

## **Position Statement on Teacher Preparation for Content-Based Instruction (CBI)**

Over the past several decades, content-based instruction (CBI), also known as content and language integrated learning (CLIL), has emerged as a new paradigm in second language education. As contrasted with language teaching in isolation, CBI uses specific subject matter on which to base language instruction. In other words, the language is taught within the context of a specific academic subject.

The emergence of CBI as a paradigm in language education, and its implementation across educational contexts, has radically changed the role of language teachers and the language curriculum in primary and secondary school settings and in postsecondary contexts. CBI has increasingly grounded language teaching in academic content across disciplines and has changed the focus from teaching language in isolation to its integration with disciplinary content in primary, secondary, and tertiary contexts worldwide.

The importance of CBI as an educational paradigm was underscored by research findings that identified several areas of concern, for example, the poor performance of English language learners in academic areas that was attributed in part to the specialized language of the academic discipline such as mathematics, science, and social studies. This highlighted one of the challenges for CBI—the lack of expertise among language teachers both in the content areas and in the discipline-specific pedagogy within which language teaching is embedded.

The challenge for language teacher education programs is to prepare candidates whose pedagogical content knowledge includes linguistic-based pedagogy with content-based pedagogy of science, mathematics, and social studies. Such preparation includes the construction of deeper understandings of linguistics and mathematical and scientific concepts to enhance the design of learning environments that support students' cultural identities, language and literacy development, and academic achievement.

The TESOL/NCATE Standards for Initial Programs in P–12 ESL Teacher Education address this issue by emphasizing teacher preparation that combines a strong linguistic foundation with a solid grounding in the respective disciplines of academic subjects. While written for the U.S. context, the standards can serve as an effective guide in that that they advance the positions that teacher education programs must prepare teacher candidates who understand and are able to:

- Construct learning environments that support students' language and literacy development and content-area achievement (Domain 1 – Language)

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- Construct learning environments that support students' cultural identities, language and literacy development, and content-area achievement (Domain 2 – Culture)
- Know, understand, and use standards-based practices and strategies related to planning, implementing, and managing second language and content instruction (Domain 3 – Planning, Implementing, and Managing Instruction)
- Collaborate with their colleagues across disciplines and serve as a resource to all staff...to improve learning for all students (Domain 5 – Professionalism) (TESOL, 2002)

The TESOL standards underscore the importance of expanded pedagogical content knowledge that, in the case of CBI, combines knowledge of linguistics, language acquisition, and language pedagogy with the content knowledge and the specialized pedagogy of the social and natural sciences disciplines. The advent of CBI has made content from other disciplines an integral part of language teaching, and the pedagogical approaches that are prevalent in the respective disciplines within which language teaching is embedded are also becoming part of the CBI classroom experience.

TESOL strongly advocates that educational authorities, when mandating policies that result in CBI (such as English-medium instruction), make significant investments in effective teacher preparation programs that adequately prepare the linguistic and content pedagogy, and language proficiency, of teacher candidates. Furthermore, TESOL advocates that educational authorities invest in, and provide for, continued professional development for all second language teachers.

*Approved by the Board of Directors  
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