

Define Primary Language Instruction

Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language.
1989. Portland House, New York

Page 1142 Primary = first or highest in rank or importance

Page 806 Language = the body of words and systems for their use common to a people who are of the same community or nation, the same geographical area, or the same cultural tradition.

Page 737 Instruction = act or practice of instructing or teaching education

California Department of Education
Questions on English Learner Instructional Services (Part 2B)
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/dc/lc/faq.asp>

What is the difference between “primary language (L1) support” in row 6 and “primary language (L1) instruction” in row 7 (Part 2, section B)?

"Primary language support" refers to the use of the primary language to support lessons that are taught mainly by using English. The use of bilingual paraprofessionals to support lessons taught in English by a classroom teacher would be an example of primary language support. Other examples would be clarifications or preview/review provided in the primary language by a teacher or aide. "Primary language (L1) instruction" refers to lessons taught directly and primarily in the primary language by a qualified teacher and supported by corresponding written materials in the primary language.

NOTE BY STANLEY A. LUCERO:

Primary language instruction is providing academic instruction in the language best understood (primary language) by the student. This means that native-English speaking students receive primary language instruction in English. Native-Spanish speaking students receive primary language instruction in Spanish.

Primary language instruction is not teaching Spanish to native-Spanish speakers. Teaching Spanish to native-Spanish speaking students is called Spanish Language Arts. Native-English speaking students receive English Language Arts.

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Data Quest

http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/EIP2_State.asp?RptYear=2009-10&RptType=ELPart2_1a

Row A - Number of English Learner (EL) Students enrolled in specific instructional settings.

	Structured English Immersion	Total Number of English Learner Students
Statewide Totals	712,961	1,475,988

Row B - Number of EL Students receiving instructional services.

	ELs Receiving English Language Development (ELD) Services	ELs Receiving (ELD) and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE)	ELs Receiving ELD and SDAIE with Primary Language (L1) Support	ELs Receiving ELD and Academic Subjects through the Primary Language (L1)	ELs Receiving Other EL Instructional Services	ELs not Receiving any EL Instructional Services	Total Number of English Learner Students
Statewide Totals	120,637	869,200	297,198	73,654	94,762	20,537	1,475,988

NOTE BY STANLEY A. LUCERO

The total number of English Learners in California is 1,475,988 students. Only 73,654 ELs are “receiving ELD and Academic Subjects through the Primary Language (L1). This means that about 5% of the English Learners in California are receiving primary language instruction. The other 95% of the English Learners are receiving their academic instruction in their second language. I estimate that most, if not all, of the native-English speaking students in California are receiving primary language instruction (Close to 100%).

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State Report – Growth API

<http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/AcntRpt2010/2010GrthStAPI.aspx>

The overall API for 4,688,358 students in California is 767. The overall API for 1,554,938 English Learners in California is 691.

The Overall API for students in Grades 2-6 is 800; Grades 7-8 is 765; and Grades 9-11 is 729.

The Overall API for English Learner students in Grades 2-6 is 742; Grades 7-8 is 667; and Grades 9-11 is 626.

NOTES BY STANLEY A LUCERO

I wonder what API scores we would see if about 5% of the native-English speaking students in California were to receive primary language instruction and the other 95% of the native-English speaking students received their academic instruction in their second language.

I wasn't able to find a report with the data on drop-out rates for English Learners in California. Most sources I have seen estimate the national dropout rate for English Learners is 40-60%. The drop-out rates for all California students range from 5.7% to 21.5% depending on what dropout formulae they used to adjust the numbers.