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Teacher Education for Effective Literacy Instruction for English/Emerging Bilingual Learners



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Introduction



Teachers are at the heart and core of early literacy instruction. They inspire, engage, plan, and deliver lessons for young learners as they embark on their journey in becoming a fully literate and participatory citizen of our nation. Part of this awesome responsibility is to guide not only the literacy growth of many of our early learners but also their language development in one or more languages.

The focus of this Teacher Education Digest centers on preparing teachers to teach English Learners/Emergent Bilinguals (EL/EBs) in order to build students' language and literacy development. We address key teacher preparation practices gleaned from the research literature and to identify the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes required of beginning teachers of EL/EB and corresponding practices in their early development as educators.

Education for the profession of teaching is both academically-based and grounded in clinical practice.¹ Building from this premise, we can affirm that professional preparation begins in preservice education and continues to be refined throughout teachers' careers. As with other professions, preservice teachers'² preparation experiences are vital to their entry to and retention into the profession.³

Because learning to read and write is a fundamental skill that all students must master, teachers of EL/EB students must be prepared to provide effective literacy instruction based on research with and for bilingual learners. A recent [white paper from the National Committee for Effective Literacy](#)⁴ cautions that, unless policy and literacy practices reflect the understanding that effective literacy instruction for ELs/EBs is both similar and different from learning to read and write as a monolingual learner, we risk failing another generation of ELs/EBs.

Teaching literacy as if a student is monolingual for a student who lives in and across multiple language worlds undermines the opportunity to draw upon linguistic resources across their languages.⁵

This statement represents an essential premise in the NCEL research synthesis and is foundational to teacher preparation. Ensuring that preservice teachers have the requisite attitudinal competencies in their preparation programs is another significant aspect in learning to teach EL/EB students. As part of their initial preparation, all teachers need to learn about the important findings from neuroscience and advantages of the "brains of bilinguals", the instructional implications of the benefits of bilingualism and biliteracy for their EL/EB regardless of the type of instructional program.

It is with these foundational premises that we identify how initial teacher preparation develops beginning teachers' capabilities to enter into a profession that, by 2025, will serve a highly diverse group of students, with almost 25 percent of our nation's student population who are EBs/ELs.⁶ First, we provide evidence-based teacher education practices that support learning-to-teach from an assets-based set of practices for building teacher candidates' knowledge and experience. We then present 6 scenarios from teacher candidates' clinical experiences as they apply that knowledge under the mentorship of experienced teachers and clinical supervisors.

1 Hollins, E. R., & Warner, C. K. (2021). *Rethinking teacher preparation program design*. Routledge.

2 We use the term "preservice teachers" and "teacher candidates" interchangeably to represent those who are not yet fully licensed to teach and are in the process of doing so.

3 Kennedy, M. M. (2016). *How does professional development improve teaching?* Review of educational research, 86(4), 945-980.

4 Escamilla, K., Olsen, L., Slavick, J. (2022). *Toward Comprehensive Effective Literacy Policy and Instruction for English Learner/ Emergent Bilingual Students [White Paper]*. National Committee for Effective Literacy for Emergent Bilingual Students.

5 Escamilla, K., & Hopewell, S. (2010). *Transitions to biliteracy: Creating positive academic trajectories for emerging bilinguals in the United States*. International perspectives on bilingual education: Policy, practice, and controversy, 69-93.

6 National Education Association (2020). *Toolkit: English Language Learners*. National Educational Association.

Preparing Effective Teachers for Literacy Instruction for EL/EBs

To implement effective literacy practices for ELs/EBs, teachers must be well-prepared, and their expertise must continue to be developed beyond initial preparation.^{7/8} We frame teacher education as a profession that includes both initial preparation and ongoing professional development across their careers.

Due to space limitations, we focus on initial professional preparation of teachers in their work with ELs/EBs. However, both EL/EB initial teachers' preparation and professional development over their careers must, at minimum, address three core understandings and competencies:

1. learn and practice evidence-based bilingual and second language and literacy pedagogies;
2. strategically use bilingual and second language and literacy instructional materials, authentic informational texts and children's literature; and
3. participate in guided critical reflection and support to build their expertise on the impact of their instruction on their bi/multilingual students' learning.

We consider the professional preparation and expertise of teachers of EL/EBs through the following question:

What does the research say about effective teacher preparation practices for learning to support EL/EB students' language and literacy development in mainstream (English-medium) and bilingual/dual language education settings?

We address this question with the understanding that initial teacher preparation introduces candidates to enduring practices which are honed and refined throughout teachers' careers.⁹ Ultimately, teacher candidates (i.e., those in teacher preparation programs) must have opportunities and receive support to build an initial set of pedagogic

7 Kibler, A. K., Walqui, A., & Bunch, G. C. (2015). *Transformational opportunities: Language and literacy instruction for English Language Learners in the common core era in the United States*. TESOL Journal, 6(1), 9–35.

8 Walqui, A. (2010). *e Growth of Teacher Expertise for Teaching English Language Learners: A Socio-Culturally Based Professional Development Model*. Teacher preparation for linguistically diverse classrooms (pp. 180–197). Routledge.

9 Hollins, E. R. (2011). *Teacher preparation for quality teaching*. Journal of Teacher education, 62(4), 395–407.

resources during their programs,¹⁰ participate in guided critical reflection on the impact of their instruction on their students' learning, and continue to refine and build their expertise throughout their careers.¹¹

Promising Practices in Teacher Preparation: Developing Knowledge, Skills and Abilities about and for EL/EB Students

In the context of initial teacher preparation programs for teachers in mainstream classroom settings or in dual language/bilingual classrooms, the following activities have been found to support teacher candidates' knowledge, skills, and dispositions/beliefs and attitudes related to ELs/MLs.¹² We highlight the ways in which effective EL/EB (mainstream) teacher education programs can address three core practices that support teacher candidates in building the core understandings and competencies for working with ELs/EBs^{13|14|15}:

1. building teachers' knowledge about themselves and their students;
2. creating educational experiences/assignments that support foundational knowledge and skill building;
3. scaffolding toward praxis through robust field experiences.

Learning about Themselves and Their Students

Learning to teach EL/EB students is more than just learning technical skills in language and literacy development, competency-based standards, curriculum, and testing/assessment of candidates. As a profession, teacher preparation has evolved to expand from an over-simplistic, one-dimensional view of teaching to include a larger view of the profession as inclusive and knowledgeable about the historical, community, and sociopolitical facets related to who the students are and how to connect with children as whole beings to ensure that schooling engages with EL/EB students in meaningful ways during their language and literacy learning.¹⁶

- **Learning another language.** Using the concept of "language as resource" approach to helping monolingual preservice teachers' experiences in learning a second language, this experience is not for teacher candidates to become proficient in a second language, rather to study and reflect on their own language learning processes. Preservice teacher candidates learn to use their first language (English) to help them make sense of the second language and become more empathetic with their EL/EB students.¹⁷

10 Coady, M., Harper, C., & De Jong, E. (2011). *From preservice to practice: Mainstream elementary teacher beliefs of preparation and efficacy with English language learners in the state of Florida*. Bilingual research journal, 34(2), 223-239.

11 Lavadenz, M. & Armas, E. G. (2023). *The Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies: A Tool for Building Expertise for Teachers of English Learners*. Multilingual Matters.

12 de Jong, E.J., Harper, C.A., & Coady, M.R. (2013). *Enhanced Knowledge and Skills for Elementary Mainstream Teachers of English Language Learners*. Theory into practice, 52(2), 89-97.

13 Chang, W.-C., & Viesca, K. M. (2022). *Preparing Teachers for Culturally Responsive/Relevant Pedagogy (CRP): A Critical Review of Research*. Teachers College Record, 124(2), 197-224.

14 Solano-Campos, A.T.; Hopkins, M.; and Quaynor, L. (2020). *Linguistically Responsive Teaching in preservice teacher education: A review of the literature through the lens of cultural-historical activity theory*. Early Childhood and Elementary Education Faculty Publications.

15 Villegas, A.M., Saiz dela Mora, K., Martin, A.D., & Mills, T. (2018). *Preparing future mainstream teachers to teach English language learners: A review of the empirical literature*. The Educational Forum, 82, 138-155.

16 Darling-Hammond, L., Flook, L., Cook-Harvey, C., Barron, B., & Osher, D. (2019). *Implications for educational practice of the science of learning and development*. Applied Developmental Science, 24(2), 97-140.

17 Catalano, T. & Edmund T. Hamann (2016). *Multilingual pedagogies and pre-service teachers: Implementing "language as a resource" orientations in teacher education programs*. Bilingual Research Journal, 39:3-4, 263-278.

- **Language portraits.** The process of creating visual representations of their language and cultural identities supports preservice teachers' self-understanding and appreciation of diversity.¹⁸ It is also an activity they can subsequently use with their own students.
- **Critical linguistic autobiographies.** Studies have found that by preservice teacher competencies with linguistically and culturally diverse student were improved by examining their own social class stigmas and stereotypes in their region with linguistically and culturally diverse students.^{19|20} Engaging preservice teachers in writing individual and family language and cultural autobiographies scaffolded by reading texts from diverse authors, deepens their own awareness of their own cultural and linguistic diversity, including dialectical differences.²¹
- **Case studies and interviews.** In addition to reflective experiences on candidates' own learning and identities, conducting interviews and examining classroom artifacts/documents of/with families, students and other educators has been found to support preservice teachers' "interpretations" of these experiences into practice.^{22|23}

This set of examples are demonstrative of initial teacher preparation coursework and experiences that build their knowledge of students and communities as they enter the profession. They could serve as co-requisites to key pedagogic/content knowledge in teacher preparation.

Learning to Teach: Assets-Based Language and Literacy Practices for Preservice Teachers

Grounded in both legal and research principles, we define assets-based teaching as building on the language and literacy strengths that EL/ML students bring to classrooms and schools. Assets-based practices are "a direct response to deficit-based models to education of the past." (California Department of Education).^{24|25} Learning to teach by using EL/EBs' languages and cultures as part of their early language and literacy development will mitigate the repetition of historical deficit-orientations leading to poor outcomes when accomplished in schools and communities that are well supported.²⁶

To illustrate how teacher educators can support assets-based disposition and pedagogies, we present a series of scenarios as examples of activities that take place in university courses as well as in field experiences. We frame these scenarios as "Putting into Practice" conceptual, empirical and practical knowledge in the teaching profession in learning to teach towards comprehensive literacy for EL/EB students.²⁷

18 Chu Lau, Sunny Man (2016), *Language, Identity, and Emotionality: Exploring the Potential of Language Portraits in Preparing Teachers for Diverse Learners*. The New Educator, 12:2, 147-170.

19 Brisk, M. E. (1998). *The Transforming Power of Critical Autobiographies*.

20 Brisk, M. E., & Kaveh, Y. M. (2019). *Teacher education for bi/multilingual students*. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education.

21 Haddix, M. (2008) *Beyond Sociolinguistics: Towards a Critical Approach to Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Teacher Education*. Language and Education, 22:5, 254-270, DOI: 10.1080/09500780802152648

22 Heineke, A., & Davin, K. (2014). *Situating Practice in Schools and Communities: Case Studies of Teacher Candidates in Diverse Clinical Experiences with English Language Learners*. NABE Journal of Research and Practice, 5:1, 40-83.

23 Jimenez-Silva, M., & Olson, K. (2012). *A community of practice in teacher education: Insights and perceptions*. International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 24(3), 335-348.

24 MacSwan, J. (2020). *Academic English as standard language ideology: A renewed research agenda for asset-based language education*. Language Teaching Research 24, no. 1: 28-36

25 Smolic, E., & Martin, D. (2019). *Cultural/linguistic immersion in teacher preparation for emergent bilingual learners: Defining a new space for asset-based pedagogies*. Redefining Teaching Competence through Immersive Programs (pp. 1-36). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

26 Kiramba, L. K., Deng, Q., & Viesca, K. (2022). *Novice general education teachers' perceptions of preparedness in US public schools: The impact of learning about and working with multilingual students*. Teaching and Teacher Education, 116, 103757.

27 Olsen, L. (2022). *Comprehensive Literacy Instruction for English Language Learners?* National Committee on Effective Literacy.

These activities can occur in teacher preparation programs in a variety of sequences based on the teacher preparation program design and/or in other models of teacher preparation (for example, alternative pathways such as internships). Though not exhaustive, we provide a sampling of six scenarios from actual teacher preparation programs from different geographic regions across the United States.²⁸

All of the scenarios are in the early grades; three scenarios take place in university classroom settings that include types of observation connected to “learning about teaching” EL/EB students in English-instructed classrooms/ settings (Scenarios 1-3). Scenarios 4 and 5 excerpts from candidates’ more increased time and responsibility in their fieldwork/clinical experiences in language and literacy instruction. The final Scenario takes place in a dual language/bilingual setting.

Scenario 1: Assets-Based Inquiry (Applying Funds of Knowledge Research and Practices)

This inquiry assignment, used in a large northwestern elementary teacher preparation program, is intended to provide candidates with a non-deficit perspective about EL/EB students. Along with other readings used in the course, this activity begins with a discussion based on the short documentary *Immersion*²⁹, a story of Moises, a young newcomer student who arrives in school just at the time of math standardized testing is taking place.

In this two-part activity teacher candidates (TCs) inquire as to the oracy and literacy practices of their EL/EBs outside of school, where they observe and document their students’ language use in either their home language or in English. The first part asks that candidates use the Funds of Knowledge Resource Matrix (Appendix A) to observe students’ language use. The second part, described in Scenario 2, illustrates how teacher candidates learn to observe, document and analyze EL/EB students’ language usage in order to build a student language and literacy profile to prepare design lessons for their students.

Candidates learn to design lessons that incorporate bilingual teaching strategies for ELs regardless of whether they speak the language(s) of their students. Thus, monolingual teachers can take a “multilingual stance” through a variety of strategies, including, but not limited to:

1. making the languages of their students visible in classrooms through classroom materials;
2. encouraging EL/EB participation by using their first language(s) “out loud” with the whole class and with their peers in small groups/partners;
3. writing language learning objectives as well as content objectives;
4. developing vocabulary in English by using cognates;
5. highlighting similarities and differences in phonology/morphology;
6. incorporating approaches to listening, responding and writing that signal similarities and differences in discourse and grammar.

²⁸ These scenarios are based on actual classroom observations and have been modified for inclusion in this digest.

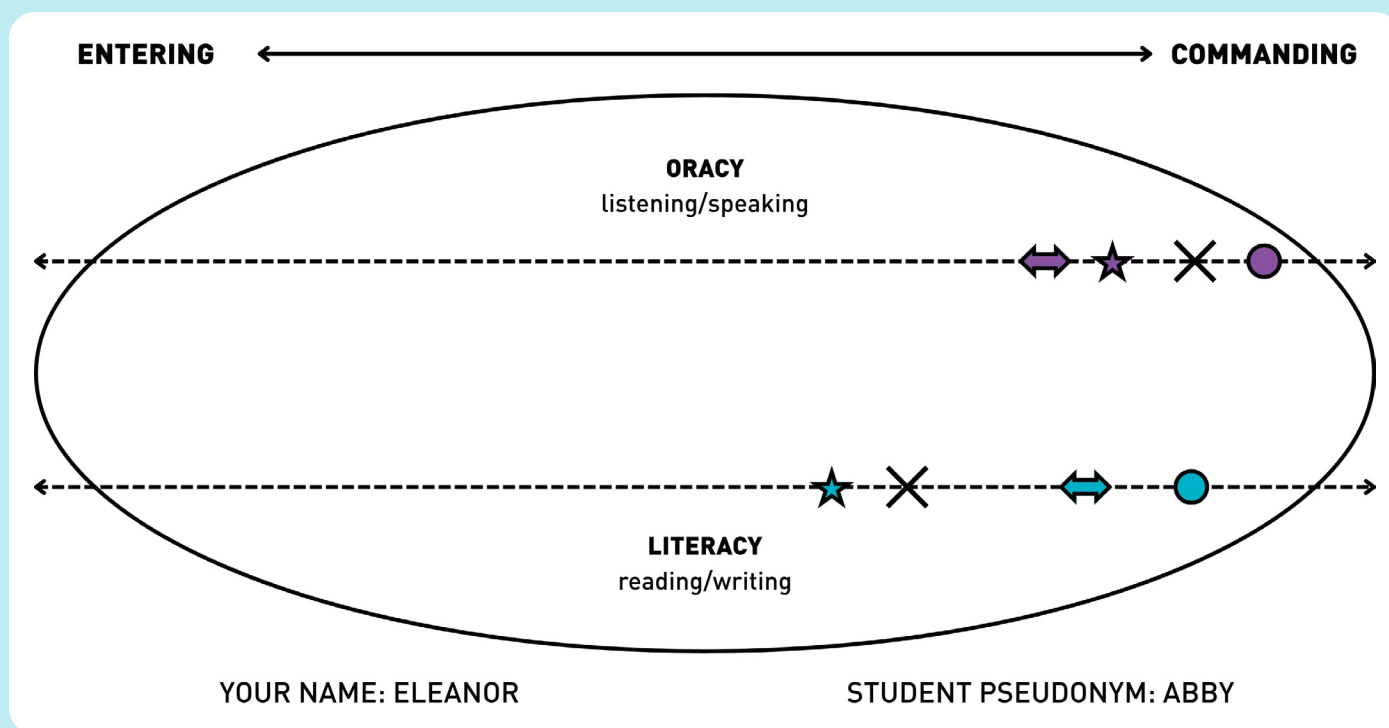
²⁹ Levien, R. B. (2009). *Immersion*. Short Film. Collective Eye Films.

Scenario 2: Using the Dynamic Bilingualism Template to Build a Bilingual Profile

As a follow up to the *Funds of Knowledge Matrix* activity in scenario one, the second part requires that teacher candidates (TCs) conduct an inquiry about the oracy and literacy practices of their EL/EB students outside of school in order to better understand and describe their ELs/EBs linguistic repertoires holistically. Using the Bilingual Profile Template (see Appendix B), teacher candidates place a star within the continuum of learning as they observe and gather information about the student literacy (Reading/ Writing) practices and a circle for oracy (Listening/Speaking) practices as they observe a student's language use at home.

Once the Funds of Knowledge Matrix and the Dynamic Bilingualism Template are completed and reviewed, candidates complete an EL/EB student profile will serve as a resource for candidates to use to support students' language and literacy learning as they plan lessons throughout their preservice experience and beyond.

Figure 1 illustrates the completed Dynamic Bilingual Template created by Eleanor, a student teacher in a 3rd grade English-medium classroom. She reflected what she learned about her student Abby:



Eleanor's Reflections about observing 3rd grade Abby's language and literacy practices at home:

"I wanted to highlight my first student. Student Abby is quite proficient in both English and Spanish in reading and writing as well. And she's the only one of the three that does some writing in Spanish and reading in Spanish at home. And I actually met her mom for the first time today because she came to the book fair with her mom, and she was buying some books in Spanish today. And her mom told me that she writes stories in Spanish. So one thing I would do is I would encourage her to bring the stories that she's writing to school and maybe share them, because maybe that will encourage some of our other students who are hesitant to write in Spanish or read in Spanish to do so. And I feel like I feel like there's some shame still and that's something we have to battle."

With this information Eleanor will try to intentionally include the assets and plan to use these practices discovered about Abby as scaffolds for learning and literacy development in English.

Scenario 3: Lesson Planning- Learning to Write Content and Language Objectives for English/Multilingual Learners

As a central component of learning to teach, lesson planning/design is a “signature pedagogy” in the teaching profession.³⁰ Lesson planning sets the stage for candidates’ “habits of mind and practice” by building their knowledge, skill and experiences through structures such as a lesson plan template (Appendix C) across a set of courses in a program. In the previous activities (Scenarios 1 and 2) candidates were provided an opportunity to learn about students’ languages and cultures. In this activity, candidates learn to analyze core English Language Arts standards for the grade level in the text (or other content area texts), identify the language demands required for English Learners in the text across a variety of language proficiency levels and the appropriate English language proficiency standards (in the case, we use the California Common Core Standards (2010) and the California English Language Development Standards (2012) and prepare lessons that identify both content and language objectives.

Activity Guidelines

In this teacher education course scenario, the professor in a southwestern university has assigned candidates to use the local school district’s adopted 2nd grade English Language Arts textbook to select a story to plan a lesson for beginning/emergent and intermediate/bridging-level English learners. In addition to the text selection, the assignment requires that the candidates:

- Analyze a portion of a story that requires teachers to provide an additional support/scaffold for EL/EMs
- Apply the information provided in previous course readings on differentiating instruction for EL/EM students. This includes building background knowledge, providing scaffolding techniques such as graphic organizers, visuals and vocabulary, providing opportunities for students to practice oral language development as part of the lesson plan design.
- Identify cross-linguistic connections and supports that are needed.
- Write a content objective and a language objective as the first part of modifying a lesson plan.

As part of preparation for this assignment, the professor has developed a complementary PowerPoint presentation that highlights the process for writing content and language development objectives; Figure 2 is one example from the presentation:

30 Shulman, L. S. (2005). *Signature pedagogies in the professions*. *Daedalus*, 134(3), 52-59.

MAKING CONNECTIONS: CONTENT OBJECTIVE	MAKING CONNECTIONS: LANGUAGE OBJECTIVE
ELA (Gr. 3–5): Students will ask questions to gather information when interviewing a speaker. CCSS, ELA SL1, SL6.	ELD (Expanding Proficiency Level): Students will use formal register and interrogative language forms to conduct interviews. Standards I.A.1, I.A.4.
CONTENT STANDARD—ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS	ELD STANDARD BY PROFICIENCY LEVEL STANDARDS
SL1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. SL6. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g. presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g. small-group discussion): use formal English when appropriate to task and situation.	I.A.1. Exchanging information/ideas. Contribute to class, group, and partner discussions, including sustained dialogue, by following turn-taking rules, asking relevant questions, affirming others, and adding relevant information. I.A.4. Adapting language choices. Adjust language choices according to purpose (e.g. persuading, entertaining), task (e.g. telling a story versus explaining a science experiment), and audience with moderate support.
FOR YOUR LESSON PLAN MODIFICATION, BE SURE TO IDENTIFY BOTH CONTENT AND LANGUAGE STANDARD(S) AND CONTENT AND LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES.	

Figure 2: Side by side example for writing content and language development objectives. This example uses California English Language Arts³¹ and California English Language Development Standards.³²

Scenario 4a: Microteaching in the pre-service university classroom

Micro-teaching provides an opportunity for teacher candidates to teach a lesson or an activity and receive feedback from peers and the instructor. Sometimes this is a rehearsal for a lesson they will be teaching in their field placement/internship. In other cases, microteaching allows for an opportunity to practice something they may not be able to try in their classroom placement. In the case below, teacher candidates attended a university located in an area where there were not many EL-designated students in the classroom. The faculty member in this southeastern university selected microteaching to help teacher candidates plan specifically for EL/MBs.

Activity Guidelines

The teacher candidates were provided with the profiles of three EL/MLs at different English proficiency levels and with different home language backgrounds. The profiles included information about the students' home language and literacy, educational experiences, and English language proficiency data. Teacher candidates were specifically asked to identify students' home languages. Examples were provided including the use of bilingual texts, using cognates and/or making other cross-linguistic comparisons. They were also asked to explicitly consider appropriate scaffolding for their EL given their level of English language development, home language and literacy profile,

³¹ California State Board of Education. (2010). *California Common Core State Standards (English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects)*.

³² California State Board of Education. (2012). *California English Language Development Standards (Kindergarten Through Grade 12)*.

cultural experiences, prior learning, and background knowledge. Candidates were then to develop a lesson plan for small group instruction based on the information provided in the student profiles.

Micro-Teaching Experience

For the microteaching activity, teacher candidates teach the activity to a small group of 4–6 of their peers. The other teacher candidates in the class sit around the small group and become observers. Together with the instructor, they provide oral and written feedback using a rubric. As an extension and deepening activity, the micro-teaching activity can be video recorded. The recording can be reviewed by the teacher candidate and with the instructor (using a coaching model) engage in reflection and more detailed feedback (see Appendix D for the criteria used for providing feedback).

Impact

Research on micro-teaching has shown a positive impact on teacher candidates' sense of efficacy and increases the likelihood of them using approaches. Similar results have been shown for EL teacher preparation.³³

Knowledge into Practice: The Importance of Field/Clinical Experiences in Developing ELs/EBs' Language and Reading Abilities

A significant body of research on teacher education concludes that teachers require similar progressively guided experiences in real classrooms to support their understanding and ability to gradually build more complex teaching practices through observation of exemplary teachers and their practices, and tutoring/small group and whole class instruction, especially in school and community contexts that are different from their own.^{34|35|36}

Therefore, as teachers' enter into the profession, teacher education faculties, in collaboration with their district partners, provide structured early literacy practical experiences that gradually increase in:

1. the amount of time spent with students in classrooms connected to their preparation programs coursework;
2. increase in the responsibilities a pre-service teacher has in both the number and diversity of students (individual, small group, whole class) as well as the requisite lesson preparation required to develop diverse EL/EBs' diverse language and literacy development. Scenarios 4 and 5 are excerpts from candidates' more increased time and responsibility in their fieldwork/clinical experiences.

33 Lee, Yong-Jik & Davis, Robert. (2019). *Pre-service Teachers' Self-efficacy through ESL Micro-teaching Experiences in a US Teacher Education Program*. 12. 153-173. 10.20487/kasee.12.1.201902.153.

34 Bunch, G. C. (2013). *Pedagogical language knowledge preparing mainstream teachers for English Learners in the new standards era*. *Review of Research in Education*, 37(1), 298–341.

35 Cochran-Smith, M., & Zeichner, K. M. (Eds.). (2009). *Studying teacher education: The report of the AERA panel on research and teacher education*. Routledge

36 Heineke, A., & Davin, K. (2014) *Situating Practice in Schools and Communities: Case Studies of Teacher Candidates in Diverse Clinical Experiences with English Language Learners*. *NABE Journal of Research and Practice*, 5:1, 40–83.

Putting it Into Practice—Scenario 4b: Contextualizing Phonemic Awareness for EL/EB Kindergarten Students in Small Group Instruction

Samuel is completing part of the teacher education program's clinical experience in literacy/reading methods requirements in Ms. Jones kindergarten grade classroom. Prior to his kindergarten clinical experience, Samuel had reviewed the scope and sequence of kindergarten reading instruction. The classroom environment includes student self-portraits, family pictures with student-written sentences describing who they are, word walls, a classroom library with bilingual books. This English-medium classroom consists of 25 students, 12 of whom are designated as English Learners, 4 of whom are at the beginning and 8 of whom are at the intermediate levels of English proficiency. Samuel has been observing in this class for about 2 days as part of his clinical hours, has gotten to know most of the children's names and has been writing observational notes of students' linguistic practices for his English Language Arts/Reading Methods course, including observing and taking notes on a focal English Learner student.

He meets every day with his teacher to review her lesson plans and has "shadowed" 6 of the 12 English Learners (including his focal student) during their whole and small group instructional time. He notes in his observation journal how Ms. Jones provides whole class instruction to set the stage for the story students will be reading in their kindergarten informational texts about eating healthily and reminds students about how they had practiced long, and short vowel sounds in the prior weeks. Because read alouds, games, exploration and songs are essential components in language and literacy development in early childhood education; Ms. Jones has charted and illustrated the words to the song "I like to eat apples and bananas" for which individual students take turns leading and pointing to the words as they sing along.

There are 5 centers in the classroom where small groups of 5 rotate:

1. consists of multiple small plastic fruits for sorting and include a math addition work sheet to color as well,
2. listening center,
3. a group that is writing in their journals about their favorite fruits using sentence frames;
4. a group in which partners take turns with a flip chart to further practice vowel substitution for initial and final phonemes for "apples" and "bananas"; and
5. a reading center with English and Spanish books.

On the 3rd day of observation, Ms. Jones has reviewed a vowel/phoneme game, where the words of the song are displayed on sentence strips, and the vowels are substituted one by one for Center 4, where she assigns Samuel to work with the 4 beginning-level English Learners to work with them in the vowel/phonemic substitution activity for 15 minutes. She encourages Samuel, who is bilingual in Spanish, to first preview the activity with his students in Spanish, and to use the visuals for "apples" and "bananas", to review the substitution vowels "a", "o", "e", "i", "u" in the sequence of the song so that they can practice aural and auditory skills. As students sign, Samuel asks "where do you hear the "a"? do you hear the "a" at the beginning or middle of the word?, etc. As part of his university course, Samuel has obtained parental permission and video records his lesson to reflect on his instruction with his professor. He lets students know what a good job they did, then dismissed them to return to their desks for whole group instruction.

After the lesson, he writes reflective notes in his observation journal which he uses to debrief his lesson with his teacher and his university professor.

Scenario 5: Aligning English Language Arts with English Language Development in a 2nd Grade Classroom

Jackie, the candidate in a second-grade classroom, selects one of the stories in the textbook for which she has consulted with her mentor teacher for her fieldwork experience for this course. The lesson is one which the mentor teacher states her ELs have a particular challenge-- idioms. The first step in differentiating is to identify the idioms in the text. They are: "*let the cat out of the bag*," "*the end of my rope*," and "*crossing the line*." Jackie has created a chart with a set of common idioms and their definitions, has included the idioms from the text, and placed the chart in the classroom.

Learning to teach for cross-linguistic connections through observation and lesson planning. Appendix C provides an example of how a completed lesson plan is developed to address both content and language objectives to support EL/ML students. In this scenario, the teacher candidate had opportunities to first observe the mentor teacher, and then co-create a lesson plan that identified cross-linguistic strengths and needs for the second graders in this English-medium classroom. Note that in addition to the focus on identified content and language objectives, idiomatic expressions that were present in the core English Language Arts text were defined and used in a complementary Designated ELD lesson session. The mentor teacher had created a chart with idiomatic expressions, to which students added as they encountered them in texts. As an accompaniment to the core text, the book, *More Parts* was read aloud over a series of min-lessons to highlight several English idiomatic expressions. The mentor teacher demonstrated how to select the English-specific idiomatic expressions, leading to a whole class conversation where students contrasted by idiomatic expressions in Spanish (student's first language). Students shared first as whole group, then in partners and compared the similarities and differences of idiomatic expressions such as "my heart is broken" and "let the cat out of the bag."

Together with her mentor teacher, she creates a lesson plan (Appendix C) that, in addition to the core English Language Arts textbook, includes a children's literature book *More Parts*.³⁷ The mentor teacher has asked for her to use the book with small groups as she builds on her clinical experiences, and begins with a group of students who are at the low to intermediate level of English language proficiency. She begins by reminding students to recall all the idioms they studied or had heard of so far and calls on a few of them to share. She reads the first half of the book, pausing to ask students to define some of the idioms in the book, such as broken heart and raining cats and dogs. She calls in other small groups of students, adding idiomatic phrases to the classroom chart. She then asks students to return to their seats and begin a journal entry about a time when they heard their family use idioms in their home. Students work in pairs while she answers questions they have and circulates around the room with her mentor teacher. Jackie, her mentor teacher, and university professor review and discuss the reflections from the field experience later that same evening.

37 Arnold, T. (2001). *More Parts*. Puffin Books.

Learning to Teach in Bilingual/Dual Language Settings

Most, if not all, of the previous practices can support bilingual/dual language education teachers as well. Nonetheless, bilingual teachers need to be able to provide instruction for language development in and across English and the partner language.³⁸ Due to space limitations, we address only two of many bilingual teacher preparation practices that are specific to learning to teach in bilingual/dual language settings:

1. **Encouraging Emerging Bilingual students to make crosslinguistic connections; and**
2. **Building oral language development with reading and writing skills.³⁹**

Scenario 6: Student Teaching in a Kindergarten Bilingual/Dual Language Classroom- From Reading to Writing with Informational Texts

Ms. Gonzalez is a student teacher in a kindergarten classroom in the 5th of 8 weeks of student teaching. She has had opportunities to observe, conduct small group and one-on-one instruction, and now to plan to teach and deliver full-day instruction during her last weeks before successfully completing her Spanish bilingual elementary teaching credential.

Ms. Gonzalez follows the research-based Dialogic Reading Practices⁴⁰ that the school has adopted to develop students' oral language abilities to engage them in interacting with authentic texts and with each other as they read parts of the book out loud. In previous lessons, Ms. Gonzalez had read aloud additional informational, more extended stories. She and her mentor teacher created and posted charts around the room that reflect the vocabulary related to items in the garden (plantas/plants; stem/talla; raíz/root, etc.). These charts include visuals that label and define the areas and plants in the garden. These charts serve as resources for subsequent whole class and small group instruction.

Ms. Gonzalez uses the state-approved kindergarten-level Spanish informational textbook selection "Mi Jardín" (My Garden) as part of the school's dual language programmatic approach to comprehensive literacy instruction. Students each have decodable texts in Spanish.^{41|42|43}

In today's lesson and as part of the previously established routine for group work, students rotate to several centers to work independently and/or in small groups as Ms. Gonzalez teaches a lesson focused on foundational skills with a small group of EL/EB students. After reviewing her plan with her mentor teacher, Ms. Gonzalez asked the students to (re)read aloud with her on one of the pages of the story that reads "Me gustan las plantas en mi jardín." (I like the plants in my garden).

To remind them about sentence structure and punctuation, she asks "what is this letter at the beginning of this sentence called? (mayúsculas/capital letters). Why is there an accent in jardín? She asks them to look at the "Artículos en Español" Chart (Appendix E) and asks "Why is it 'las plantas' (the feminine article 'the') and not 'los (masculine article for 'the'))'? One student responds, "They all mean 'the', but in Spanish they are all different."

38 Palmer, D. K., Cervantes-Soon, C., Dorner, L., & Heiman, D. (2019). *Bilingualism, biliteracy, biculturalism, and critical consciousness for all: Proposing a fourth fundamental goal for two-way dual language education*. *Theory into Practice*, 58(2), 121-133.

39 Escamilla, K., & Hopewell, S. (2010). *Transitions to biliteracy: Creating positive academic trajectories for emerging bilinguals in the United States*. *International perspectives on bilingual education: Policy, practice, and controversy*, 69-93.

40 Kennedy, C., & McLoughlin, A. (2023). *Developing the emergent literacy skills of English language learners through dialogic reading: A systematic review*. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 51(2), 317-332.

41 Decodable texts in early Spanish literacy instruction use sound-symbol relationships that students have been taught. This example uses the syllabic approach.

42 Snow, C. E. (2017). *Early literacy development and instruction: An overview*. *The Routledge international handbook of early literacy education*, 5-13.

43 See also: del Castillo-Perez, R., & Cloat, J. S. (2022). *Teaching Reading in Spanish: A Linguistically Authentic Framework for Emerging Multilinguals*. Rowman & Littlefield.

The next part of the lesson focuses on syllabic segmentation, with consonant blends, with a (pla/ple/pli/plo/plu) using the key vocabulary words that are displayed on visualized word cards with plants from the garden with the corresponding consonant blends: (Plumeria, platano, plumbago).

She then instructs children to rotate to the writing center, located immediately to the right in the room. There they each have their individual small books, where they will complete a set of “cloze activity” practice pages to complete the sentence stems: “Me gustan los/las----- en mi jardín”. In the small group writing center, she reminds them to use the resource chart with article agreements in Spanish from the previous lesson (Appendix E). As students rotate to the writing center in their small groups, she encourages her Emerging Bilingual students to talk in pairs to describe the plants in their garden, and then to individually draw and write the names of the various plants in the garden using the text and/or charts in the room. Ms. Gonzalez also created a word bank from the book that includes student-generated comparative chart with target adjectives that describe in the book (Mi jardín es...[hermoso, pequeño, verde, etc.] /My garden is...[beautiful, small, green, etc.]). As students complete each of the pages in their books, they finalize and “publish” their books about their gardens to share at home with their families and siblings.

Conclusions



This Digest addresses initial teacher preparation research and practices that address beginning teachers' knowledge and capabilities to building language and literacy for EL/EB students. Teacher expertise continues to deepen throughout teachers' career with ongoing professional support and learning.

The teacher preparation activities and scenarios such as those included in this Digest serve to build those foundational competencies. Notwithstanding, while teachers comprise an essential part of the educational ecosystem, others in this ecosystem such as school/district administrators, professional developers, and coaches are important supporters for EL/EBs' success.⁴⁴ Significantly, it is important to note is how several of the scenarios include home/family/school connections, as partnerships between EL/EB families and schools are whole-school responsibilities and have been shown to have positive impacts on learning.⁴⁵

Implications for Teacher Education Policy

"I have a big voice for our kids, and especially with literacy and our English Learners and our special education students, I use my voice. I've been told 'no' before, and then I listen to the why 'No.' 'Okay, now let me show you this. Let me show you how far my kids are coming. And how much they're being enriched.' So, I use my voice, and the data that I have." — Escamilla & Strong⁴⁶

Teacher preparation for effective literacy Instruction for English/Emerging Bilingual Learners is not solely a matter of educator knowledge, practice, skill and attitude. As this quote reflects, teacher voice and advocacy for our students as represented by the voice of this teacher as well as many others, employing the research base requires that reading/literacy policies acknowledge and ensure that teacher expertise and professional wisdom guides and supports the retention of the new generations of the teachers that we need. Thus, effective literacy for ELs/EBs has key implications for clear policy mandates for teacher preparation and professional development⁴⁷:

1. Systematic, national and state-level efforts are needed to prepare teachers and other school personnel (principals, literacy coaches) for effective language and literacy instruction that is inclusive of EL/EBs in both English-medium and dual language education settings.
2. Teacher education licensure requirements for grade level and dual language settings must go beyond reading research on monolingual English children.⁴⁸
3. After initial preparation, professional development that builds teacher expertise addressed in needs to be prioritized or, at minimum, integrated with other literacy-related professional practices.
4. District and University partnerships to support research-based professional practices.^{49/50}

44 Baecher, L., Knoll, M. & Patti, J., (2013). *Addressing English Language Learners in the school leadership curriculum: Mapping the terrain*. Journal of Research on Leadership Education, 8(3), 280–303.

45 See: *Colorin Colorado's Engaging ELL Families*.

46 Page 32. Escamilla, K. & Strong, K. (2024). *Voices from the Field: Impact of the Implementation of the Science of Reading Instruction and Policy on Emergent Bilingual/English Learner Literacy Programs and Teachers*. Californians Together.

47 Téllez, K., & Waxman, H. C. (Eds.). (2006). *Preparing quality educators for English language learners: Research, policies, and practices*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

48 López, F., Scanlan, M., & Gundrum, B. (2013). *Preparing teachers of English Language Learners: Empirical evidence and policy implications*. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 21(20).

49 Gooden, A. C., & Chase, K. (2015). *Habits of mind: Forging university-school partnerships to bring a high quality enrichment curriculum to English Learners*. Voices in Urban Education, 41, 26–35.

50 Lavadenz, M., Armas, E., Ee J., & Do, H. (2024). *Critical multilingual policy ecology: University-District partnerships in dual language/bilingual teacher education*. Freire, J., Alfaro, C., & de Jong, E. (Editors). The Handbook of Dual Language Bilingual Education. Routledge: New York.

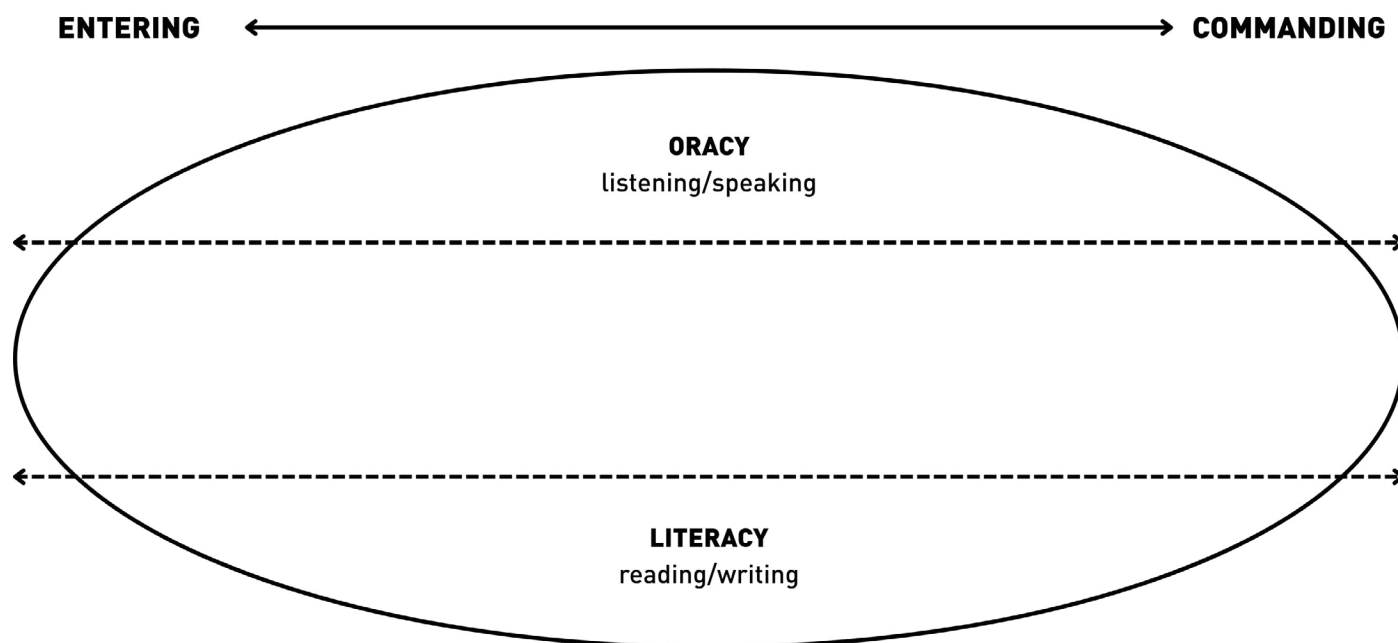
Appendices

Appendix A: Funds of Knowledge Inventory Matrix⁵¹

Funds of knowledge	Home/community practices	Classroom application
Economics	When Ruby’s parents lived In El Salvador the currency was different. They had saved their old money In a small box.	We could use this in math, money in math is very common but using different currencies would bring In their funds of knowledge, especially if we have other cultures in our classroom that we may not know about.
Geography	There were a lot of maps around their home. I saw a large world map of South and North America. I also saw small maps on key chains of El Salvador. Ruby’s mother also brought out a towel that resembled the Salvadorian flag.	This could be used in social studies. We could look at cities in Washington and take it a step farther and move from each continent and have table groups look closer at cities in specific continents or regions.
Politics	Ruby’s family has Direct TV so they got to watch news that came right out of El Salvador. Her mother and father even recorded the news so they would not miss it when it came on.	We could use this in social studies, young students most likely will not be very interested in the news but they could have an assignment that has them work with their parents to choose a topic or find a story in the news together that is relent to today’s dates.
Agriculture	In the back yard Ruby shows me where her father would be planting tomatoes this summer.	We could use this idea to create a classroom garden or talk about plant growth in science.

51 Johnson, E.J. (2016). *Funds of Knowledge Toolkit*. Website resource published by the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

Appendix B: The Dynamic Bilingualism Template⁵²



Appendix C: Lesson Plan—Learning the Meanings of Idiomatic Expressions in Core English Language Arts Textbooks⁵³

Part I: Introduction

Grade Level	2nd grade	
Target Proficiency Level	Advanced Low to Low Intermediate	
Unit Goal	Literal versus Figurative Expressions	
Lesson Topic	Idioms	
Lesson Objectives	Identify English idiomatic expressions in ELA texts/stories.	
Key Vocabulary/Structure(s)	idioms, idiomatic expressions connected to idioms used (see below)	
Language Objective	identify multiple meanings in English idiomatic expressions: broken heart, raining cats and dogs, let the cat out of the bag, the end of my rope, and crossing the line.	
Learning Outcomes	California Common Core State Standards – Grade 2	Reading Standards for Literature: RL2.7
		Speaking and Listening: SL2.1. a.
		Language Standards: Anchor Standard 5
	California English Language Development Standards – Grade 2	Part I: Interacting in Meaningful Ways: 2.I.A.1, 2.I.A.4, 2.I.B.5, 2.I.B.6 2. I.C.9, 2.I.C.11, 2.I.C.12
		Part II: Learning About How English Works: 2. II.B.3.
Designed by: Ms. Jackie M.		

⁵³ Lavadenz, M. & Armas, E. G. (2023). *The Observation Protocol for Academic Literacies: A Tool for Building Expertise for Teachers of English Learners*. Multilingual Matters, pg. 34-36.

Part II: Procedures

Purpose/Time	Procedure with detailed description and examples / questions	Props/Notes/Reflections
Setting the stage/review (5 minutes)	Jackie begins her lesson by reviewing what they have been learning on idiomatic expressions and shares with the students that they will read a book with examples of idiomatic expressions. The teacher asks the students, "What do we know about idiomatic expressions?" One student share, "When I was watching T.V., I saw a show and it had the idiomatic expression, "Cut to the chase." Ms. M extends on the student's response by asking the rest of the students to explain what "Cut to the chase" means. Several of the students respond orally in unison to her prompt using Choral Response, "To get to the point."	
Comprehensive input (10 minutes)	She begins the story with the class on the classroom carpet and by reminding students to recall all the idioms they studied or had heard of so far and calls on a few of them to share. She reads the first half of the book <i>More Parts</i> by T. Arnold (2001), pausing to ask students to define some of the idioms in the book, such as broken heart and raining cats and dogs. Jackie reminds the students that every time they find, share, remember, and use idiomatic expressions in their writings, they will receive credit in the Academic Language Proficiency Chart: L1 and L2. She writes down the names of the students who shared examples of idiomatic expressions during whole group instruction. She reminds students that in yesterday's lesson with the Mentor Teacher, one student shared an idiomatic expression in Spanish. Jackie asks the student to share the idiomatic expression in Spanish. Té student shares, "Deja el gato ir de la bolsa" (<i>Let the cat out of the bag</i>). Jackie expands on this example and asks the students, "What does this mean? Does it mean you are really getting a cat and pulling it out of the bag?" The students share out loud, "No, let a secret out." As she continues to read, she pauses occasionally to ask students to listen for and share with their partner when they think they hear an idiomatic phrase and what their actual meanings are. She writes the phrases and meanings on their classroom chart of idiomatic expressions.	
Guided and Independent practice (15 minutes)	After reading about ½ of the book, students return to their seats and Jackie continues with the whole class lesson and the core English Language Arts textbook story. She has selected a paragraph to project on the screen, has underlined a "mentor sentence" in the paragraph and asks the students to read aloud together. She asks students to identify idiom in the mentor sentence "draw the line"), it's meaning, and directs students to complete a quick write about a time when they "drew the line", then share the quick write with a partner to peer-edit for spelling, punctuation and grammar.	
Assessment and wrap-up (5 minutes)	Jackie and her mentor teacher walk from partner tables to review students' quick writes, peer-editing process and to answer questions about their experiences. They collect student journals for further analysis.	
Homework/preview (2 minutes)	Students are asked to interview their family members about idiomatic expressions in their home languages.	

Appendix D: MLL Micro Teaching Peer Feedback

MLL Micro Teaching Peer Feedback

Presenter: _____

EL Profile: _____

1. Comprehensible input. How does the lesson increase comprehensibility for EBs?	Evidence:
	Comments:
2. Peer interaction. How the lesson increase interaction among students, including EBs?	Evidence:
	Comments:
3. Higher-order thinking skills – HOTs. How does the lesson increase EBs' critical thinking skills?	Evidence:
	Comments:
4. Academic language support – AL. How does the lesson explicitly develop academic language for EBs?	Evidence:
	Comments:
5. EBs' funds of knowledge. How does the lesson make connections to EBs and utilize their funds of knowledge?	Evidence:
	Comments:
6. Strategies for Individual EB (e.g., Use of L1). Specific strategies to meet individual EB's linguistic and cultural needs.	Evidence:
	Comments:

Appendix E: Articles in Spanish Chart

LOS ARTÍCULOS

Palabras que acompañan al sustantivo.

GÉNERO	NÚMERO	ARTÍCULO	
Masculino	Singular	<u>el</u> niño	<u>un</u> libro
Femenino	Singular	<u>la</u> mochila	<u>una</u> niña
Masculino	Plural	<u>los</u> niños	<u>unos</u> libros
Femenino	Plural	<u>las</u> mochilas	<u>unas</u> niñas

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Patricia Venegas-Weber Dr. Patricia E. Venegas-Weber is Dual Language Program Supervisor for the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Her work focuses on preparing and supporting Dual Language teachers to advance equitable, asset-based instruction for multilingual learners in K–12 classrooms. A former literacy and dual language educator, Dr. Venegas-Weber's research and work examine how teachers' beliefs, language experiences, and instructional practices intersect to promote meaningful language and content learning in both English and Spanish. She has contributed to statewide professional learning and research initiatives that integrate language development with mathematics and science instruction for emergent bilingual students. Her work bridges research and practice, centering culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy as essential to educational equity. Dr. Venegas-Weber earned her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction specializing in the bilingual development of Dual Language teachers from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.



National Committee for Effective Literacy

The National Committee for Effective Literacy (NCEL) uplifts research, policies and practices to ensure that English learner/emergent bilingual students leave school as proficient readers and writers in English and preferably more languages and who thrive and succeed in school and their communities. We are researchers, teacher educators, teachers, administrators, school board members and advocates from across the nation with deep expertise in literacy and the education of English learners/emergent bilingual students.

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