

FACILITATORS' SCRIPT FOR HMONG/ENGLISH PROGRAMS  
(English)

SESSION 3: DLI CHALLENGES

1. *Welcome the participants to the session. Reintroduce yourself.*
2. *Introductions*
3. *Workshop Topics*
4. Tonight's topic is Challenges of DLI.
5. *Session objectives (The two objectives are not divided during the presentation because they are interspersed throughout the session.)*

6. Challenge #1. The Power of English

English is the superpower of languages, not only in this country, but around the world. Our Hmong home language students are surrounded by English, and since it is the language of peer culture, movies, TV, the Internet, video games, etc., they are motivated to learn and use the language outside of school. Many come to prefer English over their own language. Social pressure to speak English is so great that immigrant parents may notice resistance to using the home language as early as kindergarten. A generation later, however, even if grandparents continue to use the home language, their grandchildren will often respond to them in English. Linguists call this the "three generation pattern."

English home language students also are challenged by the power of English. Because of the limited amount of exposure they have to a second language, it is much harder for them achieve proficiency in that language so they tend to revert back to English whenever they can.

7. *After reading each scenario aloud, have participants discuss the answer options at their tables. (Keep this moving - no more than one-two minutes.) Call on a table to share the answer they decided on, then explain why the other answers were not appropriate. Do this for all slides. If a table gets the answer wrong ask other tables if they agree and engage in discussion with the group about the possible answers. **(The correct answers for the scenarios and the myth-busters can be found at the end of the ppt handout packet.)***

Scenario #1 - Answer: b.

Explain:

- a. It's possible, but students often fall back into English without even thinking about it.
- b. Also, students find it frustrating to speak in their language when other students can't communicate that well in return.
- c. It's up to the teacher, not the students, to set the language of instruction for each lesson.

8. Scenario #2 - Answer: c

Explain:

- a. He may understand his grandparents pretty well and may even be able to speak to them a little, but over time, he will be able to access less and less his home language.
- b. The goal of DLI is to achieve high proficiency levels in both languages, but this takes many years. Even then, one language may still be stronger than the other, and it's often English. Also, a DLI education is not going to magically turn your child into a fully balanced bilingual!
- c. Research shows that immigrants' children tend to become bilinguals who overwhelmingly prefer English. As a result, the same immigrants' grandchildren likely speak English only.

9-10. Activity: Myth-busters. Participants work in groups at their table. Explain that they are the DLI Myth-busters. Their task is to come up with a response to this myth. Display and read (or have a participant read) the Hearsayer statement. Tables have two minutes (or less if you see they are ready) to discuss and decide upon an appropriate response. Ask for one or two responses, then click on the slide to see the correct response. (More myths after other challenges.)

#### 11. Challenge #2. State-mandated Testing

Testing is used in schools to measure student achievement. The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) are the state tests that help districts measure student progress toward Minnesota's academic standards. Students take tests in reading and math, beginning in grade 3, and science, beginning in grade 5.

These tests are a challenge for DLI students who have received initial literacy instruction in Hmong during the primary grades. Because of the lag in their English reading skills, they may score poorly not only in English reading but in math and science as well. This affects both groups of students. English home language speakers will likely score lower than their third-grade peers, though they usually catch up within a year after formal instruction in English language arts begins. (You will have to explain – here and wherever we talk about English home-language speakers - that this research is based on majority culture, native English speakers. The lag may take longer for Hmong heritage speakers whose parents may be ELs

*themselves.)* Hmong speakers, however, take much longer to develop strong enough English literacy skills to do well on standardized tests.

Another consequence of statewide testing is that schools feel pressured to start English earlier than they need to in order to show high test scores on the MCA.

12. *Scenario #3: Answer: - b and c.*

*Explain a: Some* children – especially those who have had a literacy-rich home environment- may do well on the tests, but this is not the expectation.

13. *Scenario #4: Answer: b*

14-15. *Myth-busters*

16-22. *Activity: Needs to be prepared ahead of time.*

*Missing words! Depending on the size of your group, the physical space, and how much time you have, **choose one of the following options:***

1. *Match-up activity (participants move around and speak with people other than those at their table): One half of the participants (sheet A) have the main sentences and the other half (sheet B) have the missing words. Parents can work in pairs (if necessary) so that both languages are represented. Parents find a twosome of the opposite letter and match one sentence with its missing part. They record their answer by writing either the number or the letter in the correct box and one of the two should write his or her initials as well. Then they find another twosome and do the same. By the end they should have spoken with at least three different pairs of parents. When everyone has finished, correct the answers with slides 17 – 22.*
2. *Table activity: Print out and distribute 2-page activity sheet (sentences and missing words) to each group. Participants complete the sentences by writing in the letter of the missing words. When everyone has finished, correct the answers with slides 17 – 22.*

23. *Break*

24. **Challenge #3: Learning Difficulties and Learning Disabilities**

When students struggle, parents often jump to the conclusion that it is because their child cannot cope with learning two languages at the same time. It is true that for some children, the DLI setting can be more challenging than for others. But you have learned that it takes time to develop language and literacy and that a lag in these skills in the early years of elementary is to be expected. If you or your child's teacher suspects it is more than that, it is important to

discuss your concerns. Other learning specialists at the school may also be part of the discussion.

25. *Research findings*

26. *Scenario #5: Answer: a & c*

27. *Scenario #6: Answer: a, b, c*

28-30. *Myth-busters*

31. Challenge #4: Bilingual kids - Monolingual parents

Parents often worry that they will not be able to help their child if they are not bilingual or biliterate themselves. But there are many ways that you can support your child, even if you do not speak both languages of the DLI program.

32. *Scenario #7 - Answer: a, b, c*

33. *Scenario #8 - Answer: a*

*Explain:*

b. When you read aloud you are modeling fluency, expression and pronunciation, so you should read in the language you are most comfortable with.

c. The role of English at home will depend on the program model and will change as students move up in the grades. Your child's teacher will communicate with you about how to support your child's biliteracy development. (*Explain the expectations for your program model.*)

34-37. *Mythbusters*

38-42. *Activity: What's a parent to do? Depending on the size of your group, the physical space, and how much time you have, **choose one of the following options:***

a. *Card-exchange activity (participants move around and speak with people other than those at their table): Distribute index cards (or construction paper squares) of two different colors, half of the parents receiving one color and the other half the other. Parents find a partner with the opposite color.*

*Display the first question. Color A parent reads the problem and Color B parent offers advice, based on what they've learned about the challenges this evening as well as thinking back to sessions 1 and 2. After one minute, parents exchange cards (and roles) and find a*

*new partner. Go on to the second problem. (Just as with the Missing Words activity, parents may choose to team up with someone of the other language group and work as a twosome.)*

*b. Table activity. Parents stay seated at their tables. Print off the activity sheet and distribute one to each group. Participants take turns asking a question and the others all offer advice. If you have time, you may want to share out the answers.*

#### 43. Survey