions that are seen repeatedly are given lengthier treatment in the *AskNCELA* publication series (brief monographs addressing frequently asked questions).

The NCELA Resource Collection and Scope Areas

The NCELA Resource Collection is a comprehensive collection of over 22,000 items concerned with the education of language minority students. These materials consist of a wide variety of resources in multiple formats including: research reports, classroom materials, books, curriculum guides, conference papers, journal articles, literature reviews, newsletters, fact sheets, posters, educational kits, and multimedia products. The Resource Collection represents the broader knowledge base on the instruction of English language learners; it is not a specific endorsement or hierarchy of materials within the collection. A separate NCELA project, the “What Works Well for English Language Learners” database, will take research within the Resource Collection and examine it from the perspective of evidence-based research and gauge what the research has to offer the education community. The boundaries of the Resource Collection are more comprehensive, however, and should be seen less as a single authoritative voice than what it is: a collection of the many voices and experiences of the education community.

The Resource Collection is a broad and comprehensive knowledge base that has three major components:

1) A *repository of materials* on the education of English language learners. It contains both classic and historically important materials as well as current research, in an attempt to be both foundational and relevant. While some of these materials are electronic in origin (e.g., web-published manuscripts), the collection includes a physical representation of every work in the collection.

2) A *bibliographic database* (referred to as the Resource Collection database) that serves as an online point-of-entry for the collection, offering citations, abstracts, and availability information for the artifacts, or original monographs/items contained within the collection. Access to this database is provided through the NCELA website and is available to all users with Internet access. NCELA staff provides search services for users with limited technological capabilities.

3) A *full-text library* consisting of journal articles, research reports, syntheses, program briefs, fact sheets, lesson plans, and other resources available online in full-text format. This portion of the Collection contains electronic versions of NCELA publications as well as publications from other organizations, associations, or educational institutions. These items can be searched through the Resource Collection database or browsed through the website's "Resources" pages.

The Resource Collection's three main components are dynamic and constantly growing. Items are regularly added to the repository and, as available, full-text items are posted to the website; and the database is continually updated to reflect such additions.

Scope Areas

To understand the variety of materials in the Resource Collection, clients should be aware of NCELA's "scope areas" — broad subject headings which are used to identify and catalog items within the collection, and are adopted in recognition of the diverse needs of NCELA clientele. These scope areas, used to guide NCELA information staff in the identification and acquisition of additions to the Resource Collection, include:

- Student Assessment & Accountability
- Curriculum & Instruction
- Education Programs
- Education Research
- History, Legislation & Policy
- Language & Culture
- Parents & Community Involvement
- Professional Development
- Special Education

The most prominent place NCELA clients see or use these scope areas is in the "Resources About" section of the NCELA website, which builds upon these areas as subject headings for organizing documents. However, they are also used to identify and

label items in the Resource Collection database, and are useful ways of gathering related items together when searching or organizing items in the database. For more information about the NCELA website's Resource pages, see Appendix I.

Managing the NCELA Resource Collection

Expanding and Augmenting the Resource Collection

The NCELA Resource Collection is developed in accordance with the goals of NCLB as well as the needs of the Clearinghouse client community. It is updated through a variety of methods; the Collection is dynamic knowledge base, not a static archive.

As part of their research and projects, NCELA information staff members routinely identify new or important items for addition to the database; these items are acquired and then become part of the Resource Collection, ensuring that as a knowledge base it is current and timely. NCELA information analysts and specialists scan and review a variety of resources including Internet sites, newsletters, journals, bibliographies, catalogs and book announcements. NCELA also interacts with a large number of research centers, professional organizations, education associations, and technical assistance centers, which routinely submit new reports and other materials to NCELA for addition to the Resource Collection.

NCELA users may submit items to the Clearinghouse for possible inclusion into the Resource Collection. Clients aware of new publications (or classic publications not already in the Collection) can suggest these documents for consideration via email, mail, or fax their suggestion into the Clearinghouse. Make your request to **Attention: NCELA Resource Collection Manager**.

Note that NCELA will not distribute documents via the Internet or any other method unless NCELA has made arrangements to do so with the appropriate agents (author, publisher, etc.) or it is available according to the "Fair Use" provision of US Copyright Law.

Organizing the Resource Collection

There are multiple steps in preparing a document for inclusion into the Resource Collection beyond simply acquiring it; it needs to be uniquely identifiable so that NCELA staff and clients can search for it in the Resource Collection database. NCELA creates a bibliographic profile (called a *document resume*) for each item in the Collection,

using procedures based on Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) guidelines for cataloguing educational resources. Consistent use of industry-recognized cataloging procedures ensures that the Resource Collection database citations are easily searchable.

Abstracting: Each record in the Resource Collection database includes an abstract which enables database searchers to quickly and accurately identify the basic content of a document and to ascertain its relevance for a client's needs. An abstract is a concise and accurate representation (approximately 200 words in length) of the material without added judgment, analysis, or interpretation on the part of the abstracter. Abstracts are written in an informative style (a condensed version of key concepts from the author's viewpoint), an indicative style (a description or guide to document content and format from an objective, informed reader), or a combination of the two methods, depending upon the format and structure of the document.

Indexing: The goal of indexing is to conduct subject analysis of the materials included in the Resource Collection. (In non-library vocabulary, that means "giving it subject headings".) Descriptors are selected from the controlled vocabulary in the *ERIC Thesaurus of Descriptors* (14th edition) or a supplementary list. These descriptors cover the full range of topics dealt with by the Clearinghouse and serve as access points for topic searches. The use of these identifier lists and the controlled vocabulary provide NCELA both flexibility and consistency in assigning a vocabulary relevant to the education of limited English proficient students.

Cataloguing: Part of the process of classifying an item is giving it a unique catalog number with which it can be physically located within the Collection. These numbers are chronologically assigned and do not have any subject relationship (unlike in the Dewey Decimal or Library of Congress systems). "BE#020300" simply means it is the 20,300th item to be added to the collection.

After an item has been fully catalogued, it has a document resume and a unique catalog number, which allow users to ascertain the catalogued item's contents and how to locate a complete version of the document.

Searching the NCELA Resource Collection

Accessing the Resource Collection

The Resource Collection can be accessed through a variety of ways; the entire Database, along with many full text documents, are accessible 24/7 via the Internet, allowing NCELA clients to conduct independent searches at their convenience. Likewise, they can browse the online resources grouped together on the web in various “Resources For” and “Resources About” sections. Although using the Internet is the fastest and most efficient way to access the NCELA Resource Collection, other means are possible for clients with other needs or with limited Internet capabilities. These services are also available to clients with Internet access who need assistance finding research or information or who need help with the NCELA website.

Internet Searches: Much of the NCELA Resource Collection that is available to the public is available full-text, free of charge, through the NCELA website. The NCELA homepage is <<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu>>, and the Resource Pages (accessible via the blue navigation bar atop the screen) allow you to browse many full-text documents. In addition, the entire Resource Collection database is searchable online; this is addressed in more detail in “Online Searching,” below.

Visiting NCELA: The Resource Collection — the physical repository itself — is located at the Clearinghouse offices, although older documents are held off-site. NCELA clients and users may visit the Clearinghouse at any time during regular office hours to access these items or meet with information staff; scheduled appointments are not required but they allow information staff time to prepare for the client's unique information needs.

Email: AskNCELA is a digital reference service and help desk which handles all email queries. If you need help with your search, or if you have recommendations for additions to the NCELA Resource Collection, send a message to <askncela@ncela.gwu.edu> or complete the form at <<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/expert/askncela.html>>. One of NCELA's information

staff will respond to your email offering answers, research suggestions, and/or referrals.

Telephone Access: NCELA research and information staff can be reached Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. (ET). Clearinghouse staff can offer bibliographic assistance in helping clients locate items on the NCELA website and reference and referral services – instructing clients on the various ways of searching for materials. Call NCELA at (202) 467-0867 or 1-800-321-6223 and ask to speak with a member of the information staff. TTY users can contact NCELA at (202) 775-9193.

Mail/Fax: NCELA research and information staff can conduct searches that are requested via mail or fax. Send information requests to:

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition
& Language Instruction Educational Programs
The George Washington University
2121 K Street, NW, Suite 260
Washington, DC 20037
Fax: (202) 467-4283 or 1-800-531-9347

Please indicate **Attention: Information Staff**.

When you are emailing, mailing, or faxing a request for information, please provide as much information as possible: What are you looking for? What is its purpose? This information helps us better determine the depth, type, and amount of information you need.

Online Searching

The Resource Collection database search engine (available at <http://search.edpolicy.gwu.edu/ncela/>) allows you to query the database using a combination of options, which can be selected via different dropdown menus. For example, you can search by author, publication year, title, or descriptor. See Table 1 (*Searching: General Options Dropdown Menu*) and Table 2 (*Searching: Chronological Options Dropdown Menu*) for more details.

You can also refine your search by controlling what word(s) or phrase(s) you want to search for (see Table 3, *Searching: Word and Phrase Options*):

- **Exact phrase:** If you are looking for a specific phrase, put it in quotation marks.

- **Mandatory word:** If the word must be among the results, put a plus symbol (+) in front of it.
- **Exclusions:** If you want to exclude a word, put a minus symbol (-) in front of it.

See Table 3 for specifics on limiting word search options.

Finally, you can also limit the search results to items that are available in our online full text library. Click the check-box (“Find only items available full-text on (or via) the NCELA website”) to narrow your search to the online library.

Table 1: Searching: General Options Dropdown Menu

Select	If you want to search...
Author	...the author or creator's name.
Title	...the item's exact title or words within it.
Journal	...the title of a Journal
Keyword	...words or phrases that are used to identify the work. NCELA uses the ERIC Thesaurus to assign descriptors or keywords to each item in the database.
Abstract	...terms that might be present in the document's abstract or summary.
I.D.#	...the item's unique identifier (BE#) according to NCELA
Free Text	...word(s) that could be anywhere in the document resume, and are not limited to a single field.

Table 2: Searching: Chronological Options Dropdown Menu

Select	If you want to Search...
Any year	...for items regardless of age
Year =	... for items created only during the year you enter.
Before year	... for items created before the year you enter.
After year	... for items created after the year you enter.
1990-2000	... for items from this decade only.
1980-1990	... for items from this decade only.
1970-1980	... for items from this decade only.

Table 3: Searching: Word & Phrase Options

Examples: type...	...and you will find:
John Smith	... all items with the words John and Smith
"John Smith"	... all items with the exact phrase John Smith
+John Andrew Smith	... all items with the word John and either Andrew or Smith
-John Smith	... all items with the word Smith that do not contain the word John

Document Resumes

A successful search will yield a list of possible citations. By clicking one of them, you will be directed to the item's full document resume, which is an extensive description of the document's origin and characteristics. Table 4 (*Document Resume Fields*) offers a full description of the labels that are used in a bibliographic citation. However, a few of the fields deserve explanation here:

BE (Bibliographic Entry) – this field contains an item's unique BE#, a six digit number that is sequentially assigned as each item enters the collection.

SO (Source) – Only journals use the Source field. This field identifies the journal name, volume, and issue of publication for an individual article in the collection.

AV (Availability) – this field indicates where clients can obtain copies of the document. This typically includes a publisher's name and contact information, including telephone number on website if available.

If the document is either an NCELA publication or is made available through NCELA distribution, then NCELA's contact information is listed here. NCELA can provide a single free copy of such resources. Additional copies will be provided at the cost of duplication.

Journals use the SO field instead of this field; users will have to locate the journal at a library or through another information provider. When identifying a journal, the title of the journal is sufficient information to locate it; a journal's publisher is rarely important in bibliographic citations.

OL (Online) – this field lets you know which items are available online in full-text format, with a corresponding URL. This does not include links to items which are available via subscription service; it only provides links to items that are available free of charge.

DE (Descriptors) — this field contains keywords assigned to the document, noting the subject heading(s) which the document falls under. These descriptors are chosen from the 14th edition of the *ERIC Thesaurus*.

ID (Identifiers) — this field is used to assign additional keywords to documents. These may include terms specific to language instruction and language acquisition which have not been made part of the ERIC Thesaurus (e.g., “dual language programs”) or proper nouns (e.g., “San Francisco Unified School District”) that are of importance to the document.

Table 4: Document Resume Fields

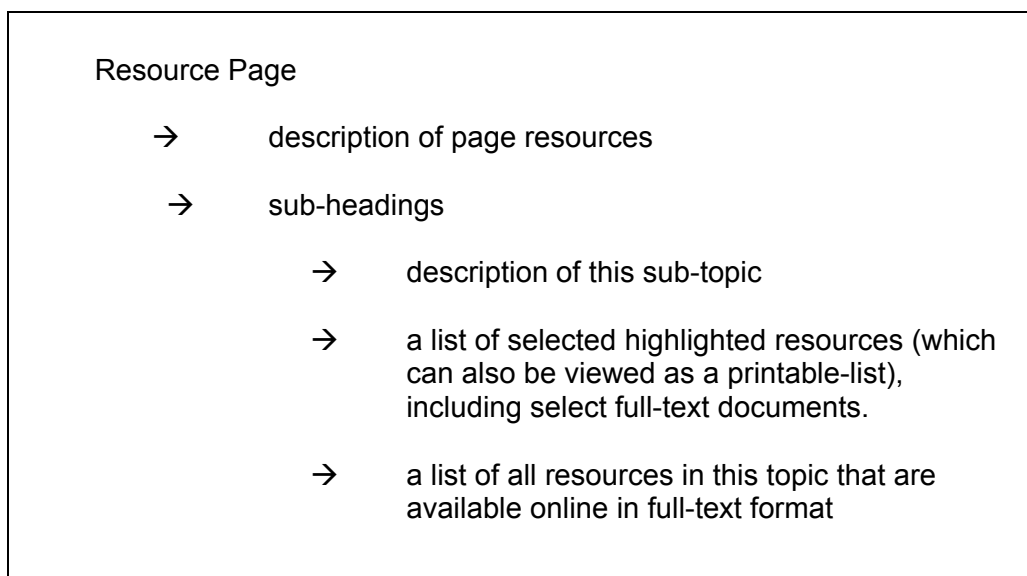
Label	Field	Description
AN	Accession Number	An eight-character number sequentially assigned to each document.
TI	Title	The title of the document as it appears on the title page.
SE	Series	The title of the series as it appears in the document.
YR	Publication Date	The document's date of publication.
AU	Author	The name(s) of the person(s) responsible for the document's creation.
IN	Institution/Corporate Author	The name of the organization that provided the funding that led to the creation of the document, as listed in the ERIC Institutional Source Directory.
NO	Contract/Report Number	The contract, grant, project, and report numbers assigned to a document, and/or the document's ISBN.
SO	Journal Citation	The journal title, volume, issue, pagination, and publication date.
GS	Geographic Source	The country or state where the document was published.
IS	Issue Code	The broad subdivisions into which documents are classified. C=curricular materials; N=noncurricular materials; J=journal articles.
LG	Language	The language(s) in which a document is written.
PT	Publication Type	Publication types refer to the form of a document and are designated as a three-character numeric code, taken from the Thesaurus of ERIC descriptors. (See Appendix 1 for more information)
AV	Availability	The source where the document can be obtained. The name and address of the organization, along with phone number and website if known.
OL	Online	If the document can be found full-text on the web (in the NCELA Online Library or externally at another site), then the URL is provided.
NT	Notes	Information about a document's pagination and physical format. Cross-references to other publications in the database are noted.
DE	Descriptors	Keywords assigned to a document indicating its major areas of emphases, selected from the <i>ERIC Thesaurus of Descriptors</i> .
ID	Identifiers	Additional subject terms assigned to a document to identify subjects for which there are no terms in the ERIC Thesaurus. These usually include (but are not limited to) project names, test names, and location names.
AB	Abstract	A description of the document contents, typically around 200 words or less.
SC	Scope Notes	Identification as to which of the NCELA Resource Collection Scope Areas the document belongs to or by which it can be best identified.
CP	Copyright	Indication whether the material is copyright-protected.

Appendix 1: Resource Pages

This compilation of pages is the most comprehensive aspect of the NCELA website, and actually consists of two distinct groupings, each accessible via the blue navigation bar atop each screen:

- **Resources About**—a collection of resources organized by subject area, such as “Curriculum & Instruction” or “Grants and Funding”.
- **Resources For**—a collection of resources organized by target audience, such as “Prospective Teachers” or “Title III Grantees”.

Each resource page contains different resources collected into a common organizational scheme, as shown below:



Additional Resources

There are two additional organizational concepts that are not common to all pages:

- **Recursos en español.** Resources in the “Resources For” pages (e.g., resources for parents and community) have the option to view resources in Spanish. (This option is not available under the Title I or Title III Grantees offerings.)
- **Database search.** Users browsing in the “Resources About” pages (e.g., resources about curriculum and instruction) have the option to search the Resource

Collection database for all resources in the particular topic area. In short, this option performs a database search for you, providing you a list of all relevant resources for the appropriate area. Remember that not all items in the Collection are available online; a desired item may have to be retrieved as hardcopy from a library or another resource center.

Resource Lists

The Resource Pages consist of the following pages; each page has subtopics that are not represented in this listing. Most of the pages in the “Resources About” category comport to NCELA’s scope areas.

Resources About:

- No Child Left Behind
- Student Assessment & Accountability
- Adult ELLs
- Curriculum & Instruction
- Education Programs
- Education Research
- Grants & Funding
- History, Legislation & Policy
- Language & Culture
- Parents & Community Involvement
- Professional Development
- Publishers & Distributors
- Special Education
- Technology & Education

Resources For:

- Institutions of Higher Education
- Parents and Community
- Prospective Teachers
- Student Researchers
- Teachers
- Title III Grantees
- Title I Grantees

NCELA Quick Reference Guide

How to Search the NCELA Resource Collection through the Internet

The NCELA Resource Collection Database contains document resumes for over 22,000 items. Each document resume includes an abstract of the resource, identifying words or phrases, and information on where to get the item. If the item is available online, the URL is also listed. The Resource Collection Database is searchable via the Internet. You can customize your search with different options (e.g., author, title, year, etc.) and lets you search specifically for items available online in full-text format.

The search page is available at:
<http://search.edpolicy.gwu.edu/ncela/>

Detailed help instructions are available at
<http://search.edpolicy.gwu.edu/ncela/searchhelp.html>

Getting Assistance from Information Staff

NCELA Information staff are available Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. (ET) to help you with your searches and requests for information. When you are emailing, mailing, or faxing a request for information, please provide as much information as possible: What are you looking for? What is its purpose? This information helps us better determine the depth, type, and amount of information you need. And please provide us with full contact information (email, telephone, fax, and address), so we can deliver the information in the most effective and appropriate method possible.

Email: Send email to askncela@ncela.gwu.edu or visit
<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/expert/askncela.html>

Telephone: Call (202) 467-0867 or 1-800-321-6223 and ask to speak to an Information staff member. TTY users, please call (202) 775-9193.

Fax: Fax your query to (202) 467-4283 or 1-800-531-9347. Indicate *Attention: Information staff*.

Mail: Send your request for information to the Information Staff, at

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