

**SECOND LANGUAGE LITERACY
DEVELOPMENT:
ENHANCING BILITERACY IN YOUNG
CANADIANS**

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CONTEXT

- Canada – a country of languages:
 - officially bilingual: 300,000+ students in French immersion programs
 - First Nations languages
 - immigrant languages: 20% of school-age children in Canada speak neither English nor French as a first language
- Globalization – all Canadian students need biliteracy skills in order to compete and succeed in an increasingly globalized world

THE ISSUES

- scant scientific evidence in Canada concerning the challenges and needs of students learning to read and write in a second language
 - this is especially true of students in French immersion, but also true for other second language readers and writers
 - lack of evidence on students at both the low and high ends of the literacy continuum – below and above average readers and writers
- ⇒ educators, policy-makers, and parents lack scientific evidence for making important decisions about second language readers and writers

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR EARLY LITERACY

- enhanced funds to increase research on all aspects of second language reading and writing development among Canadian students
- enhanced efforts to develop and evaluate intervention strategies to support second language readers and writers who are at-risk for or have impairments in reading and writing
- enhanced efforts to develop and evaluate classroom-based instructional strategies for supporting both at-risk and advanced second language readers and writers
- enhanced dissemination of scientific and classroom-based information on: (a) the challenges and needs of L2 readers/writers, (b) effective remedial interventions for at-risk L2 readers and writers; and (c) effective classroom-based instructional strategies that promote biliteracy to all students
- dissemination should seek to reach: (a) classroom educators; (b) educational specialists; (c) educational policy-makers; and (d) parents.