

Ballard & Tighe, Publishers

# A Study

to Estimate

# Typical Yearly Progress

on the



## STUDY AUTHORS

### **Gary Buck, Director of Assessment**

*Dr. Buck has over 20 years of experience designing and developing language tests, with special expertise in tests of comprehension.*

**Academic Background:** Ph.D., Linguistics and Modern English Language, University of Lancaster, England; M.Ed., TESOL, Department of Education, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA; M.A., Oriental Studies; B.A., Oriental Studies, St. Anne's College, University of Oxford, England

**Professional Experience:** Dean of Test Development and Standards, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, Monterey, CA; Research Scientist, Division of Cognitive and Instructional Science, Educational Testing Service; Assistant Professor of Linguistics and ESL, Department of Literature and Languages, East Texas State University; Visiting Professor, Language Studies Division, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey, CA; Associate Professor, Department of English, Osaka Meijo Women's College, Osaka, Japan; Lecturer, Department of English, International Buddhist University, Osaka University of Technology, and Nippon Business School, Osaka, Japan; author and editor of numerous books and articles on language testing

### **Sari Luoma, Assessment Specialist**

*Dr. Luoma has extensive experience in language testing, with special expertise in computer-assisted language testing and assessment of writing.*

**Academic Background:** Ph.D., Applied Linguistics; Licentiate (M.Phil equivalent), Applied Linguistics; combined B.A. and M.A. (5-year program), Language Arts and Education, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

**Professional Experience:** Assessment Specialist, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, Monterey, CA; Data Coordinator in DIALANG Phase 2, University of Jyväskylä, Finland; Assistant Project Manager of DIALANG Phase 2, University of Jyväskylä, Finland; Consultant to the Graduating Students' Language Proficiency Examination Project, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong; Coordinating Researcher in designing and developing the Finnish National Certificate of Language Proficiency, University of Jyväskylä, Finland; test design and development of the Finnish Foreign Language Certificate for Professional Purposes, University of Jyväskylä, Finland; part-time teacher of English and Swedish for academic and professional purposes

### **Yeonsuk Cho, Assessment Specialist**

*Dr. Cho has extensive background and experience in language testing, with a special emphasis on test development, rating scales for speaking and writing, and process-oriented writing assessment.*

**Academic Background:** Ph.D., Educational Psychology; Certificate of Advanced Study in Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Teaching; M.A., TESOL, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; B.A., English Literature and Linguistics, Gyeongsang National University, Kyungnam, Korea

**Professional Experience:** Assessment Specialist, Test Development and Standards Division, Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, Monterey, CA; ESL Placement Test Graduate Assistant Test Administrator, Division of English as an International Language; Statistical Computing Laboratory Graduate Assistant, Department of Educational Psychology; Teaching Assistant, Department of Educational Psychology; Teaching Assistant, Intensive English Institute University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Guest Lecturer, Kyungnam University, Kyungnam, Korea

### **George Seretis, Psychometric Specialist**

*Mr. Seretis has extensive background and experience in mathematical modeling and educational assessment with a special interest in categorical data analysis.*

**Academic Background:** ABD, Measurement and Evaluation, Columbia University, Teachers College, NY; M.S., Applied Statistics, Columbia University, Teachers College, NY; B.A., Psychology, Columbia University, Columbia College, NY

**Professional Experience:** Instructor, Department of Human Development, Columbia University, Teachers College, NY; Statistical Consultant, Personnel Sciences Center, NY; Statistical Consultant, Education Development Center/Center for Children and Technology, NY; Statistical Consultant, Dalton School, NY; Data Analyst, Women, Work and Family project, Columbia University, NY; Data Analyst, Cornell Medical Center/Presbyterian Hospital, NY

**Managing Editor:** Roberta Stathis

**Editor:** Kristin Belsher

**Program Consultant:** Michelle Wester

**Editorial Staff:** Allison Mangrum and Patrice Gotsch

**Desktop Publishing Coordinator:** Kathleen Styffe

**Assessment Coordinator:** Sherry Wicks

© August 2003 Ballard & Tighe, Publishers, a division of Educational IDEAS, Inc.

P.O. Box 219 • Brea, CA 92822-0219 • (800) 321-4332 • [www.ballard-tighe.com](http://www.ballard-tighe.com)

A **Study**  
to Estimate  
Typical Yearly Progress  
on the **IPT**<sup>®</sup>



Brea, California • (800) 321-4332 • [www.ballard-tighe.com](http://www.ballard-tighe.com)



# Introduction

Accountability is the main focus of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB). All schools must show that their students are making adequate annual progress in various subject areas. In the case of mainstream content classes, the schools also are required to show that more of their students are reaching the “proficient level.” By the academic year 2013-14, 100% of the students must be grade-level proficient in reading and mathematics. However, there are more than four million English language learners in the school system, and NCLB requires that schools show that these students are making adequate progress in learning English. The federal government has not yet offered official guidelines on how this should be done.

The purpose of this study is to explore one way of developing an accountability system for LEP students in grades K-12. The idea is simple in principle: We will go back to student records to retrieve standardized proficiency test scores on the *IDEA Proficiency Test* (IPT) for students who have been tested annually for at least three years, calculate mean gains, and use the data to set standards for annual progress. We will then explore a variety of ways of aggregating the individual data for school accountability.

# Typical Yearly Progress

One goal of this study was to obtain empirically based estimates of “typical” student progress on the IPT Oral, Reading, and Writing Tests. To this end, we obtained student record data from districts in Arizona, Colorado, Maryland, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah. The data provided scores on the IPT Tests for consecutive grades in school. The data were subjected to the following quality control checks:

- The data needed to be recent (from within the last five years).
- Scores needed to be available for transitions of exactly one school grade (e.g., from first to second grade).
- The data were cleaned to remove cases with impossible score values.
- An outlier analysis was performed to identify extreme data values.

The following three tables provide information about the sources of data used to estimate typical progress on the IPT Oral, Reading, and Writing Tests.

**Table 1: Data Sources—IPT—Oral Tests**

State	County/City	Overall # of students	SCHOOL GRADE TRANSITION											
			K→1	1→2	2→3	3→4	4→5	5→6	6→7	7→8	8→9	9→10	10→11	11→12
AZ	Murphy	30 1.6%		1 0.2%	19 6.2%	9 5.6%	1 1.0%							
CO	Brush	32 1.7%	5 1.2%	16 3.6%	7 2.3%	2 2.3%			1 1.4%				1 1.7%	
	Ft. Morgan	88 4.6%	19 4.6%	29 6.5%	17 5.5%	3 1.9%	1 1.0%	5 6.4%	3 4.2%	7 7.6%	3 4.5%		1 1.7%	
	Wiggins	7 0.4%	2 0.5%	1 0.2%	3 1.0%	1 0.6%								
MD	Prince George's	599 31.3%	80 19.2%	80 17.9%	80 26.1%	35 21.9%	34 33.7%	35 44.9%	35 49.3%	35 38.0%	35 52.2%	50 74.6%	50 83.3%	50 100%
NM	Gallup McKinley	12 0.6%		3 0.7%	1 0.3%	2 1.3%	1 1.0%		1 1.4%	4 4.3%				
	Las Cruces	0 0%												
TX	Spring Branch	633 33.0%	191 45.9%	231 51.7%	110 35.8%	53 33.1%	21 20.8%	7 9.0%	5 7.0%	13 14.1%	2 3.0%			
UT	Alpine	154 8.0%	37 8.9%	28 6.3%	22 7.2%	14 8.8%	11 10.9%	5 6.4%	3 4.2%	12 13.0%	10 14.9%	9 13.4%	3 5.0%	
	Provo	326 17.0%	72 17.3%	49 11.0%	43 14.0%	40 25.0%	31 30.7%	23 29.5%	21 29.6%	19 20.7%	16 23.9%	7 10.4%	5 8.3%	
	Washington	35 1.8%	10 2.4%	9 2.0%	5 1.6%	1 0.6%	1 1.0%	3 3.8%	2 2.8%	2 2.2%	1 1.5%	1 1.5%		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1916</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>50</b>

**Table 2: Data Sources—IPT—Reading Tests**

State	County/City	Overall # of students	SCHOOL GRADE TRANSITION											
			K→1	1→2	2→3	3→4	4→5	5→6	6→7	7→8	8→9	9→10	10→11	11→12
AZ	Murphy	0 0%												
CO	Brush	24 1.9%			14 6.8%	6 3.3%			1 0.9%				3 4.8%	
	Ft. Morgan	63 5.0%		1 2.0%	49 23.7%	2 1.1%			1 0.9%	4 4.4%	3 3.7%	2 2.7%	1 1.6%	
	Wiggins	5 0.4%			1 0.5%	4 2.2%								
MD	Prince George's	498 39.3%	50 100%	50 98.0%	30 14.5%	30 16.4%	30 17.5%	30 22.9%	44 38.9%	45 49.5%	44 53.7%	45 60.8%	50 80.6%	50 94.3%
NM	Gallup McKinley	128 10.1%			9 4.3%	29 15.8%	32 18.7%	30 22.9%	20 17.7%	6 6.6%	1 1.2%	1 1.4%		
	Las Cruces	12 0.9%						1 0.8%	5 4.4%		1 1.2%	2 2.7%		3 5.7%
TX	Spring Branch	0 0%												
UT	Alpine	185 14.6%			32 15.5%	42 23.0%	55 32.2%	22 16.8%	11 9.7%	9 9.9%	5 6.1%	8 10.8%	1 1.6%	
	Provo	306 24.1%			66 31.9%	66 36.1%	51 29.8%	39 29.8%	25 22.1%	21 23.1%	19 23.2%	12 16.2%	7 11.3%	
	Washington	47 3.7%			6 2.9%	4 2.2%	3 1.8%	9 6.9%	6 5.3%	6 6.6%	9 11.0%	4 5.4%		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1268</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>53</b>

**Table 3: Data Sources—IPT—Writing Tests**

State	County/City	Overall # of students	SCHOOL GRADE TRANSITION											
			K→1	1→2	2→3	3→4	4→5	5→6	6→7	7→8	8→9	9→10	10→11	11→12
AZ	Murphy	0 0%												
CO	Brush	30 2.8%			14 6.1%	9 4.4%	3 1.6%			2 2.6%				2 14.3%
	Ft. Morgan	63 6.0%			54 23.4%	7 3.4%				1 2.1%	1 2.5%			
	Wiggins	13 1.2%			4 1.7%	8 3.9%	1 0.5%							
MD	Prince George's	100 9.5%	50 100%	50 100%										
NM	Gallup McKinley	139 13.2%			9 3.9%	31 15.1%	33 17.1%	33 27.0%	23 29.9%	6 12.5%	2 5.0%	2 8.0%		
	Las Cruces	17 1.6%			3 1.3%	1 0.5%		1 0.8%	5 6.5%		1 2.5%	2 8.0%	2 14.3%	2 100%
TX	Spring Branch	0 0%												
UT	Alpine	195 18.4%			43 18.6%	44 21.5%	57 29.5%	25 20.5%	8 10.4%	9 18.8%	4 10.0%	5 20.0%		
	Provo	460 43.5%			94 40.7%	100 48.8%	93 48.2%	54 44.3%	36 46.8%	30 62.5%	29 72.5%	14 56.0%	10 71.4%	
	Washington	40 3.8%			10 4.3%	5 2.4%	6 3.1%	9 7.4%	3 3.9%	2 4.2%	3 7.5%	2 8.0%		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1057</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>

The next three tables summarize the typical gains found for the IPT Oral, Reading, and Writing Tests, respectively. In addition to providing an overall gain estimate, the tables break down the gains by grade transition points.

**Table 4: Typical Gains for the IPT–Oral Tests**

IPT Test(s)	Transition Point	Sample Size	Median Gain	Mean Gain	95% Confidence Interval for the Mean Gain
I E & F	K→1	416	1	1.12	1.03 to 1.21
	1→2	447	1	1.00	0.91 to 1.09
	2→3	307	1	1.04	0.93 to 1.16
	3→4	160	1	1.11	0.95 to 1.26
	4→5	101	1	1.11	0.89 to 1.33
	5→6	78	1	1.38	1.11 to 1.65
I E & F→II C & D	6→7	71	0	0.10	-0.18 to 0.38
II C & D	7→8	92	1	0.95	0.70 to 1.19
	8→9	67	0	0.66	0.32 to 0.99
	9→10	67	1	1.07	0.78 to 1.37
	10→11	60	1	1.08	0.78 to 1.39
	11→12	50	1	1.00	0.71 to 1.29
<b>Overall</b>		<b>1916</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.02</b>	<b>0.97 to 1.07</b>

**Table 5: Typical Gains for the IPT–Reading Tests**

IPT Test(s)	Transition Point	Sample Size	Median Gain	Mean Gain	95% Confidence Interval for the Mean Gain
Early Literacy	K→1	50	22	22.12	20.47 to 23.77
Early Literacy→1 A & B	1→2	51	-27	-24.98	-27.60 to -22.36
1 A & B	2→3	207	11	11.01	9.80 to 12.22
1 A & B→2 A & B	3→4	183	-3	-2.34	-3.48 to -1.20
2 A & B	4→5	171	7	7.00	6.03 to 7.97
	5→6	131	6	5.85	4.57 to 7.12
2 A & B→3 A & B	6→7	113	0	-0.68	-2.08 to 0.72
3 A & B	7→8	91	4	5.69	4.29 to 7.09
	8→9	82	4	3.95	2.50 to 5.41
	9→10	74	4	4.46	2.90 to 6.02
	10→11	62	4	3.47	2.14 to 4.79
	11→12	53	3	2.66	1.41 to 3.91
<b>Overall</b>		<b>1268</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4.02</b>	<b>3.42 to 4.62</b>
<b>Overall (No Early Literacy)</b>		<b>1167</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4.51</b>	<b>4.03 to 5.00</b>

**Table 6: Typical Gains for the IPT–Writing Tests (Parts 1, 2, & 3)**

IPT Test(s)	Transition Point	Sample Size	Median Gain	Mean Gain	95% Confidence Interval for the Mean Gain
Early Literacy	K→1	50	6	5.92	5.02 to 6.82
Early Literacy→1 A & B	1→2	50	-8	-8.16	-8.99 to -7.33
1 A & B	2→3	231	3	3.02	2.60 to 3.44
1 A & B→2 A & B	3→4	205	1	1.10	0.64 to 1.55
2 A & B	4→5	193	2	2.09	1.68 to 2.50
	5→6	122	2	1.89	1.32 to 2.45
2 A & B→3 A & B	6→7	77	-1	-0.52	-1.31 to 0.27
3 A & B	7→8	48	2	1.31	0.26 to 2.36
	8→9	40	1	0.98	0.04 to 1.91
	9→10	25	1	1.44	0.04 to 2.84
	10→11	14	0	0.36	-0.88 to 1.59
	11→12	No data	No data	No data	No data
<b>Overall</b>		<b>1055</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.47</b>	<b>1.22 to 1.71</b>
<b>Overall (No Early Literacy)</b>		<b>955</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.74</b>	<b>1.53 to 1.95</b>

The estimates of typical gain provided by Tables 4, 5, and 6 provide an empirically determined basis for setting benchmarks for progress for the IPT Oral, Reading, and Writing Tests. The most striking conclusion, with respect to the mean gains, is that the mean gains appear to differ substantially, depending on the transition point. This is due to two factors:

1. Changes in the test forms. These are means of raw scores, and as a result, any transition point that corresponds to a change to a more difficult test will show a low or even negative “gain” as typical progress.
2. Actual developmental differences in progress.

The substantial difference in gains suggests that progress on the three tests is not uniform, so that more progress is achieved between some grade transitions and less between others. Consequently, a single benchmark for progress may be ill advised. A better solution is to have multiple benchmarks for the IPT Tests, depending on the grade transition. If multiple benchmarks are eschewed in favor of a single one, then the result is likely to be a benchmark that is unrealistically high for some students while being unrealistically low for others.

## Setting Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives

One of our client states provided data for the purpose of examining how setting benchmarks for the IPT Tests and establishing Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) with those benchmarks would impact the number of students who could be shown to be making adequate progress. This particular state chose to use a

single benchmark for showing progress for each of the IPT Oral, Reading, and Writing Tests. The benchmarks were set at slightly below the mean overall gains for each test using the state's data. The next series of tables contains the results of this inquiry.

**Table 7: Student Performance with Respect to the Established Benchmarks**

	<b>Oral Test</b>	
	Number of Students	Percent
Below Benchmark	821	<b>22.2%</b>
Met or Exceeded Benchmark	2878	<b>77.8%</b>
	<b>Reading Test</b>	
	Number of Students	Percent
Below Benchmark	1606	<b>43.4%</b>
Met or Exceeded Benchmark	2093	<b>56.6%</b>
	<b>Writing Test</b>	
	Number of Students	Percent
Below Benchmark	1390	<b>37.6%</b>
Met or Exceeded Benchmark	2309	<b>62.4%</b>
Total Number of Students	3699	<b>100%</b>

As can be seen in Table 7, a large percentage of the students was successful in meeting the benchmarks for the Oral, Reading, and Writing Tests. This is to be expected, since the benchmarks were set below the mean overall gains for each of the tests. The next three tables break down the performance of the students by transition point.

**Table 8: Student Performance on the IPT–Oral Test Broken Down by Transition Point**

<b>Oral Test</b>				
(Total Number of Students = 3699)				
<b>Transition</b>	<b>Below Benchmark</b>		<b>Met or Exceeded Benchmark</b>	
K→1	105	<b>15.8%</b>	559	<b>84.2%</b>
1→2	89	<b>15.9%</b>	471	<b>84.1%</b>
2→3	117	<b>19.4%</b>	487	<b>80.6%</b>
3→4	83	<b>19.9%</b>	335	<b>80.1%</b>
4→5	63	<b>19.1%</b>	267	<b>80.9%</b>
5→6	51	<b>28.0%</b>	131	<b>72.0%</b>
6→7	71	<b>68.3%</b>	33	<b>31.7%</b>
7→8	55	<b>32.4%</b>	115	<b>67.6%</b>
8→9	70	<b>39.1%</b>	109	<b>60.9%</b>
9→10	82	<b>28.3%</b>	208	<b>71.7%</b>
10→11	20	<b>13.5%</b>	128	<b>86.5%</b>
11→12	15	<b>30.0%</b>	35	<b>70.0%</b>
Total	821	<b>22.2%</b>	2878	<b>77.8%</b>

**Table 9: Student Performance on the IPT–Reading Test Broken Down by Transition Point**

<b>Reading Test</b> (Total Number of Students = 3699)				
<b>Transition</b>	<b>Below Benchmark</b>		<b>Met or Exceeded Benchmark</b>	
K→1	8	<b>1.2%</b>	656	<b>98.8%</b>
1→2	556	<b>99.3%</b>	4	<b>0.7%</b>
2→3	112	<b>18.5%</b>	492	<b>81.5%</b>
3→4	312	<b>74.6%</b>	106	<b>25.4%</b>
4→5	102	<b>30.9%</b>	228	<b>69.1%</b>
5→6	51	<b>28.0%</b>	131	<b>72.0%</b>
6→7	61	<b>58.7%</b>	43	<b>41.3%</b>
7→8	86	<b>50.6%</b>	84	<b>49.4%</b>
8→9	75	<b>41.9%</b>	104	<b>58.1%</b>
9→10	135	<b>46.6%</b>	155	<b>53.4%</b>
10→11	77	<b>52.0%</b>	71	<b>48.0%</b>
11→12	31	<b>62.0%</b>	19	<b>38.0%</b>
Total	1606	<b>43.4%</b>	2093	<b>56.6%</b>

**Table 10: Student Performance on the IPT–Writing Test Broken Down by Transition Point**

<b>Writing Test</b> (Total Number of Students = 3699)				
<b>Transition</b>	<b>Below Benchmark</b>		<b>Met or Exceeded Benchmark</b>	
K→1	42	<b>6.3%</b>	622	<b>93.7%</b>
1→2	551	<b>98.4%</b>	9	<b>1.6%</b>
2→3	160	<b>26.5%</b>	444	<b>73.5%</b>
3→4	171	<b>40.9%</b>	247	<b>59.1%</b>
4→5	70	<b>21.2%</b>	260	<b>78.8%</b>
5→6	53	<b>29.1%</b>	129	<b>70.9%</b>
6→7	36	<b>34.6%</b>	68	<b>65.4%</b>
7→8	69	<b>40.6%</b>	101	<b>59.4%</b>
8→9	62	<b>34.6%</b>	117	<b>65.4%</b>
9→10	92	<b>31.7%</b>	198	<b>68.3%</b>
10→11	57	<b>38.5%</b>	91	<b>61.5%</b>
11→12	27	<b>54.0%</b>	23	<b>46.0%</b>
Total	1390	<b>37.6%</b>	2309	<b>62.4%</b>

It is immediately obvious that while overall performance was good (as suggested by Table 7), students at specific transition points have a difficult time meeting the established benchmarks. For example, on the Oral Test (Table 8), only 117 out of 604 (19.4%) of the students at the second to third grade transition point were below the benchmark, while 70 out of 179 (39.1%) of the students were below the benchmark at the eighth to ninth grade transition point. It is important to note that some differences in the number of students meeting the benchmark are partially a result of changing to different tests. However, other differences, like the example just given, suggest developmental differences.

The next series of tables examines how different AMAOs impact the number of students who show progress.

**AMA0 #1: In order for a student to show adequate progress, he or she must meet or exceed the benchmark on ALL THREE tests (Oral, Reading, AND Writing).**

**Table 11: Number of Students Who Met or Exceeded the Benchmark for All Three Tests**

	Number of Students	Percent
AMA0 not achieved	2334	<b>63.1%</b>
AMA0 achieved	1365	<b>36.9%</b>
Total Number of Students	3699	<b>100%</b>

**Table 12: Number of Students Who Met or Exceeded the Benchmark for All Three Tests, Broken Down by Transition Point**

Breakdown by Transitions (Total Number of Students = 3699)				
Transition	AMA0 Not Achieved		AMA0 Achieved	
K→1	139	<b>20.9%</b>	525	<b>79.1%</b>
1→2	558	<b>99.6%</b>	2	<b>0.4%</b>
2→3	287	<b>47.5%</b>	317	<b>52.5%</b>
3→4	351	<b>84.0%</b>	67	<b>16.0%</b>
4→5	172	<b>52.1%</b>	158	<b>47.9%</b>
5→6	109	<b>59.9%</b>	73	<b>40.1%</b>
6→7	91	<b>87.5%</b>	13	<b>12.5%</b>
7→8	135	<b>79.4%</b>	35	<b>20.6%</b>
8→9	136	<b>76.0%</b>	43	<b>24.0%</b>
9→10	209	<b>72.1%</b>	81	<b>27.9%</b>
10→11	105	<b>70.9%</b>	43	<b>29.1%</b>
11→12	42	<b>84.0%</b>	8	<b>16.0%</b>
Total	2334	<b>63.1%</b>	1365	<b>36.9%</b>

Tables 11 and 12 display very interesting results. If you'll remember from Table 7, students generally had little problem meeting the benchmark for each of the Oral, Reading, and Writing Tests. This was because those benchmarks were set below the mean (or "typical") gains for the three tests. Table 11 shows dramatically that it is not typical, however, for an individual student to show a mean level of progress *on all three tests*. In fact, fewer than 37% of the students would show adequate progress if they had to improve on all three tests according to the benchmarks set for each test. This suggests that individual students do not show uniform gains across the three tests. They may improve quite a bit on one test, and less on the others. Table 12 shows that the number of students who meet the AMA0 also depends on the transition point. For example, most (79.1%) of the students in the kindergarten to first grade transition met the benchmarks for all three tests, while only 20.6% of those in the seventh to eighth grade transition did so.

**AMAO #2: In order for a student to show adequate progress, he or she must meet or exceed the benchmark on ANY of the three tests (Oral, Reading, OR Writing).**

**Table 13: Number of Students Who Met or Exceeded the Benchmark for Any of the Three Tests**

	Number of Students	Percent
AMAO not achieved	230	<b>6.2%</b>
AMAO achieved	3469	<b>93.8%</b>
Total Number of Students	3699	<b>100%</b>

**Table 14: Number of Students Who Met or Exceeded the Benchmark for Any of the Three Tests, Broken Down by Transition Point**

Breakdown by Transitions (Total Number of Students = 3699)				
Transition	AMAO Not Achieved		AMAO Achieved	
K→1	0	<b>0%</b>	664	<b>100%</b>
1→2	88	<b>15.7%</b>	472	<b>84.3%</b>
2→3	19	<b>3.1%</b>	585	<b>96.9%</b>
3→4	28	<b>6.7%</b>	390	<b>93.3%</b>
4→5	7	<b>2.1%</b>	323	<b>97.9%</b>
5→6	2	<b>1.1%</b>	180	<b>98.9%</b>
6→7	22	<b>21.2%</b>	82	<b>78.8%</b>
7→8	10	<b>5.9%</b>	160	<b>94.1%</b>
8→9	18	<b>10.1%</b>	161	<b>89.9%</b>
9→10	21	<b>7.2%</b>	269	<b>92.8%</b>
10→11	8	<b>5.4%</b>	140	<b>94.6%</b>
11→12	7	<b>14.0%</b>	43	<b>86.0%</b>
Total	230	<b>6.2%</b>	3469	<b>93.8%</b>

Table 13 indicates that the vast majority of students (93.8%) attained adequate progress. Table 14 shows that while the number of students who attain adequate progress depends on the transition point, even the lowest percentage (78.8% for the sixth to seventh grade transition) is quite respectable. These tables underscore that it is much more likely for students to make good progress on just one of the three tests, and that students do not improve uniformly in oral, reading, and writing ability.

# Conclusion

This study has generated three general conclusions regarding the IPT and typical yearly gains: (1) This study clearly demonstrates the importance of obtaining empirically based estimates of typical gains for students; (2) The mean gains on the three IPT Tests used in this study differed substantially by transition point, suggesting that it may be prudent to have multiple benchmarks for each test, depending on the transition point; (3) This study also shows that discretion needs to be used when deciding on AMAOs. Specifically, it appears that while a given student may show a high amount of progress in one area of language, this does not necessarily coincide with a similarly high gain in other areas.

This study has been effective in establishing the school grade-level transition point as a factor in the gains students make in language development. It is certainly possible that there are other factors. One such factor may be the starting proficiency of the student. It is reasonable to expect that students of lower levels of English language proficiency may show more improvement after a year of instruction than those of a higher level of language proficiency. Eventually, all tests lose the ability to discriminate between students of very high levels of language proficiency—at some point, there is no room for improvement on the test.

Ballard & Tighe, Publishers' NCLB-compliant IPT—called the IPT 2004—will be available in February 2004 in time for spring 2004 testing. For more information about the IPT 2004, please contact Ballard & Tighe.

P.O. Box 219 • Brea, CA 92822-0219 • (800) 321-4332  
FAX (714) 255-9828 • [www.ballard-tighe.com](http://www.ballard-tighe.com) • [info@ballard-tighe.com](mailto:info@ballard-tighe.com)