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## **Teaching the Language of Mathematics to English Learners: Assessing What Pre-Service Teachers Know and Can Do**

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As students in U.S. schools become increasingly linguistically and culturally diverse, teachers need to understand the language demands inherent in instruction and assessment, and they need to be prepared to design and modify instruction to meet the needs of students from linguistic and cultural backgrounds other than their own. As teacher preparation programs throughout the country grapple with how to prepare teachers to teach for linguistically and culturally diverse students, one statewide, high-stakes assessment of competencies for preservice teachers, the Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT), has included prompts that ask candidates to focus specifically on English learners, academic language, and the language demands of mathematics instruction, and rubrics that evaluate their effectiveness in doing so. In this paper, we explore how 8 teacher candidates discussed the role of language in mathematics teaching and learning, especially related to English learners, on the PACT. We focus on mathematics, both because of the importance of the subject for English learners and others who have traditionally been underserved by U.S. schools, and because mathematics is often misunderstood to be a "language-free" endeavor. We highlight implications for teachers of Latino/a students, representing the largest group of English learners both in California and nationwide, and a group that has been traditionally underserved by U.S. educational institutions, particularly in mathematics instruction.