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Your inner English teacher.

Math. Teach. Middle Sch. 17, No. 4, 238-243 (2011).

Summary: With the ever-changing dynamics of society, teachers are often faced with a classroom of students who have diverse linguistic and academic needs. Research has shown that schools are becoming more linguistically diverse throughout the United States and that English language learners (ELLs) are posing their own sets of challenges for teachers. Teaching mathematics to ELLs can be particularly challenging. Mathematics contains many of the same challenges as other subjects and can be perceived as being less difficult because it is based on the language of numbers. By using deliberate strategies to adjust the phrasing of word problems, teachers can provide a richer mathematics experience for ELLs. The author presents two examples of word problems written in a traditional format and rewritten in an adjusted format reducing linguistic demands while maintaining rigor. The framework can be used by teachers to support their ELLs by modifying word problems to focus more on the mathematics. (Contains 2 figures.) (ERIC)

Classification: D53 C63 F93

Keywords: linguistics; second language learning; word problems; second language teaching; achievement; student needs

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