

RESEARCH BRIEF

# Impact of Using Lexia English on the California English Language Proficiency Assessment

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**ENGLISH**   
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

## Key Findings

This study examined the relationship between Lexia English usage and the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC) test scores from the 2020–21 school year. The sample included 2,034 Emergent Bilingual students from 21 schools in one California district.

- **Lexia English users scored 15 points higher than non-Lexia English users on the overall ELPAC.** Lexia English users consistently scored higher than non-Lexia English users across all grades, K–5.
- **All Emergent Bilingual students benefited from using Lexia English.** The largest positive differences on the overall performance were observed for students who spoke South Asian languages at home (+30 points) and those who spoke Spanish at home (+20 points).
- **Lexia English users scored 18 points higher on the oral domain than non-Lexia English users.** These results are consistent with Lexia English’s emphasis on speaking and supporting students’ English language development through academic conversations.
- **The estimated effect size of using Lexia English was 0.20, which is comparable to the effect of other programs for Emergent Bilingual students.** The similar effect sizes reflect Lexia English’s celebration of students’ cultural and linguistic backgrounds through its inclusive instructional approach, which are features that prior research has found to be the most effective for Emergent Bilingual students.

## Introduction

Since 2010, the number of Emergent Bilingual students has increased by more than half a million in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Various recommendations exist for Emergent Bilingual instruction which include emphasizing academic language development and providing opportunities for Emergent Bilingual students to practice speaking using academic language.<sup>2</sup> Lexia Learning created Lexia® English Language Development™ (Lexia English) to support Emergent Bilingual students and their teachers. Lexia English is an adaptive blended learning program designed to help Emergent

Bilingual students in grades K–6 acquire speaking, listening, and grammar skills needed for communicating in English. The program is designed using culturally relevant pedagogy and supports students’ English language development through academic conversations.

**Lexia uses the term “Emergent Bilingual student” in place of “English Learner” to celebrate the value of bilingualism that these students bring to the classroom and society.**

<sup>1</sup> National Center for Educational Statistics. (2021). *English language learners in public schools*. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cgf>

<sup>2</sup> Francis, D.J., Rivera, M., Lesaux, N., Kieffer, M., & Rivera, H. (2006). *Practical guidelines for the education of English language learners: Research-based recommendations for instruction and academic intervention*. Center on Instruction. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/lep-partnership/interventions.pdf>

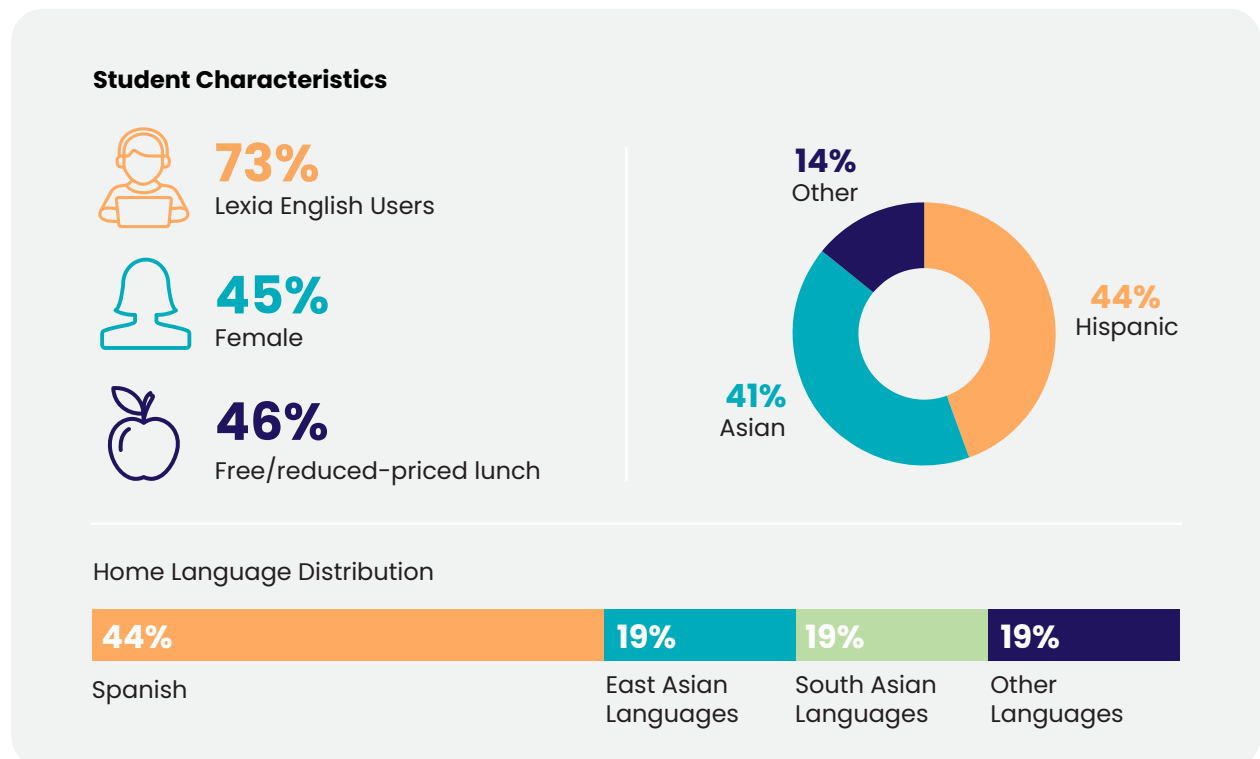
Lexia English is aligned to several academic standards, including the California English Language Development Standards. As part of an ongoing commitment to evaluate the effectiveness of its instructional products, Lexia conducted a study to explore the relationship between the use of Lexia English and student performance on the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC).

## Study Design

Lexia partnered with a mid-sized northern California district to analyze patterns in students' ELPAC scores. The ELPAC provides an overall scaled score as well as scores for the oral and written domains of language proficiency. The sample consisted of 2,034 Emergent Bilingual students in grades K-5 across 21 schools. Female students made up 45% of the analytic sample. Most Emergent Bilingual students identified as

Hispanic (44%) and Asian (41%). Spanish was the home language for 44% of the students, and 46% of students qualified for free-or-reduced lunch. Students completing at least one unit (approximately 3-5 minutes) in the program were considered Lexia English users in the current study. Of the Emergent Bilingual students in the analytic sample, 73% were classified as Lexia English users.

The district used Lexia English as part of hybrid or remote instruction for Emergent Bilingual students in grades PreK to 5, primarily in English Learner (EL) or English as a Second Language (ESL) instructional periods. This study explored the relationship between the use of Lexia English and ELPAC scores after controlling for demographic characteristics and school differences. Due to Covid-19 related disruptions during the 2019-20 school year, prior year achievement was not available for many students and was not controlled for in analyses.



## Results

Results consistently showed that Lexia English users scored higher on the ELPAC than non-Lexia English users. Findings were consistent across demographic subgroups, indicating that diverse groups of Emergent Bilingual students may benefit from using Lexia English.

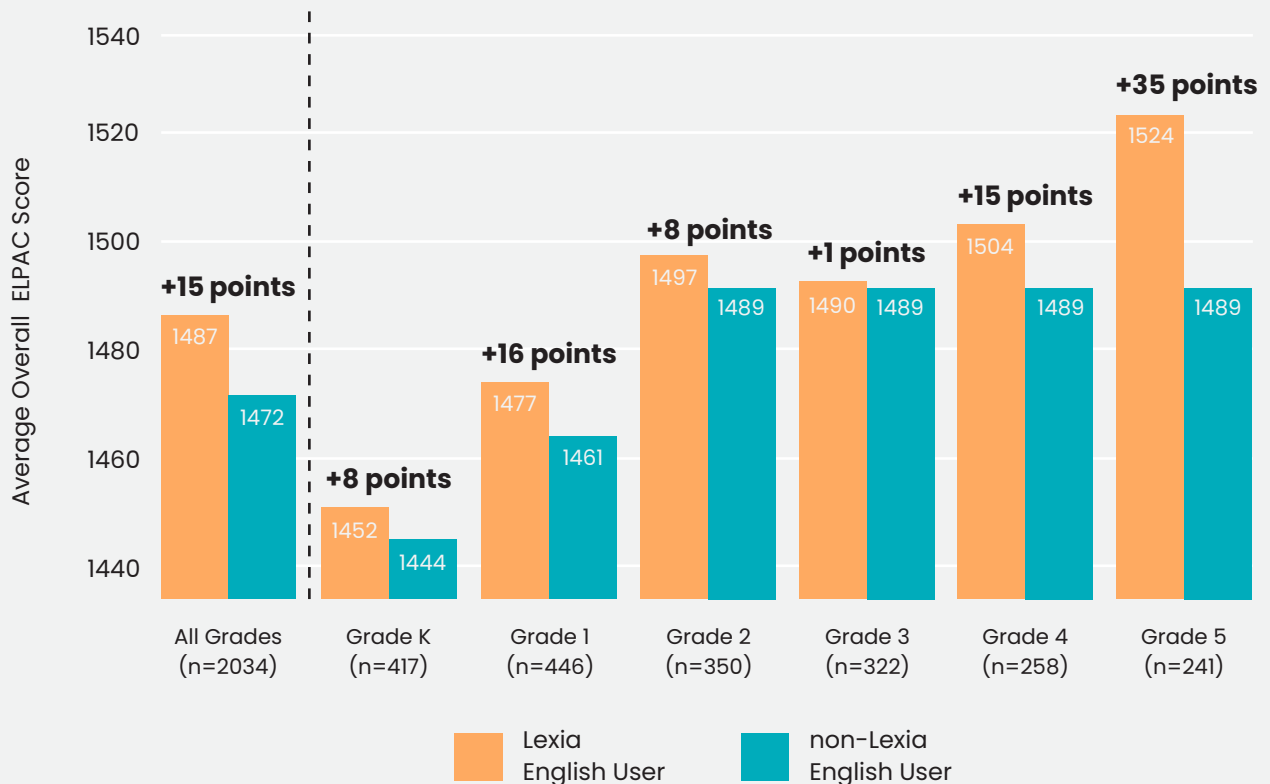
### Lexia English Users Scored Higher on the Overall ELPAC

Emergent Bilingual students who used Lexia English scored 15 points higher, on average, compared to Emergent Bilingual students who did not use Lexia English on the overall score. As illustrated in the display below, this

positive effect was found across grades with the largest difference of 35 points occurring among Grade 5 students. Note that average ELPAC scores for non-Lexia English users plateau beginning in Grade 2 with average scores of 1489 in Grades 3-5. In contrast, Lexia English users not only score higher than their peers but also tend to have successively higher average scores in Grades 3-5.

**Results consistently showed that Lexia English users scored higher on the overall ELPAC than non-Lexia English users.**

**Average Overall ELPAC Scores By Grade**



### Lexia English Benefited All Student Groups

Lexia English users consistently scored higher than non-Lexia English users when the data were disaggregated by demographic characteristics. Compared to non-Lexia English users, Lexia English users scored higher regardless of their gender (+23 points for males and +4 points for female), race or ethnicity (+26 points for Asian students, +15

points for Hispanic students, and +17 points for Emergent Bilingual students of other ethnicities), eligibility for free-or-reduced price lunch (+22 points for FRL eligible students and +15 points for FRL ineligible students), or language spoken at home (+30 points for South Asian languages, +20 points for Spanish, +14 points for East/Southeast Asian languages, and +13 points for all other languages).

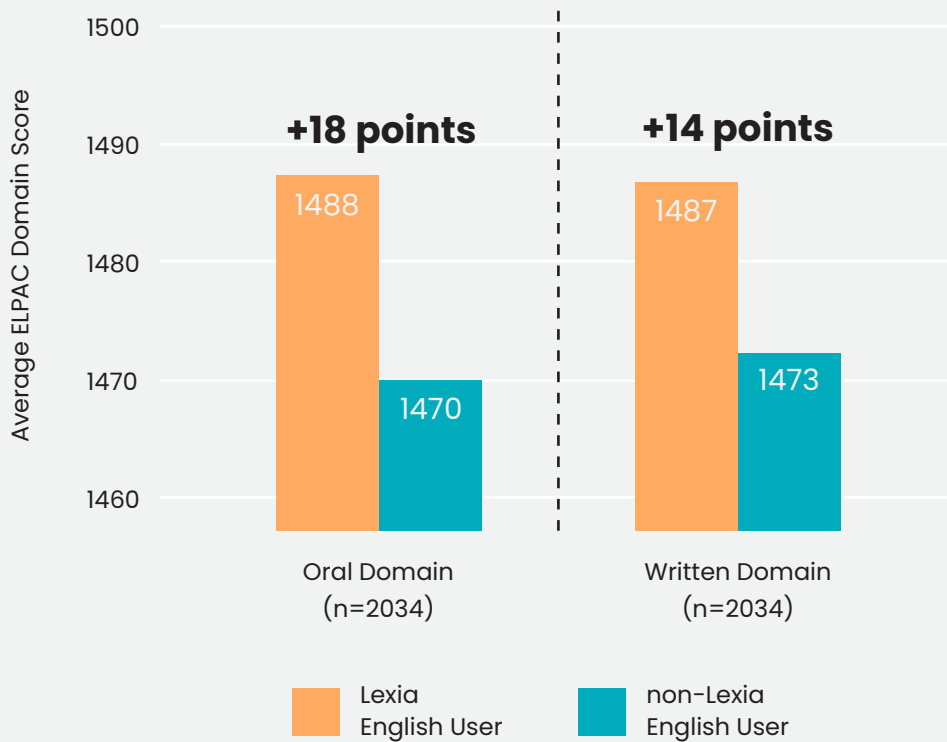
	Average Overall ELPAC Score		Difference
	Lexia English User	Non-Lexia English User	
<b>Gender</b>			
Male (n=1112)	1486	1463	<b>+23</b>
Female (n=922)	1488	1484	<b>+4</b>
<b>Race</b>			
Asian (n=836)	1509	1483	<b>+26</b>
Hispanic (n=904)	1466	1451	<b>+15</b>
Other (n=294)	1499	1482	<b>+17</b>
<b>FRL Status</b>			
FRL Eligible (n=937)	1471	1449	<b>+22</b>
FRL Ineligible (n=1097)	1502	1487	<b>+15</b>
<b>Home Language</b>			
South Asian (n=379)	1511	1481	<b>+30</b>
Spanish (n=896)	1467	1447	<b>+20</b>
East/Southeast Asian (n=381)	1506	1492	<b>+14</b>
Other (n=378)	1497	1484	<b>+13</b>

### Lexia English Users Score Highest on the Oral Domain

The ELPAC assessment total score is a combination of the oral language and written language domains. The larger positive difference was on the oral domain in which Lexia English users scored 18 points higher than non-Lexia English users. Lexia English users also scored higher on the written domain (+14 points). These results were observed after controlling for demographic characteristics and enrolled school, and they are consistent with Lexia English’s emphasis on speaking and supporting students’ English language development through academic conversations.



### Average ELPAC Domain Scores



## Effect of Using Lexia English is Comparable to Other Programs for Emergent Bilinguals

Effect sizes describe the magnitude of the difference between one group using a program and one group not using a program. We standardized students' ELPAC scores within grade and modeled the relationship between being a Lexia English user and students' 2021 standardized scores, statistically controlling for students' demographics and enrolled school. The difference in students' overall performance on the ELPAC was equivalent to a statistically significant effect size of 0.20. Prior research<sup>3</sup> has found that the average effect of providing bilingual instruction to Emergent Bilingual students is 0.23. The similar effect sizes reflect Lexia English's personalized learning approach that helps improve academic English language proficiency and Lexia English's celebration of students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds through its inclusive instructional approach.

**Student performance on the ELPAC is particularly important as it is one criterion educators use to reclassify students from Emergent Bilingual to Fluent English Proficient.**

## Discussion

Student performance on the ELPAC is particularly important as it is one criterion educators use to reclassify students from Emergent Bilingual to Fluent English Proficient. The results described in this brief provide promising evidence that using Lexia English can have a positive impact on students' ELPAC test scores. Across all student groups, Lexia English users scored higher than non-Lexia English users. Additionally, the large effect for oral scores aligns with Lexia English's unique emphasis on speaking and supporting students' English language development through academic conversations. Although these results are encouraging, additional evidence is needed to demonstrate the extent to which Lexia English is the cause of these results. Lexia will continue to build the evidence base for Lexia English by working with different partners to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

## Want to Learn More?

For more information and updates on research related to Lexia English, please contact [research@lexialearning.com](mailto:research@lexialearning.com).

<sup>3</sup> Rolstad, K., Mahoney, K., & Glass, G. (2005). The big picture: A meta-analysis of program effectiveness research on English language learners. *Educational Policy*, 19(4), 572-594.

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Lexia is the structured literacy expert. For over 35 years, the company has focused solely on literacy, and today, provides a full spectrum of solutions for both students and teachers. With robust offerings for differentiated instruction, personalized learning, assessment, and professional learning, Lexia helps more learners read, write, and speak with confidence.

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