Characteristics of quality teaching for students in New Zealand schools whose first language is not English

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ABSTRACT: The current paper draws on the findings of two recent research reports commissioned by the New Zealand Ministry of Education (Alton-Lee, 2003; Franken & McComish, 2003) in order to generate a synthesised statement of characteristics of quality teaching for students for whom English is not the first language (referred to from here as NESB students[1]) in New Zealand schools. Alton-Lee (2003, see Ministry of Education website, www.minedu.govt.nz) provides a synthesis of research-based evidence addressing the nature of quality teaching in schooling for the full range of diverse students. In this work, diversity encompasses "many characteristics including ethnicity, socio-economic background, home language, gender, special needs, disability, and giftedness" (Alton-Lee, 2003, p. v). Because her synthesis addresses diversity in the student population, she focusses on what is common to diverse students and thus does not specify particular conditions that pertain to any one sub-group of diverse students. Franken and McComish (2003) on the other hand, is a research report into the English language support for NESB (Non English Speaking Background) students in New Zealand schools. It includes a literature review of evidence-based research into second language teaching and learning, particularly classroom based research. It also reports on observations and analysis of practices in New Zealand schools, and discusses how these documented practices relate to the research findings from the literature.

Introduction

Research into second language learning for students in English medium education systems emphasises the importance of an excellent general teaching and learning context, as a background and prerequisite for the specifics of second language learning (Corson, 1990, 1999; Genesee, 1999). From this point of view, Alton-Lee's exploration of the characteristics of quality teaching for diverse students is invaluable as a reference point for developing a statement of characteristics of quality teaching targeted specifically towards NESB students

There are a number of reasons why a synthesis of the two reports is a productive development. First, it is important to link significant research initiatives commissioned by the Ministry of Education in order to achieve greater research and policy integration. Second, research in the area of learning and teaching English as an additional language is extensive (as evidenced in the literature review in Franken & McComish, 2003). It is thus helpful to make research findings available in a form that readily translates into good teaching practices. Third, the integration of these two reports leads to a matrix of best practice statements against which teaching practices in schools can be evaluated from the point of view of language development and curriculum learning for learners of English as a second or additional language.

Alton-Lee (2003) derives from her review of the evidence, ten characteristics which she further develops with a number of related points. To produce a synthesis of these characteristics of quality teaching with ones focussing on teaching NESB students, we organised Alton-Lee's characteristics under the five headings representing major categories of good practice: inclusive school, whole school alignment, appropriate goals and assessment, teaching and learning styles, and classroom practices. We also added a sixth, content of EAL teaching. As with other areas of learning, there is specific content to language learning and quality language teaching involves knowledge about and selection of the language content, and how to work with it in appropriate ways (Richards, 1998, p.10). We chose to organise the major categories in this way because they correspond to the areas of policy and practice that schools commonly develop in relation to NESB students. Figure 1 below lists these six areas, or major categories of good practice, and links them to Alton-Lee's ten major statements of good practice for diverse students.

Major categories of good practice statements for NESB students	Major statements of good practice from Alton-Lee (2003)
1. Inclusive school	Effective links are created between school and other cultural contexts in which students are socialised, to facilitate learning.
2. Whole school alignment	Curriculum goals, resources, including ICT usage, task design, teaching and school practices are effectively aligned.
3. Appropriate goals and assessment	Quality teaching is focussed on student achievement (including social outcomes) and facilitates high standards of student outcomes for heterogeneous groups of students. Teachers and students engage constructively in goal oriented assessment.
4. Teaching and learning styles	Pedagogical practices enable classes and other learning groupings to work as caring, inclusive, and cohesive learning communities. Pedagogy promotes learning orientations, student self-regulation, metacognitive strategies and thoughtful student discourse.
5. Classroom practices	Quality teaching is responsive to student learning processes. Opportunity to learn is effective and sufficient. Multiple task contexts support learning cycles. Pedagogy scaffolds and provides appropriate feedback on students' task engagement.
6. Content of EAL teaching	

Figure 1: Matched lists of good practice statements for diverse students and NESB students

The figure below elaborates on the major categories of good practice to show the specific characteristics of good practice and quality teaching for NESB learners in

schools derived from the research literature on second language teaching and learning. While the list of characteristics is not exhaustive, we focus on those we feel should be prioritised and which we feel most strongly complement those identified by Alton-Lee in her synthesis.

Major categories of good practice statements	Specific characteristics of good practice
1. Inclusive school	School practices and policies are inclusive of all languages and cultures and build on these as resources for learning.
2. Whole school alignment	EAL curriculum goals, resources, and pedagogical practices are aligned with other curriculum teaching and school activities.
3. Appropriate goals and assessment	Second language assessment is systematic, comprehensive, regular, and meaningful to learners. Assessment reflects developmental aspects of second language learning and second language literacy acquisition. Goals for L2 learners are age appropriate and are not limited to performance in easier contexts, or on easier objectives.
4. Teaching and learning styles	Students experience positive classroom environments for interaction. Student learning strategies and styles from other language backgrounds and educational contexts are built on constructively. Classes and individuals are taught and assisted to become skilful learners, and to participate actively in managing their own learning.
5. Classroom practices	Students are given sufficient exposure to language input, as well as opportunities to use language in extended contexts. Learners are given language opportunities that allow for significant repetitions and expansion of use. Students are supported by language scaffolding that facilitates the development of the three goals of restructuring, accuracy and fluency. Learners are given explicit and focused instruction on all aspects of language
6. Content of EAL teaching	The specification of content of EAL teaching is comprehensive and based on research in second language learning in school contexts. Vocabulary development is targeted, especially in the area of academic vocabulary. An appropriate range of texts is encountered.

Figure 2: Good practice statements for NESB students

In the rest of the paper we describe these characteristics as they are conceived of in the research literature and how they are realized in schools and programmes for NESB students in some of the New Zealand schools we studied (Franken & McComish, 2003).

Inclusive school

School practices are inclusive of all languages and cultures and build on those as resources for learning.
In accordance with Ministry of Education guidelines (e.g. Ministry of Education, 1999a), schools generally have an inclusive policy which is clearly manifested in school prospectuses and other information, in enrolment and orientation procedures, and in policies on class, playground and extra curricular arrangements. These documents often articulate the diversity of culture within a school as a positive and enriching aspect of school life. Many schools also commit part of the funding they receive from the Ministry of Education for NESB students to purchase resources which provide information about different cultures and their literature, or L1 resources such as dictionaries, reference books and extensive reading material.

However acceptance and support ideally should go beyond this to include teaching practices that affirm cultural identity and see student diversity and experience as a pedagogical resource. Not only do such practices operate to raise the achievement of students, they also provide for the positive linking of school and other cultural contexts such as family and community (Alton-Lee, 2003). An increasing number of primary schools are developing closer relationships between families and the school through the Home-School Partnership programme.

However one key aspect of inclusive practices is to draw on the language and literacy strengths of bilingual or multilingual students through support for the students' first language. There is a strong research base to support the continued use of the first language alongside English as a second language, and the development of academic and formal uses of the first language as well as of English (Corson, 1990; Crandall, 1997, Cummins, 2000). In bilingual approaches the use of the students' first language is encouraged because it is considered to facilitate language and conceptual development in general, thus leading to improved educational outcomes.

Crandall's (1997) review of the research on approaches to language teaching for school-aged learners in second language contexts concludes that bilingual approaches are the most effective in supporting the primary language, and making a bridge to instruction in a second language. Crandall's (1997, p.82) rankings from the most effective to the least effective approaches to teaching these students combine considerations of the type of bilingual arrangement, the degree of sheltered instruction[2], and second language instruction. Crandall identifies the most effective context to be two way bilingual education as provided in a number of Canadian and United States schools. Associated with this should be sheltered instruction and second language instruction. Two way bilingual education involves students from two different language backgrounds working together in the same class and developing both languages with content and literacy instruction in both languages. Some New Zealand schools are reported to have done this with Māori/English (Christian, 2001). Cutting students off from formal educational development in their L1 in order to give

them maximum exposure to the L2 is identified by Crandall as the least effective approach for NESB students in schooling.

There is official support for maintaining and using first languages other than English in New Zealand schools. For instance, *English in the National Curriculum*, in the section 'English for All' discusses English for students from language backgrounds other than English (LBOTE) and recommends that "The first language and culture of each student should be incorporated in English programmes" and that "Students should initially use their first language and move between that language and English" (p.15). Resources provided by the Ministry include, but are not restricted to, refugee co-ordinators, information for teachers such as the 1999 publication, *NESB Students: A Handbook for Schools,* and booklets for families such as *Families Learning* (2002). In spite of this support, the expectation in most schools is that maintenance and development of first language proficiency is largely a community or family responsibility.

Bilingual development itself is not directly supported in most schools to any extent, and is not seriously factored into learning contexts and goals as a permanent aspect of a student's educational programme. In most schools, the bilingual educational experience is very limited unless there happen to be numbers of students from the same country in the same class who continue to work together in their first language. However, there are some schools which support students in their early years of schooling with bilingual assistants or teacher aides who speak the children's first language, so that English language learning can be developed through fluency in the child's first language. This can be particularly effective when the class is relatively homogenous in terms of first language background. The bilingual teacher aides often also provide other support such as community liaison or language support in homework centers.

Some New Zealand secondary schools have developed special curriculum area classes for NESB students, with bilingual staff, or staff who have expertise in second language teaching as well as in the curriculum area. These teachers tend to use a number of the features associated with sheltered instruction. However only about 10% of teaching staff in secondary schools are reported as being bilingual, with most of these being teacher aides (Franken and McComish, 2003).

Other secondary schools put together programmes of support that approximate to the approach Crandall (1997) considers to be the second most effective i.e. late-exit bilingual education + sheltered instruction + second language instruction. The students receiving this type of programme are relatively recent arrivals with a full education to that point in their first language, plus some prior learning of English as a Foreign Language. In general, the experience in New Zealand schools is that they may receive second language instruction by ESOL teachers, and they may also be taught by bilingual teachers in some content areas, who provide some bilingual language use, build on the first language knowledge, and provide a form of sheltered instruction by using very explicit and visually oriented teaching methods.

Whole school alignment

EAL curriculum goals, resources, and pedagogical practices are aligned with other curriculum teaching and school activities.

There are a number of important issues which schools address which require whole school alignment to be really effective – these include cross curricular literacy and numeracy initiatives, ICT use, and culturally integrated learning communities. Curricular integration is also an important characteristic of quality second language teaching (Corson, 1988). What this means for language programmes is that EAL organisation, goals and instruction should be aligned and integrated with other curriculum teaching and school activities, as should first language maintenance and development.

Although many schools are aware of the need for cross-curricular language development they often find it difficult to fully align all their practices to facilitate it in the best way (ERO, 2001, cited in Alton-Lee, 2003; Franken & McComish, 2003). To have an effective ESOL programme the challenge is for schools is to identify appropriate goals and outcomes for children in the programme which complement wider curriculum goals and which at the same time also recognise the particular nature of second language development. This is difficult to achieve if the most common use of funding for NESB students is in the form of withdrawal sessions managed by a teacher aide (Franken & McComish, 2003). While withdrawal sessions can allow for focused instruction, that instruction is not always fully meaningful in relation to the curriculum or the students' experience. In-class support allows for teachers and a teacher aide to work ideally in tandem on a well planned shared programme, with shared lesson plans but with different language outcomes and with different pathways to achieving those outcomes.

If schools do not have the resources to give a great deal of in-class support, it is critical that class programmes and ESOL programmes are cross-referenced. This requires a commitment on the part of the class teacher to communicate with the NESB teacher who is organising and teaching withdrawal sessions. The ESOL teacher has an important role in providing feedback to the class teacher.

One of the most effective ways in which alignment with curriculum can be achieved is through sheltered instruction. One low decile intermediate school has a sheltered instruction programme operating in one class at year 7 and one at year 8. These two classes include both NESB funded and foreign fee payers. The syllabus in each of these classes is aligned with that of other classes at the same level. However, intensive and focused language instruction complements content instruction. Each of the classes is supported by a full time bilingual teacher aide (reported in Franken & McComish, 2003).

In secondary schools, most teachers are aware that the language of their curriculum area is an integral part of learning in that area, but in most cases their strategies for working on this language are very limited. Language across the curriculum professional development programmes, such as LTL (Learning through Language), have enabled a number of secondary curriculum area teachers to add to their strategies for NESB students' language development.

Appropriate goals and assessment

Second language assessment is systematic, comprehensive, regular, and meaningful to learners.

Twice a year, New Zealand schools must forward the results of an assessment procedure (see Ministry of Education's (1999b, *Non-English-speaking-background students in New Zealand schools: ESOL assessment guidelines*) to the Ministry of Education in order to receive the funding for students. This encourages teachers involved in NESB students to assess students on a regular basis, and encourages teacher aides and teachers to work together to make valid and reliable judgments of students' performance in classroom tasks. This serves the aim of assessing how close or how far the students are from cohort in order to determine whether or not they have achieved the cut off point for receiving funding.

Assessment should reflect developmental aspects of acquisition second language and literacy.

The benchmark of the national cohort may be useful in making explicit the gap between NESB students' English language development and that of the national cohort but it is not sufficient to appreciate and monitor the language learning achievements of many NESB students. A more comprehensive view of assessment is needed. Such assessment is dependent upon teacher knowledge of the nature of language learning in a schooling context. Teachers in New Zealand schools do not have available any ESOL curriculum guidelines that could provide them with a scheme of realistic and relevant learning outcomes at particular stages in NESB students' development, and that would be referenced to other curriculum learning outcomes. An inability to appreciate the full range of objective needs that NESB students have leads some teachers to focus on narrow concerns in the assessment of NESB students such as grammatical accuracy or pronunciation of words in reading, and to focus on decontextualized language use.

To assess students' development fully, teachers need to recognize that students are capable of functioning at a high level cognitively but that language is a barrier to either the comprehension of the task or the production of output for the task. Research has shown that language demands can be lowered while cognitive demands remain at a high level thus engaging students in meaningful learning (Franken & Watson, 1996; Zhang, 1987).

Goals for L2 learners are age appropriate and are not limited to performance in easier contexts, or on easier objectives.

Alton-Lee (2003, p.20) observes that

> International evidence also emphasises the complexity of teacher expectations and affirms the principle that teachers need high expectations for all learners but high expectations in themselves do not go far enough. High expectations need to be supported by effective and appropriate pedagogical approaches.

In the case of L2 learners there are increased hazards for teachers in developing appropriate expectations supported by appropriate pedagogical approaches. Low expectations of educational achievement are often held for L2 learners, especially if they are not of European ethnicity (Alton-Lee, 2003, p.21, Phillips, McNaughton & MacDonald, 2000). On the other hand, unreasonably high expectations are often held of the likely rate of L2 learners achieving national norms in academic uses of English.

There is clear evidence that L2 students will normally take at least 5 to 7 years, or even more, to fully reach national norms in academic English (Collier, 1989; Cummins, 2001; Wong-Fillmore and Snow, 2000; Wylie, Thompson & Lythe, 2001), yet the extra ESOL funding from the Ministry of Education to schools in respect of NESB students is only available for 3 to 5 years, and ceases when they are approaching national norms. Based on the expected times to reach national norms, teachers need to be monitoring NESB students' English language development and providing support after special funding ceases.

Unfortunately, teachers are often not able to assess accurately their students' L2 proficiency (e.g. Alton-Lee, 2003, p.19; Cummins, 2001, p.119). This results both in setting inappropriately high or low expectations, and in using inappropriately high or low objectives and content. This is not surprising since teachers are not taught how to assess second language development as part of their initial training, and the suggestions made in the ESOL Assessment Guidelines (Ministry of Education, 1999b) take considerable expertise to put into practice. Teachers are often aware themselves that they are unable to assess accurately, and are concerned about the effect of this on their teaching (Franken and McComish, 2003, p.98).

A further hazard in developing appropriate expectations and pedagogy in New Zealand has been the application of procedures associated with teaching reading to L1 students in the lower primary school, to teaching NESB students of various ages.

Key skills	L1 new entrants aged 5	L2 beginners aged 9	L2 beginners aged 13
Oral English vocabulary: approx. no. of words used in speech	more than 1000	much fewer than 1000	much fewer than 1000
Ability to comprehend spoken English	fluent	almost none	almost none
Ability to produce spoken English	fluent	almost none	almost none
Ability to read	none	becoming fluent in L1	fluent in L1
Ability to write	none	becoming fluent in L1	fluent in L1
Cognitive development	typical of 5 year old	typical of 9 year old	typical of 13 year old
Knowledge base	limited	widening	approaching adult

Figure 3: Key differences between L1 and L2 students of English

Figure 3 shows key differences between L1 new entrant students, for whom graded reading materials and associated practices have been designed, and beginning L2 learners of English at ages 9 and 13 who have had full education to that point in their L1. The very marked differences in their patterns of abilities and development suggest how inappropriate it is likely to be to transfer practices designed for one group to the second group at different age levels.

L2 learners in New Zealand schools often have short ESOL sessions based on readers which are designed for students who are much younger than themselves, and who have a completely different pattern of language skills. Because the material used is so inappropriate for students who are older and can already read, it is impossible to have reasonable expectations and objectives for them. In other words, the goals are not age appropriate and are limited to performance in easier contexts, and on easier objectives.

Apart from ESOL sessions, for the majority of the school week L2 students are immersed in a classroom environment where the cognitive level is appropriate, but the language environment is so far beyond their abilities that what they are able to learn from it is patchy both for content and language. In mainstream classes the goals for the L2 learners are age appropriate and are not limited to performance in easier contexts, or on easier objectives, but the pedagogical practices do not support NESB learners' full participation in this environment.

It is possible to enable L2 learners to learn effectively in mainstream age appropriate environments by the skilful use of pedagogical tools such as varied tasks, team teaching, student groupings, various types of language support, etc. The challenge in providing quality teaching for L2 students is to correctly address and allow for their different patterns of language skills, while at the same time enabling them to learn curriculum knowledge and skills at an age appropriate level.

This is recognised in Victoria, Australia where teachers are required to "avoid searching for outcomes at lower levels of the [English] Curriculum and Standards Framework". The ESL Companion provides age and second language appropriate objectives for NESB students.
(www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/curriculumatwork/esl/es_assess.htm)

Teaching and learning styles

Students experience positive classroom environments for interaction.
Successful second language learning depends on exposure to rich and meaningful input, and on regular opportunities for meaningful interaction with others who know the language well, especially teachers (Franken and McComish, 2003, p.38). Meaningful input and interaction will lead to improved language learning opportunities during class time, and improved opportunities for interaction with L1 students during out of class time.

It is very important that there should be positive classroom environments for interaction. This has major implications for opportunities to extend language learning but also for making school life happier for L2 students. Many L2 learners are quite isolated either alone or in their ethnic groups within New Zealand classrooms (as discussed in Barnard, 2003), and older immigrant or international students often express disappointment that they have not been able to make "Kiwi" friends. Some students find strategies to overcome this (see Barnard's 2002 discussion of collaborative strategies with peers), but the difficulty should not be underestimated. Two recent reports on a longitudinal study of young English language learners in Canadian public schools, give new insights into factors in working with L2 children that teachers need to take account of (Norton and Toohey, 2001; Toohey 2001). Three

learners discussed had different opportunities to engage in interaction and language learning in their schools as a result of how they managed to position themselves as social individuals in the classroom. Two of them, from initially somewhat marginalised positions as "ESL learner" and "ESL immigrant", managed to reposition themselves with more desirable and powerful identities offering improved possibilities for shared interaction with the other students. The third, an Indian girl about whom some children made racist observations, was often defeated in disputes and marginalised, with reduced opportunities for participation in peer interaction.

It has been shown that teachers may contribute to these exclusions, probably unwittingly. Edwards (1999, p. 214) reports that in four multilingual classes of five and six year olds in England, teachers initiated fewer interactions with black than with white children and had fewer extended exchanges. Very carefully focussed teacher and school intervention is required to change these kinds of patterns.

Student learning strategies and styles from other language backgrounds and educational contexts are built on constructively.
When second language learners enter New Zealand classrooms they bring with them strategies and styles from other languages and cultures. This provides an opportunity for teachers to build constructively on these existing skills as well as introducing them to practices typical of New Zealand and English speaking contexts. For example, Escamilla and Coady (2001) found that bilingual English/Spanish school students were sometimes penalised because their English writing reflected unrecognised Spanish genres and patterns of discourse. If however, teachers engage with the students and their communities over their writing, such differences will not go unrecognised. Rather than eradicate the L1 discourse pattern, it can be developed and analysed comparatively with related English discourse patterns. This has the added advantage of equipping the student with metacognitive strategies discussed below, and enables a fruitful cross referencing of the two languages.

Students who enter New Zealand schools after a number of years' education in another country, may have a number of learning strategies common to their culture or their educational environment. In particular, teachers should be aware that in many countries there is a much more highly developed tradition of second language learning than in New Zealand, and students and their families may bring some unfamiliar but successful strategies with them.

In some countries there is a tradition of imitation, memorisation and repetition in education. This was once a feature of English speaking education also but is rarely used now to any extent. The fear is that such practices result in mindless learning, and that students may repeat chunks of text without understanding. However, provided students do move on to engage meaningfully with what they memorise, these memorisation strategies can be very helpful for language learning. The challenge for the teacher again, is not to seek to eradicate things which learners already know, but to help them to use these skills productively in a new environment. At the same time it is important that students are assisted to develop strategies which are highly valued in our culture, such as interacting with the teacher on curriculum content, expressing opinions and generating questions.

Classes and individuals are taught and assisted to become skilful learners, and to participate actively in managing their own learning.

Sustained higher achievement is possible when teachers use pedagogical approaches that enable students to take charge of their own learning. Such approaches do not leave the students to 'discover' in an unstructured environment. Rather, they are highly structured in supporting student agency and sustained and thoughtful engagement. For example, they foster students' abilities to define their own learning goals, ask questions, anticipate the structure of curriculum experiences, use metacognitive strategies when engaging with curriculum, and self-monitor. Pedagogies that emphasise, embed and enable metacognitive strategy use throughout curriculum engagement for class groupings, are associated with much higher achievement and enable marked improvements for low achievers.

Classroom practices

Students are given sufficient exposure to language input and opportunities to use language in extended contexts.

Research in second language learning has concerned itself largely with three facilitating conditions for second language acquisition: input, interaction and output (see for instance Swain, 1995). Within this research history, it is generally agreed that students need language input that is comprehensible and provides access to meaning, they need opportunities to use language they have been exposed to, and they need to do this in interaction which forces them to test and refine their output under the communicative pressure of having to negotiate meaning.

Much teaching in classrooms continues to be teacher-led and to expose students to large quantities of input over the course of a school day. However what seems to be lacking, particularly beyond the junior primary school, are opportunities to use output and to engage in interaction. The mainstream teachers observed in our study made efforts to adjust their language to the needs of the NESB students, but did not use a wide range of teaching techniques to enhance comprehension or student output. What was observed in these classes matched the findings of a small study of 12 mainstream classes, each with some NESB students, in a New Zealand secondary school (Keum & Lewis, 2000, p.5). The main activities in 12 Year 12 classes were in order of frequency – following spoken explanations, answering oral questions, following spoken instructions, completing worksheets, notetaking from teacher talk, correcting work by listening.

Nystrand (cited in Abt-Perkins and Gomez, 1998, p. 11) suggests that teachers need to engage in the practice of "eliciting, sustaining, and extending student initiated contributions" in both written and spoken form so that students can articulate content through language in an academically appropriate way. Many such techniques needed for language development across the curriculum exist, but it is not possible for most curriculum area teachers to elicit, sustain and extend student output without ongoing professional development in techniques for doing this.

In a number of secondary schools, ESOL writing is taught explicitly and well with a consistent focus on a number of genres and text types important for academic study. The students analyse texts, organise information, write their own texts, and discuss

and evaluate their work with other students and the teacher throughout the writing process. They are assisted to relate this ESOL writing programme to texts encountered outside the ESOL class, and outside the school. Good practices such as these in developing facility in writing texts need to be extended across all departments, and all schools, and into working with texts through reading, listening and speaking.

Learners are given language opportunities that allow for significant repetitions and expansion of use.
As mentioned above one basic principle of second language acquisition is the exposure to sufficient and accessible language input. Language learning also requires frequent use (through both production and comprehension) of language items. To help students achieve this, teachers must ensure that learners repeatedly engage with targetted language items. This means that for a teacher the approach to language development and language teaching content is not a linear one. For example, on the level of a simple pairing of words with meanings (expressed in translations, definitions, or visual images, for example) some word-meaning pairs may be learned immediately, but in general up to 16 repetitions will be required before the pairing is permanently learned. These repetitions must be spaced correctly – over a period of days and weeks – in order to make learning permanent.

Students must also be given opportunities for expansion in use of language items. For instance, with the case of word learning, more than a simple pairing of form with basic meaning is involved. Words have a range of meanings, conceptual relationships, collocations, conditions for appropriate use, and structural patterns associated with them. It takes time and repetition to expand the initial basic word knowledge into a full working knowledge of all aspects of each word (Nation, 1990; 2001). Similar principles apply to learning the structural resources of a language, at the level of the sentence and of larger texts such as discussions, narratives, descriptions of objects or processes, and so on.

The teacher then has the task of providing for appropriately spaced repetition, at the same time as constantly expanding the scope of language items covered, and introducing new items – both in production and comprehension, and in expanding and varying contexts. In other words students are progressively put in situations where they learn to use language by using it in a range of different contexts. They are assisted to meet the challenges of these contexts and to develop appropriate linguistic responses.

To achieve this repetition and contextual variation for the students, the teacher must be able to devise and control many different educational tasks and task contexts, including particularly a variety of group and interactive arrangements. This is challenging not only for the class teacher, but especially for a teacher or teacher aide managing learning in a withdrawal situation. In primary schools where the ESOL programme is not a scheduled subject, and time can range from less than half an hour to one hour per week (Franken & McComish, 2003), instruction is often too disjointed, too short or too spaced in time to achieve careful repetition and recycling of language items. Some schools effectively try to concentrate time in fewer sessions of longer duration during the week. For instance one low decile primary school

allocates one day of in class support for the NESB children in junior classes every week, rather than using funding to withdraw children.

Other scheduling options can be to place learners into a 10 week intensive programme which operates for half of the school day or the whole day, as one high decile intermediate school does with its phase one learners (reported in Franken and McComish, 2003). In this school, the focus of the programme is one of acquiring general language and beginning learning through English in the area of Mathematics.

Learners are supported by language scaffolding that facilitates the development of the three goals of restructuring, accuracy, and fluency.
Given that the teacher has an appropriate repertoire of tasks to use, and is able to facilitate meaningful and positive student interaction, the next requirement of quality language teaching is to work well at scaffolding language use and development in a way that allows for "a balanced development towards the three goals of restructuring, accuracy and fluency" (Richards, 2002, p.49). Below are accounts of two lessons – one where the teacher was skilful in managing tasks, interaction and scaffolding, and one where this was not the case.

An experienced ESOL teacher teaching a Year 12 class based on a written text of about 3 pages seemed to have few tasks in her repertoire and little expertise in scaffolding. The students were asked to take turns in reading a few sentences aloud to the whole class. However many of them read almost incomprehensibly yet the teacher did not give them any feedback or goals for their reading performance. It took a long time to get around the class and meanwhile it was not clear how the students might be engaging with the text although many of them were checking words in bilingual palm held dictionaries. Finally the teacher asked some questions about the text, which some students volunteered answers to.

Students working in pairs on a variety of reading tasks with clear objectives could have been interacting with each other and the teacher, and engaging in detail with the text for the whole hour. Even if it had been decided to have a whole class session focussing on oral reading, joint goals for comprehension and pronunciation could have been set and discussed, and the class could have worked as a group to interact with the teacher on assessing whether the goals were met, and on restructuring, accuracy and fluency.

By contrast, another ESOL teacher observed had her Year 10 class of recently arrived beginners working very productively with a cycle of reading, vocabulary, listening, speaking and writing tasks around short narratives plus evaluating comments. The work was varied and useful and the students made obvious progress within the space of an hour. This was achieved through the teacher's skill in working with language tasks. She had no special materials or equipment, and the students worked on the basis of less than half a page of printed material, which the teacher thoroughly exploited. Because of her ability to teach in this way, the students were able to use new vocabulary, sentence and text patterns in reading, writing, speaking and listening. They were also interacting with each other, and with the teacher, thus creating an active, inclusive and cohesive learning group of very diverse students.

Other similar classes in the same school were not working in this active and integrating way, showing how crucial teacher skill in good task use is to good learning contexts.

Learners are given explicit and focused instruction on all aspects of language.
Exposure to English and immersion within a classroom in which English is spoken is not a sufficient condition for learning the language needed for academic learning. Language items referenced to developmental research, need to be targeted for attention in language learning sessions, whether they be in-class or withdrawal. Students' attention must be drawn to those items. However this is not to be done in isolation or in a decontextualized way. Focus on forms of language (whether they be at the level of pronunciation, grammar, features of texts or genres) should be integrated with attention to use and meaning.

Lightbown (in Doughty & Williams, 1998) states:

> [R]esearch on classroom-based second language learning has shown positive results for learners who have experienced an integration of forms and meanings in their instructional environment.… Research in intensive ESL classes with young francophone learners has shown that teachers who focus learners' attention on specific language features during the interactive, communicative activities of the class are more effective than those who never focus on language form or who do so only in isolated 'grammar lessons'… These effective teachers tend to provide focus on form on the fly, without causing the interaction to be interrupted or learners to be discouraged.
> (p. 191-192)

Content of EAL teaching

The specification of content of EAL teaching is comprehensive and based on research in second language learning in school contexts
An important addition to the list of key features for addressing the needs of diverse students is the reference to a curriculum or syllabus for language. This needs to reflect research understandings about the nature of development of second language and literacy, and also needs to acknowledge all aspects of language (such as in Graves, 1996, for example). Such a syllabus does not exist at a national level, although the Ministry of Education is currently initiating such a development.

In the meantime, in the absence of curriculum guidelines, some teachers inappropriately refer to curriculum documents intended for first language speakers of English and focus on tasks appropriate to them when planning and teaching tasks for NESB students. One example of this is the emphasis placed on decoding of text by means of grapho-phonic strategies, or strategies of guessing word meanings from context for young NESB students with little working knowledge of English.

Some schools, particularly at a secondary level, do however have very well developed curriculum plans and supporting resources which are not dependent on the particular teachers of the moment. Other schools essentially operate on an ad hoc basis with a few resources held, but leaving it up to the individual ESOL teachers to decide what

to teach their classes. This approach is sometimes regarded as necessary because student groups change from year to year, but it does not allow for the development of consistently good quality and well integrated teaching in the department.

Vocabulary development especially in the area of academic vocabulary is targeted.
To truly enable academic learning, systematic and focused attention must be paid to the vocabulary needs of students who need to understand and produce texts containing increasingly academically specific and technical vocabulary. Many secondary schools give vocabulary learning a central role in their ESOL programmes. They commonly target specifically selected academic vocabulary in a cumulative approach. There is often some cross curricular liaison in targetting vocabulary for NESB students.

An appropriate range of texts is encountered
Another important aspect of academic language is the organisation of written discourse. The recognition of and fluency with writing specific kinds of texts can contribute much to effective learning and content retention. In addition, as much assessment is made of students' production of written texts in particular, this is an important area that students need to have control over. The coverage of different types of texts and the skills to work with those texts is usually not very well addressed. It is possible to construct a syllabus organized around types of texts or genres as is done in one high decile intermediate school (reported in Franken & McComish, 2003).
The main work in this respect in the secondary school is done in the English classes, but very often the ESOL classes are scheduled instead of English. In the other curriculum areas, the learning is usually thought of in terms of vocabulary and concepts, and the main texts the students meet are the teachers' spoken explanations, plus short paragraphs or sentences. Students themselves have to generate mostly short word or sentence answers, or long written projects.

This unbalanced environment of texts and language use does not relate well to the objective needs students have in developing competencies in academic language.

Conclusion

Alton-Lee's (2003) major statements of good practice are general in the sense that they are relevant to students across a broad spectrum. While the good practice statements apply to students whose first language is not English as much as they do to other diverse students, there are particular issues arising from the specific nature of language learning. The factors needing to be acknowledged in good practice for NESB students are that these students possess another language or languages, and that language learning to some extent follows predictable sequences and developmental pathways that constraint what can be learned. Particular conditions concerning the nature of input, the presentation of language, the practice of language items, and feedback on language need to be acknowledged, and above all else there needs to be a strong recognition of the fact that .the learning of a second or additional language needs to accompany curriculum learning, and for younger learners literacy acquisition as well. Research in the area of learning and teaching English as a second or additional language is extensive (as evidenced in the literature review in Franken & McComish, 2003), and must continue to inform our understanding of the way in these factors influence our teaching of NESB in our schools.

Notes
1. NESB is the term to describe students, while the teaching of those students is often described as the teaching English as a second language. For the latter, a more acceptable term is, in our view, the teaching of English as an additional language (EAL), as this acknowledges the fact that many students are multilingual and English may be their third or even fourth language.
2. Sheltered teaching refers to "an adaptive teaching strategy to present content area material through a variety of recommended second language strategies to make the material meaningful and interesting to students" (Carrasquillo and Rodriguez, 1996, p.73).

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Figures

Major categories of good practice statements for NESB students		Major statements of good practice from Alton-Lee (2003)
7.	Inclusive school	Effective links are created between school and other cultural contexts in which students are socialised, to facilitate learning.
8.	Whole school alignment	Curriculum goals, resources, including ICT usage, task design, teaching and school practices are effectively aligned.
9.	Appropriate goals and assessment	Quality teaching is focussed on student achievement (including social outcomes) and facilitates high standards of student outcomes for heterogeneous groups of students. Teachers and students engage constructively in goal oriented assessment.
10.	Teaching and learning styles	Pedagogical practices enable classes and other learning groupings to work as caring, inclusive, and cohesive learning communities. Pedagogy promotes learning orientations, student self-regulation, metacognitive strategies and thoughtful student discourse.
11.	Classroom practices	Quality teaching is responsive to student learning processes. Opportunity to learn is effective and sufficient. Multiple task contexts support learning cycles. Pedagogy scaffolds and provides appropriate feedback on students' task engagement.
12.	Content of EAL teaching	

Figure 1: Matched lists of good practice statements for diverse students and NESB students

Major categories of good practice statements		Specific characteristics of good practice
7.	Inclusive school	School practices and policies are inclusive of all languages and cultures and build on these as resources for learning.
8.	Whole school alignment	EAL curriculum goals, resources, and pedagogical practices are aligned with other curriculum teaching and

		school activities.
9. Appropriate goals and assessment	Second language assessment is systematic, comprehensive, regular, and meaningful to learners.	

	school activities.
9. Appropriate goals and assessment	Second language assessment is systematic, comprehensive, regular, and meaningful to learners. Assessment reflects developmental aspects of second language learning and second language literacy acquisition. Goals for L2 learners are age appropriate and are not limited to performance in easier contexts, or on easier objectives.
10. Teaching and learning styles	Students experience positive classroom environments for interaction. Student learning strategies and styles from other language backgrounds and educational contexts are built on constructively. Classes and individuals are taught and assisted to become skilful learners, and to participate actively in managing their own learning.
11. Classroom practices	Students are given sufficient exposure to language input, as well as opportunities to use language in extended contexts. Learners are given language opportunities that allow for significant repetitions and expansion of use. Students are supported by language scaffolding that facilitates the development of the three goals of restructuring, accuracy and fluency. Learners are given explicit and focused instruction on all aspects of language
12. Content of EAL teaching	The specification of content of EAL teaching is comprehensive and based on research in second language learning in school contexts. Vocabulary development is targeted, especially in the area of academic vocabulary. An appropriate range of texts is encountered.

Figure 2: Good practice statements for NESB students

Key skills	L1 new entrants aged 5	L2 beginners aged 9	L2 beginners aged 13
Oral English vocabulary: approx. no. of words used in speech	more than 1000	much fewer than 1000	much fewer than 1000
Ability to comprehend spoken	fluent	almost none	almost none

English			
Ability to produce spoken English	fluent	almost none	almost none
Ability to read	none	becoming fluent in L1	fluent in L1
Ability to write	none	becoming fluent in L1	fluent in L1
Cognitive development	typical of 5 year old	typical of 9 year old	typical of 13 year old
Knowledge base	limited	widening	approaching adult

Figure 3: Key differences between L1 and L2 students of English