

**BILINGUAL EDUCATION
VERSUS SHELTERED ENGLISH
IMMERSION:
WHAT IS THE BEST APPROACH
TO EDUCATING LEP CHILDREN?**

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Approaches to Educating Limited English Proficient (LEP) Children

- Regular classroom, “sink or swim”
- Regular classroom, ESL pull-out
- Bilingual education
- Structured immersion

Self-Contained Classrooms, Different Approaches

- Bilingual education
 - Same-language children
 - Taught the native tongue
 - Taught subjects in the native tongue
 - Receive ESL instruction
- Structured immersion
 - Group of second-language learners
 - Taught by teacher trained in ESL
 - Taught in English at a pace they can understand

- SEI is the default assignment for LEP students in California (1998), Arizona (2000), Massachusetts (2002) as approved by the voters in referendum.
- TEXAS LAW requires bilingual education if there are 20 or more elementary LEP students of a single language in the same grade level of a *district* (not school). SEI is not an option.

Is Bilingual Education Superior?

Review of scientific research: All other approaches work better, including doing nothing:

1. Sheltered English Immersion (SEI)
2. Regular classroom with ESL
3. Doing nothing
4. Bilingual education

SEI Law in California, Arizona, Massachusetts

- Sheltered English Immersion (SEI)--*nearly all* instruction in English, time period in sheltered classroom not to exceed one year
- Traditional bilingual education allowed
 - after 30 days in English classroom
 - informed opinion child has special needs
 - if parent personally visits school and signs a waiver, to be renewed annually

OUTCOMES:

- ❑ Rossell (2002) found a significant positive effect on reading and a small insignificant positive effect in math for SEI in California schools.

❑ No study has found bilingual education to be superior to SEI.

❑ Former bilingual education teachers interviewed by Rossell (2002) prefer SEI to bilingual education.

•SEI is a sheltered classroom like BE, but mostly in English.