



Research Institute for the Study of Language in an Urban Society (RISLUS)  
The Graduate Center, The City University of New York  
365 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10016-4309  
Main Number: (212) 817-8511

### **Brief Description of Long-Term English Language Learner Study**

Dr. Kate Menken, a Research Fellow at the Research Institute for the Study of Language in an Urban Society (RISLUS) of the CUNY Graduate Center and Assistant Professor of Linguistics at Queens College, has received a grant for \$45,494 from the Office of English Language Learners of the New York City Department of Education to conduct a study entitled “Meeting the Needs of Long-Term English Language Learners in High School.” The purpose of this research project is to explore the characteristics and educational needs of Long-Term English Language Learners (LTELLs), students who remain engaged in the process of learning English after six years or more in the United States.

While there are significant numbers of LTELLs in the New York City public schools, comprising approximately one-third of all high school English Language Learners (ELLs), very little research has been conducted about these students. Though often orally proficient in English, Long-Term ELLs are characterized by low levels of academic literacy in both English and their home language, and typically score below grade level on assessments. Traditional English as a second language and bilingual education programs at the secondary level were designed to meet the needs of newly arrived ELLs who are literate in their home language, but such programs often fail to meet the needs of Long-Term ELLs. To gain a clearer understanding of this population and learn how high schools can best meet the needs of these students, a descriptive qualitative study will be conducted in three New York City high schools serving LTELLs. The initial phase of this study will be completed in September, 2007.