Summary: Everyone uses language to learn mathematics. Paying close attention to the needs of students who are learning English as a second (or third) language is crucial so that teachers can modify lessons to accommodate those needs. The Equity Principle requires that they accommodate differences in their diverse student population to help everyone learn mathematics (NCTM 2000). About 10% of the nation’s public school students are English Language Learners (ELLs), and every year this percentage increases (NCELA 2007). Although language arts is probably the most challenging subject of their school day, mathematics is likely a struggle for these students as well. In fact, achievement data show that ELLs are not performing at the same levels in mathematics as their native English-speaking counterparts (NAEP 2007). In this article, the authors highlight the challenge of teaching mathematics to ELLs and discuss how this challenge might be addressed by modifying math lessons in ways that will help all students, especially ELLs, develop English proficiency and mathematical understanding. (Contains 3 tables.) (ERIC)

Classification: C52 C53 C62 C63
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