

Translating the Common Core for Dual-Language Classrooms

By [Lesli A. Maxwell](#) on October 23, 2012 9:30 AM

When it comes to putting the new common standards into classroom practice, dual-language teachers must prepare and adapt their instructional strategies to teach the more-rigorous common standards in language arts and mathematics not only in English, but in a second language.

In many dual-language programs, particularly in the early grades, students are learning as much as 90 percent of their content in the target, non-English language.

So what does the common core look like in Spanish language arts, for example? Who is doing the kind of translation and modification that dual-language teachers need to bridge the language they are teaching in with the content standards? And where can dual-language teachers find more resources to help them?

There are a few efforts I've recently become aware of, and I'm sure many more exist. But here is what I've come across so far, and I'd encourage anyone with other resources to chip in.

One is called the [Common Core en Español](#) Project and is being led by the San Diego County Office of Education, with support from the California Department of Education and the Council of the Chief State School Officers. This group of district-level educators and language scholars has been working to translate the standards into Spanish, as well as provide "linguistic augmentation" to address differences between the English language and Spanish language such as the use of accent. Some of the main contributors to this project presented

their work both in **language arts** and in **mathematics** at a bilingual educators conference a few months ago in California. It doesn't appear that their final translations are available for widespread use yet, but soon they are to be published on the California education agency's **common core website**.

Another initiative that also targets Spanish/English dual programs was spearheaded by educators in the District of Columbia public schools and researchers at the Center for Equity and Excellence in Education at The George Washington University (GW-CEEE). That effort—called "Normas Para la Enseñanza de las Artes de Lenguaje en Español"—is described by the writers as being "carefully and closely aligned to the Common Core State Standards while still taking into account the linguistic differences between the Spanish and the English languages, the methodological differences in Spanish- and English-literacy instruction, and traditional Spanish literacy-learning expectations."

The New York state education department has also been developing what it is calling "**Bilingual Common Core Standards**" that are meant to align the state's standards for English-as-a-second-language and native-language arts (for students in bilingual or dual language programs) with the common core in English/language arts.

And in Albuquerque, N.M., where there are numerous Spanish/English dual-language classrooms across the city, educators are putting the finishing touches on modifications of the district's new units of study and scope-and-sequence documents for the common core in English/language arts for kindergarten through 3rd grade so that they will work for Spanish language arts. Lynne Rosen, who is district's director of language and cultural equity, calls it "taking the content standards in English/language arts and mirroring them in Spanish."

I'd love to hear more about any resources/adaptations under way for dual-language programs and the common core. Who's working on Mandarin? French? Haitian-Creole?