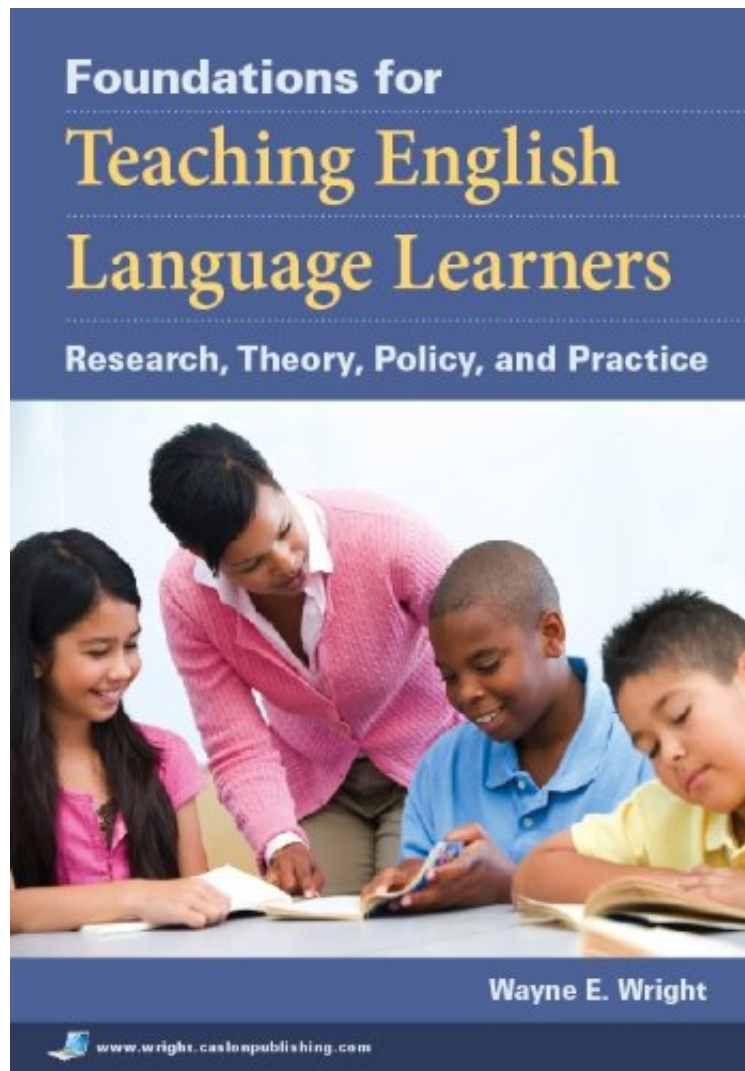


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Foundations for Teaching English Language Learners: Research, Theory, Policy, and Practice

Wayne Wright

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Wayne Wright : Foundations for Teaching English Language Learners: Research, Theory, Policy, and Practice before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Foundations for Teaching English Language Learners: Research, Theory, Policy, and Practice:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. For All EducatorsBy ConnieWayne Wrights Foundations for Teaching English Language Learners: Research, Theory, Policy, and Practice is a research- and experience-based

manual on the teaching, theory, and policy concerning the nations increasing English language learning (ELL) population. It succeeds in its handling of the many complicated issues surrounding the education of ELLs, and advocates for them, their families and their teachers in every chapter. Each chapter is organized into very useful segments, beginning with Key Terms and Guiding Questions to provide schemata for the reader, well-labeled subtopics, and research-based tables and charts. Each chapter then concludes with a concise summary, discussion questions and research activities for further investigation. The sequence of chapters begins with background information on who ELLs are, and continues with succinct descriptions of antiquated and current second language acquisition methodology. Wright shows his knowledge and comprehension of these theories and methodologies and cites hundreds of leaders in the field. Chapters on current and historical policies governing ELL education follow this, and he defines the various programs models used in the U.S. He does not hesitate to evaluate the effectiveness of the various methods. The next chapters offer highly useful studies, theory, and suggested best practice in assessment, and in teaching speaking, listening, reading and writing. For each skill, Wright suggests research-based rationale for his suggested strategies. At the end of the chapters of each of the four language skills are also suggested means of assessing them. There is also a comprehensive online component to the book with discussion forums, links, forms and tables. This would provide a valuable mode for student interaction. Of the few similar textbooks on the topic of teaching ELLs I have read, I find this the most comprehensive, informative, and readable. The book should be required reading for anyone going into the teaching field, and for all administrators who have bilinguals and ELLs in their schools.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Must Have for Teachers and Educators Working with ELLs! By English Shep Foundation for Teaching English Language Learners, Research, Theory, Policy, and Practice written by Wayne E. Wright 2010 is a comprehensive must have book when working with and teaching English Language Learners. I have used this book for three of four semesters while earning my ESL endorsement. The book is designed and written in an easy to follow format and reading style while maintaining enough research and data to support Wright's suggestions and findings. My focus for this review will be on Chapter 5: Assessment. In a time when the entire educational world is focused on Common Core State Standards and NCLB and the direct impact on the role of states, districts, schools, teachers and most important the education of our students, this chapter brings forward concerns, findings, suggestions and answers to over testing and most importantly how to meet the needs and accommodate our English Language Learners. As I stated earlier the book has an easy to follow format that allows it to be used both a textbook and resource for teachers. Each chapter is introduced with a meaningful quote. Being a philosophical person myself I am able to jump right into the author's point of view and purpose from the start. "Everything that has to do with the test has been given such a high priority, that there is no priority any more but that. The bottom line question comes down to, "Well, what's going to help them do better on the test?" And if it's not going to help them do better on the test, well, we don't have time for that right now. -Nicole Soto" (Wright 2010 p. 111). Wright also provides his readers with key terms and guiding questions; again a great way to narrow in and get focused on what is to come. As important as it is to know the format and the readability of a text it is equally if not more so important to know the answer to the questions, "What is in it? And what will I take away from this chapter?" Wright begins the chapter with assessment basics in which he explains different forms of assessments such as summative and formative assessments, norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests, reliability, validity and bias. Having an understanding of each is important but I do want to address the bias. Wright is quick to point out the obvious yet ignored fact that, "a test written in English is biased in favor of students who are native or fluent speakers of English and biased against those who are not" (Wright, 2010 p. 118). This is a valid concern of many educators who work closely with ELL students. Wright doesn't just stop at pointing out the flaws in the system he ends the chapter discussing the testing requirements of ELL's the importance of demonstrating growth, accommodations for ELLs or the lack of and most important suggestions to help solve the current issues in testing, accommodating and meeting state and national performance requirements. Wright strongly suggests the use of performance assessment systems that can measure growth rather than demonstrate what a student doesn't know. This can be demonstrated through the use of performance portfolios. There is so much to this chapter alone that it is impossible to provide a adequate summary as well as encourage the purchase and use of this book for any educator involved in the education of English Language Learners in 500 words or less. **I do not recommend renting this book. It is much more reasonable and cost effective to purchase it.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I would highly recommend this book to educators who work with ELL students. By Nikki Williamson Foundations for Teaching English Language Learners, by Wayne E. Wright, is a text that was assigned for a class that I am currently taking for my ENL Endorsement. My review discusses Chapter 5, which focuses on Assessment. I have read this book for various reasons and topics but Assessment is by far the most informative and helpful for me as a teacher. The Chapter is packed with research and resources that I find very useful for the ELL classroom. The chapter begins by discussing the testing burden that is placed on ELL students and the impact test results can have on students and teachers lives (Wright, 2010, p. 111). Educators need to be aware of the types of assessment and other terminology that goes along with it. Wright does a great job of explaining and connecting the assessments to the ELL population. One particular section that was important for me to read was the discussion of Accommodations for ELLs. There is a great breakdown in Table 5.1,

the Rationale and Problems Associated with Testing Accommodations for ELLs. The next section covers some of the most helpful information, in my opinion. Alternative Authentic Assessments for ELLs discusses the importance of using a variety of assessments that are unlike the standardized tests. They are authentic because they more closely match instructional practices in the classroom and they reflect the knowledge and skills ELLs need outside of the classroom (Wright, 2010, p. 131). The information provided in this section is useful for all teachers and includes examples of assessments that can be applied in any classroom. Some of the assessments that Wright discusses include: observations, performance assessments, self and peer assessments and portfolios. The final section of the chapter discusses the need for multiple measures and the need for assessments that can measure growth. Wright introduces this topic by reinforcing the problems of high-stakes tests. He explains that they provide just one piece of evidence about what students know and can do despite the inadequacies of standardized high-stakes tests, they are not likely to go away anytime soon (Wright, 2010, p. 136). Teachers need to use multiple measures and students need to have the opportunity to show their growth. Wright says that ELL students are particularly important because, as the school year progresses, ELLs learn more and more English. At any point, they probably know more English than they did the last time they took a test or completed an assessment (Wright, 2010, p. 136). Teachers should provide ongoing assessments, using multiple measures, to show progress and to allow students to see their progress. High-stakes tests do not measure growth, rather give a score that students must reach to meet or exceed in order to pass. Students who make great growth, but do not meet the score, are not celebrated. Authentic assessments paint a more fair and accurate measure of the progress of our students than did the state test (Wright, 2010, p. 137). I would recommend not only this chapter, but this book to any educator who has, does or will work with ELL students. This chapter in itself is beneficial to any educator who may or may not work with ELL students. As we know, assessments are here and keep coming year after year. It is important that educators take into consideration the amount of testing our students endure and what we do with the outcomes of those tests. I really appreciated that Wright included so much research and made so many connections to what is happening in education today.

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