

CABTE

California Association for Bilingual Teacher Education

CalTPA Cycles 1 and 2:

Issues related to current Bilingual Teacher Education Placements and Practices

[Disclaimer: The following is a public-facing working document developed for the purpose of defining particular current issues having a negative impact on bilingual pre-service teachers and teacher preparation programs as they participate in the CalTPA. It has been vetted by CABTE Board members and CTC CalTPA staff members. It is not intended to be a formal policy statement, but an exploration of the issues and possible and preferable approaches to resolving them.]

Overview of the Issues

The issues we must address are most relevant to pre-service teachers (both traditional student teachers and independent teachers) placed in primary classrooms (TK-2) in 90/10 dual language programs with strict language separation model in which students switch teachers for ELD/ELA work. **Such programs are fairly common throughout the State.**

While districts and sites continue to grapple with the question of strict language separation and translanguaging practices, and this problem may dissipate, the strict language separation model is still very common, and since many pre-service placements are in primary grades because programs are new or in early years of development, many of our current pre-service teachers may encounter this issue. (Translanguaging is, “an act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential” [Garcia, 2017].)

In the strict language separation model, a version of “one parent, one language” (in this case, “one teacher, one language”) is used so that the main classroom teacher only interacts with students in the target language, and another grade-level teacher conducts the ELA/ELD instruction for the students in their colleague’s target language classroom.¹

- ¹ Single subject teacher candidates sometimes report a similar problem in preparation for World Language teaching in which more than 90% of instruction must take place in the target language, according to the new World Language standards. Of course, ELD development can be achieved indirectly since we believe language skills do transfer; however, it is an undue burden for World Language teacher candidates to conceptualize and complete Cycle 1 of CalTPA in a way that explains how their students will develop English language development in their WL classrooms.

CABTE is an associated organization of CCTE and an affiliate of CAFE.



Current Conditions Regarding Placements in Bilingual Classrooms

While the Bilingual Authorization (BILA) standards allow pre-service teachers earning their BILAs to be placed in a variety of bilingual educational settings, including transitional bilingual and heritage language classrooms, the passage of Proposition 58 and the resulting changes in bilingual education policies have led to the expansion of current and opening of new dual language (one- and two-way immersion) programs statewide. The common practice when a district is opening a new dual language program is to begin with TK/K, and sometimes first grade, and roll out new grades each year thereafter. Therefore, currently, many more placements may be available to pre-service teachers in those lower grades. While districts seriously consider the structure of their dual language programs, some choosing a 50/50 model, many, perhaps most, choose to develop a 90/10 model in which early grades spend nearly all of their days in the target language other than English. Pre-service teachers placed in 90/10 primary grade classrooms, therefore, will conduct all or nearly all of their instruction in the target language.

Many 90/10 model dual language programs in which in-service teachers might be placed continue to operate from a strict language separation model of instruction, in which the students' main classroom teacher conducts class completely in the target language. Students in this dual language model often receive their ELA/ELD instruction from a partner grade-level teacher in another classroom to preserve the separation of English and the target language during the majority of their school day. Scholarship and practice regarding translanguaging (that is using both languages in the classroom) is on the rise, yet teachers are just beginning to receive professional development related to translanguaging instruction practices from districts and statewide professional organizations. District policies and classroom practices related to strict language separation continue in many programs that pre-service teachers might be placed in.

The Problem in the CalTPA Context

The CalTPA problem comes up in the context of both cycles.

Cycle 1

In CalTPA Cycle 1, pre-service teachers must select an English Learner for their Focus Student (FS) 1. They must identify and demonstrate how FS1 will be supported in English Language Development.

For Cycle 1, pre-service teachers are only required to submit their lesson planning (no video) but their lesson must include a plan for interacting with FS1 for the purpose of English language development **in English** (per statement from Commission) and the intention is for the teacher to enact the plan with their current group of students, including FS1, not with an alternative group of students, such as students from a grade level colleague's classroom during ELA/ELD class exchanges. This requirement does not easily fit into the 90/10 instructional model of dual language in the primary grades in which pre-service teachers provide 90% of instruction in the target language and ELD is provided by a partner teacher.

Some teacher preparation programs in IHEs or LEAs might opt to remedy this problem in an ad hoc way through working with districts or sites to place pre-service teachers so that they have access to their EL students even when students change classrooms/teachers for ELA/ELD work. In such cases, traditional student teachers might follow their students from their target language classroom to their English-only classroom for ELD. They might plan their lesson for ELA/ELD work to be an extension of the target language development work they do in the rest of the lesson. In the case of independent student

teachers, they would have to be allowed by the site to keep their target language students for the ELA/ELD lesson that would normally be conducted by another grade level teacher.

We believe this approach to remedying the problem would be difficult to negotiate with the sites and districts, in particular during the current environment of CoViD-19 when many districts are challenged to place pre-service teachers at all. It represents at best a “work-around” to the problem, which actually places further burdens on pre-service teachers and bilingual teacher education programs.

A preferred approach would be for IHE/LEA faculty to instruct pre-service teachers to focus their lesson planning on general Language Development which crosses between the target language and English, explicitly including targeted ELD work with FS1 in the target language, focusing on elements of **cross-linguistic transfer** between languages (this would vary depending upon the target language, and would work differently in the context of different target languages). **While the lesson would be enacted in the target language**, the emphasis would be on elements of the target language that positively support ELD (i.e., elements of linguistic adaptation and augmentation as presented in *CCSS en español*, work with cognates in vocabulary development, orthographic or syntactical similarities and differences). This work would interact with Part II of the CA ELDS, “Learning About How English Works.”

- In the contexts of either Literacy or Math, Cycle 1 lessons would involve linguistic elements that compare positively and differ across languages. Teachers would highlight such differences in the target language, asking students to offer their responses in either the target language or English, using their whole language repertoire, eliciting English from the students, recording English words and phrases on boards and cataloging them in anchor charts/online resources that remain available to students throughout the day.
- Lessons would include plans for follow-up with FS1 to check for understanding and re-teach linguistic adaptations and augmentations, if needed.
- Professional development resources are available to pre-service teachers and teacher educators to assist with this approach to resolving the problem. CalTPA Bilingual assessors should also be provided professional development resources regarding this approach to Cycle 1.

Cycle 2

In the Literacy context, pre-service teachers are required to use CA CCSS English Language Arts (ELA), CA English Language Development (ELD) and CA Academic Language Development (ALD) standards.

In contexts in which the target language is Spanish, pre-service teachers can access the ELA/SLA standards through *CCSS en español* (<https://commoncore-espanol.sdcoe.net/CCSS-en-Espanol/SLA-Literacy>) and the California Spanish Language Development Standards (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/sldstandards.asp>) and connect ELD and ALD standards to them. Once again, the emphasis would be on cross-linguistic transfer over the scope and structure of the Learning Segment comprised of 3-5 lesson plans that build on each other. Standards regarding cross-linguistic transfer and linguistic adaptation are built into the *CCSS en español*.

In the Math context, pre-service teachers must use CA Math, ELD, and ALD standards.

Cross-linguistic transfer in Math would consist of highlighting cognates between the target language and English and examining the similarities and differences of culturally informed mathematical concepts and expressions between the target language and English.

Assessment of Dual Language CalTPA Responses

The preferred approach outlined above would require that CalTPA Bilingual Assessors receive professional development in order to recognize instruction that involves cross-linguistic transfer as a bridge to ELA/ELD in the early grades as valid and essential.

CalTPA Bilingual Assessors should be knowledgeable and ready to accept and assess tasks from Transitional Bilingual Programs, One-Way Immersion and Two-Way Immersion/Dual Language Programs (50/50 & 90/10 Models). Professional development should include understanding of applied practice in literacy and mathematics for English speakers, speakers of other languages, English Learners, standard English learners, emerging and developing Bilingual learners and multi-dialectal speakers. CalTPA Bilingual Assessors should be prepared and calibrated to fairly assess without implicit bias the submissions of Bilingual Teacher Candidates in settings that invite the instructional use of the target language, English and/or translanguaging. CalTPA Bilingual Rubrics should respond and be accountable to the complex use of one or more language systems in the classroom in California public schools.

The importance of this professional development to build assessor's capacities and to support the profession cannot be emphasized enough, and the resources, both material and human, are readily available through bilingual education organizations such as the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) and the Association of Two-Way Dual Language Educators (ATDLE), as well as a growing list of bilingual education consultants, to assist in such training.

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