

Key Factors in the Success of Two-Way Bilingual Programs

In this article, a California professor makes the case for the two-way bilingual immersion approach, making similar points to the article just above about separating the languages and giving equal time – and also noting two approaches, each supported by research, to phasing in the second language: 90:10 (in which ELLs begin kindergarten with 90 percent of instruction in the native language and 10 percent in English and gradually shift to parity), and 50:50 (in which the two languages are used equally from the start).

The author goes on to spell out six factors that research has found are important to the success of two-way programs:

- *School environment* – There is a cohesive, schoolwide vision with clear goals for student achievement and faculty unity and collaboration.
- *Curriculum* – Instruction must be aligned with standards and assessments, be academically challenging, foster the use of both languages, and reflect the cultures of all students.
- *Program planning* – The bilingual program must be part of the overall school scope, sequence, and alignment with developmentally appropriate practices and language proficiency levels in both languages.
- *Assessment and accountability* – Multiple measures should be used to assess students' progress toward bilingual and bi-literacy goals.
- *Teacher quality* – High-quality teachers are vital, and they need to understand the model and good instructional practices.
- *Family involvement* – Parents from all cultures and linguistic backgrounds feel valued and welcome in the school.

“The Rich Promise of Two-Day Immersion” by Kathryn Lindholm-Leary in *Educational Leadership*, December 2004/January 2005 (Vol. 62, #4, p. 56-59), no e-link available