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Improving Teacher Quality for English Language Learners: Reports and Next-Step Recommendations from a National Invitational Conference

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A growing number of American students are nonnative English speakers.

Native Spanish-speaking Latino students, whose educational achievement is unacceptably low, constitute the largest group of English language learners (ELLs). These students are vulnerable to early school exit and schools are facing more and more such students each year. Presently, about 56% of all public school teachers in the United States have at least one ELL student in their class, but less than 20% of the teachers who serve ELLs are certified English as a second language (ESL) or bilingual teachers. In a recent profile of the quality of our nation's teachers, the National Center for Education Statistics found that most teachers who taught ELLs or other culturally diverse students did not feel that they were well prepared to meet the needs of their students. In another recent national survey of classroom teachers, 57% of all teachers responded that they either "very much needed" or "somewhat needed" more information on helping students with limited English proficiency achieve to high standards. Nearly half of the teachers assigned to teach ELLs have not received any preparation in methods to teach them. The number of teachers prepared to teach ELLs falls short of the tremendous need for teachers of ELLs. ELLs are three times as likely as other students to have an under-qualified or uncredentialed teacher.

With the increasing pressure placed on teachers to have their students score well on standardized tests, an issue that has previously received little attention has been justly brought into the spotlight. What are the best methods and policies to help ELLs attain academic success? What are the most effective methods one can use when teaching ELLs?

More broadly, what kind of training are teachers receiving or should they receive in order to help ELLs meet high academic standards?

These are all questions that were discussed at a National Invitational Conference, "Improving Teacher Quality for English Language Learners," sponsored by The Laboratory for Student Success (LSS), the Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory, at Temple University Center for Research in Human Development and Education. The conference convened in Arlington, Virginia on November 13–14, 2003. Its purpose was to provide insights and research-based information on how to improve the quality of teachers for all ELLs.

In small work groups, conference participants explored issues raised in the general discussion. They generated next-step recommendations for improving the teaching of ELLs and for improving the links between research and practice. Work-group discussion focused on the importance of effective training to teacher quality. The conferees achieved considerable agreement on the recommendations, although not all work-group participants agreed on all points. Recommendations can be organized in five broad areas: policy, preservice education, professional development, research, and dissemination.

Policy

Participants proposed that policies affecting ELLs should broadly define teachers of ELLs as those with any ELLs in their classes. All teachers, not just English teachers, need policies supporting their work with ELLs. At the same

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time, policies should encourage more college students with skills in more than one language and knowledge of more than one culture to become teachers; participants maintained that the growing number of ELLs in U.S. classrooms requires that teachers in all disciplines have the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of these students. Policies like the Dream Act, which helps undocumented student immigrants qualify for in-state college tuition levels, can support the recruitment of qualified teachers for ELLs.

Federal policy that mandates a strict scientific basis for curricular interventions should be modified. Given the qualitative nature of much research on interventions for ELLs, such policy limits the number of programs that can be used and might hamper the quality of teaching for ELLs. Moreover, federal and state policies should be better aligned with research findings on ELLs. For example, the 3-year time frame for district improvement under No Child Left Behind legislation could be better aligned with the research showing that many ELLs require 5 to 7 years to develop the English skills that allow them to participate fully in content classes. To further improve federal policy, some conferees suggested instituting a national test of language skills for ELLs, a test adapted to their linguistic and cultural needs. While some deemed such testing to be unfeasible, participants generally agreed that ELLs should be assessed in the language in which they can most ably perform.

At the state and local levels, administrators should ensure that professional development programs be recognized as part of a teacher's day instead of onerous after-school responsibilities. It was urged that advocates work with policymakers to promote staff development targeted at meeting the needs of ELLs. Further, state preservice and permanent certification requirements should include coursework in language development and acquisition as well as knowledge of social justice and advocacy for ELLs. Dual certification in ELL teaching and a content area may not be practical, but a hybrid certification including skills for teaching ELLs should be advocated for all teachers.

Moreover, state and local policies that may lead to deprofessionalization of teaching, such as some states' reduction of teaching requirements to a bachelor's degree and a teacher's exam, should be discouraged. At the same time, state and local policymakers should increase efforts to retain high-quality ELL teachers. Retention efforts should include provision of professional working conditions: adequate classroom space, preparation time, paraprofessional support, and democratic relations within school governance. Crucial to retention of novice teachers is that they not be given the most difficult students. Also important to retention can be multistate credentialing (such as that underway in the mid-Atlantic region) for portability, effective mentoring programs, and funding for conference attendance and other development opportunities.

Much discussion focused on those state and local policies designed to educate ELLs predominantly in English without consideration of their knowledge of their native languages. The research reviewed in the conference papers

suggests that the English-only instructional approach has not been proven effective for ELLs or their teachers. Thus, it was recommended that English-only curriculum programs that have not been proven effective should be critically evaluated before adoption by states and districts. Moreover, district and school policies that base high-school progress and graduation on passing a test in English should be reformed to take the needs of ELLs into account.

Preservice Teacher Education

Considerable discussion focused on trends in preservice training of ELL teachers in colleges of education. Of concern were possible threats to teacher quality posed by alternatives to the use of teachers trained in colleges of education, such as the hiring of teachers with nonstandard certifications and the use of online programs instead of teachers in some charter schools. In this context, participants agreed that colleges of education must promote and follow the implications of research, such as that disseminated by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, that shows the need for high-quality teacher preparation.

Specifically, colleges of education should identify training focused on ELLs as an important priority. Preservice curriculum for ELL teachers should develop deep understanding of first- and second-language acquisition, strong content mastery, cross-cultural understanding, acknowledgement of differences, and collaborative skills. Coursework in literacy instruction, including second-language issues, should be required for both elementary and secondary preservice teachers. All teacher education programs—both elementary and secondary—should include a greater ELL component in methods courses. Additionally, field experiences for preservice teachers should integrate work with ELL students. Such experiences need to occur in linguistically and culturally diverse settings because educators must develop the skills needed to engage with and learn from diverse families and communities.

Preservice teacher education curriculum must also support greater understanding of ELLs. Teachers must learn to adapt instruction to the needs and realities of ELLs, maintaining compassion and high expectations for students while viewing them not just as language learners but as whole persons. Future teachers of ELLs must learn to value students' native languages, whether they speak them or not. To that end, training programs must help teachers examine their preexisting attitudes about linguistic differences. Moreover, both teacher and administrator preparation curricula should include issues of language, race, poverty, privilege, and social justice. Preservice educators also need greater knowledge of political issues and of personal beliefs that influence teaching of ELLs.

Professional Development

Professional development for ELL teachers must be comprehensive and systematic at all levels. Professional development should include demonstration of theories of language, sustained coaching, and evaluation programs measuring

teacher implementation and impact. Integration of inservice programs with preservice curriculum for ELL teachers should be promoted. A holistic approach emphasizing teacher cooperation and ongoing analysis of what makes schools and teachers successful would be more useful in professional development than emphasizing specific teaching skills.

Professional development should begin with the needs identified by teachers themselves. Staff developers should carefully assess what ELL teachers and their students need and include classroom-based training with a focus on implementation of knowledge gained through professional development. Developers should also build on teacher competencies that already exist. Because teachers need to share knowledge of both language-learning strategies and individual student issues, inservice initiatives that team content teachers and ESL teachers—a teaming embedded within the workday—should be implemented.

The needs of ELLs should be a priority in professional development efforts. Schools should promote inservice training in language acquisition and in instructional strategies specific to ELLs. Teachers of ELLs should continually develop their understanding of the significant connection of language with learning, identity, and social and emotional well-being. Like preservice programs, inservice programs for ELL teachers need to incorporate outreach to parents, families, and communities in order to foster students' continued language development in the home.

Teachers need to become educational leaders who bring critical thinking and advocacy to their work with ELLs. Inservice programs encourage teachers of ELLs to reflect on and assess their teaching and conduct action research that helps them change their attitudes and practices. As role models for teacher leadership, administrators must be active participants in the ongoing training of ELL teachers, setting expectations that all students will succeed and balancing other demands like state accountability with a focus on the needs of growing ELL populations.

Research

Much more research on teacher quality for ELLs at the national, state, and local levels is needed. A crucial goal of this research should be defining the skills that highly qualified ELL teachers should have and identifying appropriate credentialing requirements. In particular, more research on the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of teachers and administrators that are relevant to ELL student outcomes should be conducted. Further research should also focus on the impact of external policies such as standardized testing and alternative routes to certification on teacher quality and ELL student outcomes. Research on the relation of early childhood education to school success is also needed. Research-based models of culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate instructional practices for different age groups should inform early childhood education training programs.

A national study of successful ELL teachers could serve to build the knowledge base on teacher quality for ELLs. Such studies should be as rigorous and extensive as

possible, given the complex differences in ELL policy and teaching across the country. National, state, and local agencies should cooperate to fund such studies. Moreover, using data gathered from across the country, educational researchers should develop a comprehensive knowledge base on student outcomes relevant to ELL teaching. To improve their instruction, teachers need access to broad-based research that shows them what connections exist between specific practices and a range of academic and personal benefits.

Dissemination

Organizations such as regional educational laboratories should play a larger role in disseminating research findings to teachers, administrators, and policymakers. In particular, disseminating organizations should gather and publish data on professional development for teachers of ELLs. Teachers need data that shows that successful instruction for ELLs requires not only good teaching practices but inservice training that specifically addresses the needs of ELLs. A national databank on professional development for ELL teachers is needed to improve access to information on training programs and outcomes research. This data bank should include information on dealing with linguistic and cultural issues in the classroom.

Several suggestions were made for improving communication among educators, institutions, and other stakeholders in English language learning. For example, learning collaboratives among institutions serving ELLs should be established in order to foster professional interaction, build advocacy skills, and facilitate dissemination of knowledge about high-quality teaching for ELLs. Also, national organizations responsible for setting teaching standards should sponsor a conference focused on redefining ELL teacher quality in the context of the growing population of ELLs. Conference deliberations need to be communicated to policymakers at all levels. Local learning communities for teachers of ELLs and other stakeholders should be developed in support of broader dissemination initiatives.

Conclusion

The conference papers, general discussion, and work groups all pointed to the conclusion that teaching informed by knowledge about language acquisition, cultural differences, and the social context of schooling can improve outcomes for English language learners and that increasing such knowledge among teachers, administrators, researchers, and policymakers is both necessary and achievable. Strengthening links between evidence-based research and classroom teaching can benefit the growing population of English language learners in U.S. schools and those who share responsibility for educating them. With greater understanding and support of the needs of English language learners and their teachers, schools can improve the quality of instruction and ensure that no child—and no teacher—is left behind. ❧

Critical Issues in Developing the Teacher Corps for English Language Learners

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In 2002, federal No Child Left Behind legislation mandated that schools provide a quality education for all students. It brought the education of English language learners (ELLs)—students whose native language is one other than English—into even greater focus by mandating that all states test their ELLs annually and hold schools accountable for the educational progress of these students. The stakes are higher than they have ever been for bringing ELLs into the academic mainstream.

The primary key to successfully educating all students, particularly those who are as vulnerable as English learners, is providing them with a well-qualified teacher. Adequate facilities, reasonable class size, good curriculum and materials, and a safe place to learn are all important components of the education of ELLs, but as for all students, nothing is more important for educational outcomes than the qualifications of the teacher.

Absence of National Policy Rationale for Recruiting and Preparing Teachers for English Learners

A fundamental impediment to the development of a teacher corps for ELLs in this country is the absence of any national policy to provide direction for schools and communities. There is no local or national consensus about what an ideal education for ELLs should look like. In fact, there is very little policy discussion at all with regard to educating these students. In the absence of serious discussion about our educational goals for ELLs, political entrepreneurs have filled the policy void with political solutions to educational problems. The common discourse focuses on “close the achievement gap” rhetoric for ELLs without any real attention to what would be required to actually do this. For some visionary educators, simply closing the achievement gap is not enough; instead, they would like to think that ELLs might actually raise the educational bar by achieving mastery of two languages. Without question, neither high achievement nor mastery of two languages will occur unless students can be assured of teachers with the attributes, skills, and knowledge required to meet their academic needs.

But there are many questions regarding appropriate ELL teacher preparation. What kind of teacher is best suited to teach these students—must it be someone from the same ethnic and/or linguistic background, or are these considerations irrelevant if the teacher is highly qualified? How should we go about recruiting these teachers, and should there be extra compensation for the additional skills they possess? Should we provide special incentives to keep them in the workforce, given the high turnover of teachers and the shortage of individuals with these skills? And if so, what would these incentives be? For teachers of

ELLs already in the workforce, how should we support them? What should be the content of professional development?

Building a Corps of the Best Teachers for ELLs

Although scholars tell us something about the important attributes, skills, and knowledge of quality teachers for linguistically and culturally diverse students, less is known about how to build a corps of teachers who possess these qualities. One means of building a corps of teachers who are effective with diverse limited-English students is to recruit individuals who already have the language and other experience that enables them to effectively teach these students.

The “right” teachers are not necessarily those from the same underrepresented communities as the students, but more often than not, these individuals have insights, experiences, and skills that are difficult to replicate in the short space of time that teacher-preparation programs have to train new teachers. Certainly, the acquisition of a second language will rarely occur in that time frame. Moreover, these individuals may be the “right” teachers because they tend to come from the same geographic areas where many of the teachers who are currently graduating from teacher-preparation programs do not want to work. There is also reason to believe that teachers who share the backgrounds of these students are more likely to persist both in the teacher corps and in schools with large minority populations.

The lack of any consistent policy for the education of ELLs and the constant shifting of programmatic goals leaves administrators with little guidance for what kind of teachers they should recruit and train. A goal of producing bilingual, biliterate students suggests one kind of teacher while a goal of shifting students as rapidly as possible out of their native language and into English may suggest another. In either case, teachers need specialized knowledge and skills in order to adequately meet these students’ needs—something that too few current teachers of ELLs have.

The lack of a clear and articulated policy for the education of ELLs also leads to a weak commitment to recruitment. It is entirely within the capacity of most states to train all the teachers for English learners that they need. Yet, despite this capacity, there is a chronic shortage of these teachers because no one has taken responsibility for making it a legislative priority to guarantee that every ELL will have a qualified teacher. Without such teachers, the educational achievement gap is not likely to close for ELLs, no matter how many times we chant the mantra “no child left behind.”

Recommendations

ENGLISH LEARNER POLICY

The involvement of the U.S. Department of Education in research on the instruction of ELLs has principally been through the funding of studies to answer the question: Which kind of program most rapidly moves English learners into the academic mainstream? The following questions have never been asked, however: What should be our goals for the education of ELLs from preschool to high-school graduation? and What are the impediments that stand in the way of meeting those goals? The answers to these questions would provide significant guidance to the field about the appropriate aims of local policies and the attendant role of support from the federal government. Certainly, one answer would be to provide all ELLs with teachers who have sufficient knowledge and expertise to truly meet their educational needs. Providing incentives for the states to prepare and recruit these teachers would be an important policy response.

PREPARATION AND RECRUITMENT

In order to develop the ELL teaching force, it makes sense to concentrate efforts where the target population is found in greatest numbers. For example, most Latino and other underrepresented linguistic-minority high-school graduates who enter postsecondary education attend community colleges. Currently, we lose most of these students before they complete a bachelor's degree. Among the most prominent reasons for this loss are financial pressures, inadequate career counseling, and lack of a focused goal of their studies. Thus, we recommend state and federal policies that would foster teacher preparation programs, sign-up bonuses for well-qualified teachers, and support for students.

Teacher preparation programs should be initiated at community colleges, with focused coursework and counseling, and forgivable loans for educational and other expenses of the student's education. Such an initiative could help stem the dropout problem among students of color in community colleges and could ultimately add significant numbers to the teacher pool. As a part of this program, a specialized associate's degree awarded to these students at the completion of their community college coursework could prepare them to work as classroom aides, serving to help them acquire needed experience and supplement their incomes while they continue their studies.

Provide sign-up bonuses for well-qualified teachers of ELLs. The armed services pay substantial sign-up bonuses, as well as fund the education of promising recruits, in order to enhance their pool of candidates. Surely the need for qualified teachers is as great as our need for high-quality military recruits. Sign-up bonuses should be paid to qualified teacher candidates who have the skills, background, and experience that are needed to teach diverse students. Thus, individuals with multiple language competencies and experience living and working among culturally diverse populations should be eligible for a sign-up bonus

large enough to attract these individuals who clearly have many other occupational options.

Support students who are already "in the college pipeline," who have special knowledge of minority communities and languages, and who have demonstrated an interest in teaching. They should be eligible for forgivable loans sufficient to ensure that they complete their undergraduate degrees and credentials in a timely manner and quickly enter the teaching force. This recommendation is a matter of degree, not innovation. Forgivable loan opportunities already exist, but it is our suggestion that to be maximally efficient, such programs should provide students enough support through these loans to allow them to forgo other work and focus solely on their teacher preparation studies.

Clearly, these proposed solutions require a strong sense of commitment. It is no longer enough for any administration—whether federal, state, local, or district—to demand quality teachers without supplying the resources to make that a possibility. Native-English-speaking students, nonnative-English-speaking students, and teachers alike deserve to be equipped with the tools they need to make their educational experiences successful.



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The Laboratory for Student Success (LSS) is one of the nation's ten regional educational laboratories funded by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education to revitalize and reform educational practices in the service of the educational success of the nation's children and youth.

The primary mission of LSS is to bring about lasting improvements in the learning of the mid-Atlantic region's increasingly diverse student population. LSS seeks to establish a system of research, development, and dissemination that connects schools, parents, community agencies, professional groups, and higher education institutions in order to transform low-performing schools into high-performing learning communities.

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Training Teachers Through Their Students' First Language

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English language learners' (ELLs) academic success depends on teachers' knowledge and applications of effective pedagogy in the classroom. To date, much of the professional development in schools on language and academic needs of ELLs has been addressed to bilingual and/or English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers. Universities have developed undergraduate and graduate programs with curricula and courses to prepare these professionals. In turn, school systems have addressed professional development programs for furthering the continuing education of inservice teachers. However, comparatively little attention has been focused on mainstream teachers who have or will have ELLs in their classrooms. Because statistics show that the numbers of ELLs in regular mainstream classrooms are increasing, this lack of attention is a cause for concern.

The Graduate Programs

This paper is based on efforts of four university programs that offer sheltered instruction (SI) courses in Spanish through the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) to master's or post-master's degree students who work as teachers (bilingual, ESL, or mainstream) of Hispanic ELLs in urban school districts. The programs' goals are to enhance teaching skills and complete degree and bilingual and/or ESL certification requirements. The programs' specific objectives include (a) increasing the number of qualified teachers of ELLs, (b) improving teachers' first and second language (L2) proficiency and competence, and (c) broadening career opportunities for teachers of ELLs. The four programs include course work in literacy and biliteracy, assessment of bilingualism, ESL teaching methods and curriculum design, foundations of bilingual and bicultural education, linguistics, and other courses meant to develop expertise in the education of ELLs. As a result of their training, teachers receive a master of arts degree or a sixth-year professional diploma in education, or an education specialist degree with emphasis on bilingual bicultural/ESL education and meet requirements to receive the bilingual or ESL certification endorsements from the states' departments of education. In addition, they become instructional teacher leaders or in-school trainers and offer professional development on SI methodology at district and school professional development days.

THE SHELTERED SPANISH COURSES

Three-credit graduate courses are offered to ESL, bilingual, and mainstream teachers who work in various school districts. At the beginning of the program or course, their level of Spanish language proficiency is assessed using informal measures, and ranges from advanced beginner, to intermediate, to advanced level. For the most part, students have studied Spanish at school or in college for 1–6 years with native Spanish-speaking instructors.

Each course is designed to meet the students' varied language proficiency needs in addition to the SI pedagogy needed by teachers teaching literacy and subject content to ELLs in their classrooms. These courses, titles, descriptions, and course syllabi are approved by the universities and listed in the institutions' graduate school catalogs. The sheltered Spanish instructors' task is to write the course syllabus (prontuario del curso) with the same contents and requirements as their English counterparts in Spanish, detail activities during the semester, and select appropriate readings and textbooks in Spanish that focus on teaching strategies for reading, language, and content area development. The content objectives and the requirements for the Spanish courses are the same as those approved by the university.

The language objectives differ for course students. For bilingual students (native speakers of Spanish, most raised in Puerto Rico or the United States and schooled in English), the language objective is to improve facets of their Spanish proficiency (e.g., academic writing) and to increase vocabulary range in curriculum content areas. For ESL and mainstream teachers (nonnative speakers of Spanish with some high-school or college Spanish training), the language objective is to increase their command of the L2 so that they can function in relatively fixed linguistic exchanges (e.g., at school, with their students, and with their students' parents).

The pedagogical objectives relate to literacy, SI and the SIOP, and to the notion of reflection. Students examine the myriad factors that shape what they do in their classrooms in order to become effective practitioners. They are encouraged to analyze the constraints and opportunities they perceive in teaching ELLs. Real-life experience takes the place of simulation, since students experience firsthand the difficulties and challenges faced by ELLs when having to attend to new language, content, and same academic standards for all students at the same time. For most course students, the language of instruction (Spanish) is their L2, and the course meetings are conducted almost exclusively in this language using the SI approach.

For these training programs, SI and the SIOP are adapted to meet the needs of Spanish-as-second-language students. SI and the SIOP are based on the premise that L2 acquisition is enhanced through meaningful use and interaction. Through the study of content, students interact in Spanish with meaningful material that is relevant to their training.

Since language processes—such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing—develop independently, SI Spanish lessons incorporate activities that integrate those skills. These lessons mirror high-quality nonsheltered teaching for native Spanish speakers, and careful attention is paid to the students' distinctive L2 development needs.

Essential in this process is the articulation of different levels of Spanish used with and by the students and the provision of comprehensible input through the use of realia and

meaningful activities such as visuals, props, modeling, demonstrations, graphic organizers, vocabulary previews, predictions, adapted texts, joint productive activities, peer tutoring, instructional conversations, and first-language support. The goal is to create a nonthreatening environment where students feel comfortable taking risks with language. However, lesson activities are linguistically and academically challenging, and the mandated course syllabus is carefully followed. The objective is to make specific connections between the content being taught and students' experiences or prior knowledge while improving their Spanish and to promote a high level of student engagement and interaction with the course instructor(s), with one another, and with text in order to promote elaborate discourse. Students are also explicitly taught functional Spanish language skills, such as how to negotiate meaning, ask for clarification, confirm information, argue, persuade, and disagree. When requested, grammar exercises (e.g., identification and discussion of noun phrases in Spanish in a poem, adverbs of comparison) are practiced. Through meaningful activities, students practice and apply their knowledge of Spanish as well as their content knowledge. Diverse supplementary materials and resources are used to support the academic texts.

COURSE EVALUATION RESULTS

The goal of these SI Spanish courses is to understand better the teaching–learning process of the L2, Spanish. Program students move from surface engagement with theory to an engagement that promotes reflective commitment to become more effective teachers of ELLs. The constructs of instructional and social interaction are examined as cultural phenomena reflecting the interactive process of the construction of meaning and the language of the learning process. Ethnographic techniques such as personal journals, focus group interviews, questionnaires, and surveys were used in these courses in addition to the university end-of-course surveys. Only a brief summary is presented in this paper.

Students are pleased with the courses and the nature of their instruction. In their view, instruction in the courses met their professional development needs in the following areas: (1) L2 methodology, (2) students' culture, and (3) classroom activities. These results coincide closely with SI course goals, which focused on Spanish language communication related to ELLs. Students are also satisfied with the nature of their course instruction. In their view, instruction in the courses could not get appreciably better. After a semester or two of taking Spanish SI courses, all students strongly agreed or agreed that the SI Spanish courses they took were very useful in the planning and delivery of their daily lessons to meet their ELLs' needs during the school year. They have incorporated SI and the SIOP to integrate concept and language opportunities. They still consider comprehensible input as an important lesson component and adjust their speech to their ELLs' proficiency levels. They also use scaffolding techniques, group work to support the language and content objectives of their SI and SIOP lessons, and provide a review of key concepts throughout the lesson.

Conclusions

In these Spanish SI courses, students use their L2 to talk and write about their own experiences and notions about L2 learning and to voice their changing perspectives. The experience of having to deal with academic demands in the L2 can provide valuable insights into the world as viewed by ELLs. Through carefully planned experiences in which intellectual activity is coupled with interactive participation, the course instructors practice a pedagogical approach that might help design more effective teacher education programs and facilitate the development of inservice and preservice teachers of ELLs. Traditionally, SI has been part of an ESL program, a bilingual program, a dual language program, a newcomer's program, or a foreign language program. The goal is to extend its role to the implementation of graduate-level university courses and programs with the purpose of developing a strong foundation in SI, the SIOP, and a common knowledge base related to the understanding of language and to sociocultural issues underlying effective instructional practices for all teachers of ELLs.

SI and the SIOP have proved to be highly useful professional tools to aid in the planning of training units for teacher preparation sessions. Students appear to benefit from these courses since their L2 achievement has improved. They also speak highly of the benefits of classroom collaboration and interaction in increasing their ability to speak Spanish and in sensitizing them to their students' learning process. They find the lessons interesting and comprehensible. They enjoy the courses because they feel relaxed and confident. They reiterate that their Spanish vocabulary has increased. Sometimes they feel nervous when they have to speak to the whole class and always are comfortable when they work in groups. They stress that they are using the techniques and routines introduced during the course in their own classrooms. A semester to a year after they took these courses, students strongly agreed or agreed that SI and the SIOP were very useful in the planning and delivery of their daily lessons to meet their ELLs' needs. They incorporated SI and the SIOP as important lesson components to integrate concept and language opportunities to teach their ELLs.

Overall, this paper provides support for a number of key characteristics that professional development initiatives need to adopt in order to respond effectively to the needs of teachers of ELLs. Effective teaching requires an understanding of both social and school factors that influence L2 acquisition and academic learning. This paper has proposed an approach to professional development that is both interactive and exploratory. These courses can become bridges between the theoretical content and the practical reality of the L2 classroom. No claim can be made that these courses are the answer to the problems posed by teacher education in these challenging times, but it is fair to state that courses of this nature have a valuable role to play in inservice, and perhaps preservice, efforts.



Quality Instruction in Reading for English Language Learners

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From the national data on English language learner (ELL)/language minority student (LMS) performance, it is evident that knowing how to teach reading to ELLs is critically important. Knowing how to prepare teachers to teach reading to ELLs becomes one of the most important goals of a school district. The purpose of this paper is to explore ways to enhance professional development programs for teachers of ELLs and LMS. It is hoped that this conceptual framework will assist school districts in the design and implementation of quality professional development programs.

What Does the Research Say About Teaching Reading?

There is a consensus among researchers and comprehensive research review panels that the following components are necessary for teaching basic reading skills:

KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR EARLY READING

1. Phonemic awareness, letter knowledge, and concepts of print
2. The alphabetic code: phonics and decoding
3. Fluent, automatic reading of text
4. Vocabulary
5. Text comprehension
6. Written expression
7. Spelling and handwriting
8. Screening and continuous assessment to inform instruction
9. Motivating children to read and developing their literacy horizons

What Does the Research Say About Teaching Reading to ELLs?

Emerging studies on ELLs find that teaching to the basic principles is not sufficient to ensure success for ELLs. In a recent exhaustive review of the literature, researchers found only eight solidly empirical studies on ELL literacy. These few empirical studies concur that teachers of ELLs need to complement the nine components listed above with an extensive teaching repertoire that includes:

- second language acquisition (oracy, literacy, and subject matter integrated);
- bilingual instruction (when and how to teach in native language and the second language; literacy in both languages);
- contrastive linguistics, cognates/false cognates, and how to effectively employ this knowledge;
- teaching different tiers of vocabulary (basic for non-English speakers, domain vocabulary, and challenging levels);
- fast-track decoding in English if the student is literate in the first language;

- fast-track decoding and fluency skills for students in 4th–12th grades;
- reading comprehension for content mastery;
- other skills for students with limited formal schooling;
- written expression (e.g., bilingual or multicultural voice and mechanics—grammar, language conventions, spelling);
- screening and continuous assessment to inform instruction; and
- teaching love of reading and writing to some of the inexperienced students.

Integrating Reading and English Language Learning for Professional Development

Borrowing the concept of tables from the Alliance for Learning, but adding the elements that focus on English language learners, I have mapped out a framework for building concepts, skills, and teacher experiences. These frames were intended as a starting point for the project Preparing All Administrators, Counselors, and Teachers to Work with Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students (PAACT) that would be shared with university teacher education programs. The frames have been modified to help school districts and schools conduct meetings with their teachers to identify needs and plan the designs of their comprehensive staff development programs. This paper will present the features of a staff development design and suggestions for initial planning. *Please refer to the Laboratory for Student Success website at <http://temple.edu/lss> for a tabular representation of the framework itself.*

DURATION OF TRAINING

Each of the frames contains a set of activities that can be demonstrated and discussed at an initial 1-day workshop, to be followed by teacher practice in the classroom, simultaneously accompanied by weekly 30-minute discussions with teacher colleagues in teachers' learning communities (TLCs). In addition to the collegial learning at the school site, 2 or 3 additional days of inservice will be needed to refresh and learn additional concepts, skills, and creative application.

TRAINING COHORTS

The professional development activities can be adapted to K–12 instructional levels. However, the way secondary school teachers apply a domain such as phonemic awareness will be very different from a K–1 teacher application. Therefore, cohorts of teachers should be grouped, such as: K–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12. There will be occasions when kindergarten teachers need to work together on subcomponents that are relevant only to them; fifth-grade teachers may have to plan their students' transition into middle school; ninth-grade

teachers may need to develop lessons for their incoming students, and so on. Some teachers need to observe a strategy 5 or 6 times before they feel comfortable applying it; others need 20 observations. If we are to individualize student learning, we must begin by individualizing teacher learning.

PROCESS OF THE TRAINING

The process for professional development itself must be based on research. Researchers agree that making sense of experience and transforming professional knowledge into teaching habits requires time and a variety of professional activities. Furthermore, it is believed that teachers need theory, research, modeling or demonstrations of instructional methods, coaching during practice, and feedback in order to integrate instructional practices into their active teaching repertoire. For example, teachers would need presentations on cutting-edge theory and research on reading/literacy; experts to model effective strategies for building word knowledge, comprehension, and writing for teaching English language learners; and time to practice and exchange ideas with peers after each segment or activity of the presentation. Adult learners need to inquire, reflect, and respond to new ideas if they are to embrace them. Therefore, a teacher-oriented program would provide low-risk practice sessions in a workshop setting where teachers can practice teaching strategies in small teams. Workshop presenters could provide opportunities for reading and teacher reflection through cooperative learning activities. Presenters should also include as part of their workshop explanations and demonstrations of peer coaching practices that promote transfer of new teaching skills into the classroom.

According to researchers, collegial activity is key for continuous learning on the job. Even after an inservice training, seasoned teachers need time to reflect and adapt new learnings into their teaching. Without collegial activity, teachers will begin to feel uncomfortable with an innovation after 4 weeks, and usually stop using the new instructional behaviors shortly thereafter. For this reason, it is critically important to build collegial skills and the mind-set of continuous learning with peers before the inservice ends.

WEEKLY COLLEIAL STUDY

As part of the inservice on reading, teachers need to learn how to set up and run their own TLCs. The studies of TLCs in schools have documented collegial activities of teachers as follows: model new strategies for each other; solve problems of student adaptation; share their creativity through concrete products (lessons, curriculum, tests, etc.); analyze and evaluate student work regularly; provide ongoing peer support, responsiveness, and assistance to all teachers; share and discuss issues of classroom implementation, transfer from training, impact of teacher on student behavior and learning; share ideas for new lessons or next steps; and schedule peer observations and coaching.

When well implemented, TLCs can be collaborative endeavors in which teachers examine profoundly, question,

develop, experiment, implement, evaluate, and create exciting change. TLCs are opportunities for teachers to coconstruct meaning of their craft and do whatever necessary to help each other implement an innovation. When studies are being conducted in their classrooms, teachers become co-researchers and eagerly contribute to the research and development of new programs. Their creative talents emerge, and a new type of professional environment is established where they are respected for their expertise.

However, the studies have also documented the need to provide teachers with theory and practice on how to work in collegial teams. Because collegiality is difficult for many adults, the concept of collegiality needs to be established and practiced during all inservice workshops.

It is also important to recognize that teachers add analytical, creative, and practical learning to their teaching and assessment methods. This additive learning can also take place in brief 30-minute weekly TLC sessions at the school. These brief but productive moments serve to empower teachers to introduce new concepts, share instructional techniques, or revisit those that are more complicated or troublesome for some or all teachers. As teachers explore ways of integrating all the reading components into their instructional repertoires, their application becomes more meaningful to them and their students, when they become engaged in collegial learning. Perhaps the most exciting side effect of TLCs is the support teachers receive from one another.

SUMMER CURRICULUM INSTITUTES

A well-skilled worker can do little without his/her proper tools. Teachers need carefully crafted lesson plans and yearlong curricula to accomplish their tasks. As part of a comprehensive staff development, teachers will need 2 to 4 weeks in the summer to integrate new reading strategies into their lessons, curriculum standards, and assessments. To require teachers to do all this during the year as they are teaching results in incoherent assimilation and inconsistent implementation. Thus, the summer institutes are part of a serious design.

TRAINING FOR TEACHER SUPPORT

Principals, curriculum coordinators, mentors, and other support personnel need to be well equipped to assist teachers in this difficult phase. They need to be required to attend the workshops and to attend one in which teacher support mechanisms is the topic. Another topic might be helping teachers recognize and capitalize on their strengths. Forming a successful teacher development program will require building communities of practice in which teachers, administrators, and students are learning constantly. As additional research on reading emerges, pedagogy must adapt and readapt. As teachers are better prepared to teach reading, particularly to ELLs, children's chances for learning to read will significantly increase.

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Conclusion

Because of the poor ELL outcomes and a greater emphasis on accountability by state and national policymakers, transforming teaching practices has to go hand in hand with transforming professional development practices. Hard-nosed empirical studies and evaluation of staff development programs have to come to the surface each time a workshop, an inservice, or the implementation of

a new program is being contemplated. We do not have a culture of rigorous professional development yet—much less an overabundance of evidence for what defines a high-quality teacher and what practices represent effective teaching for ELLs. However, making sure that all teacher training attempts be guided by evidence is an excellent beginning to ensuring quality professional development for teachers and education for their students. ☘

Successful School Leadership for English Language Learners

Elsy Fierro Suttmiller and Maria Luisa González, New Mexico State University

Schools across the nation are grappling with the issue of how to best instruct English language learners (ELLs), and one key aspect of this dilemma lies in the testing of recent immigrant students. The No Child Left Behind Act's (NCLB) requirement that recent immigrant students be tested after their third year of enrollment is contrary to research in language acquisition and bilingual education. Several studies clearly point to the fact that students need 5 to 7 years to develop academic language proficiency. Yet, this well-established, research-based fact is known to few school administrators. Thus, not only does NCLB demonstrate the need for school leaders to become informed about the instructional needs of ELLs, but it also requires, in many cases, the reorientation of the current educational program that has failed to meet the needs of ELLs. The difficulty surrounding this type of reorientation is that few school districts have the leadership and/or the instructional capacity to understand the needs of ELLs.

If the school reorientation that is necessary for all students to meet the requirements of NCLB is to take place, educational leaders must ensure that the education of ELLs is part of the overall school and district effort. This means that all school educators and leaders must take into careful consideration issues related to language, culture, and the school context in order to provide a reframing of the fundamental organization of the school.

Successful School Leadership Model

The successful school leadership model is a graphic representation of the key elements that must guide a school in meeting the needs of ELLs. The role of the principal in this model is to understand and implement these key elements into the general program of instruction for all students.

The model's center, the student, is surrounded by the academic, sociocultural, and linguistic domains that must be taken into account by the principal and staff. Attending to these domains is essential in providing the type of instruction that will result in high student achievement for students who are ELLs.

The principal's understanding of these domains will guide the reorientation of schooling for ELLs. The model also

contains leadership components that involve a principal's ability to appreciate and attend to the (a) school context, (b) curriculum and instruction as it relates to second-language learners, (c) the population's diverse language and culture, as well as (d) parental and community engagement that is relevant and meaningful. Each part of the model relies on the knowledge and coordination provided by the principal as the main school leader. Moreover, in this model, district-level leadership also plays a role in providing the support that the school needs to focus on the optimal learning climate for ELLs. Explanation of each of the model's components follows.

ACADEMIC DOMAIN

An effective instructional program for ELLs responds to the following questions affirmatively. Are the students learning? Are the students learning English? How learning is accomplished depends largely on the academic program offered to students. Research has identified key features of classrooms that promote learning for ELLs. Some of these features include (a) opportunities for students to interact with both languages in written and/or oral form, (b) context-embedded activities that are meaningful and relate to the students' experiences, (c) thematic units that help students build concepts across the curriculum, and (d) cooperative learning activities that encourage reflection and vocabulary development.

SOCIOCULTURAL DOMAIN

The sociocultural domain addresses the hidden messages students receive through social interaction in their home, community, and school. This interaction also includes exposure to media (e.g., books, newspapers, magazines, television, radio) that carry implicit and explicit messages about the individual's language and/or culture. It is known that the interaction between the child and the external social world helps define the child's perception of self. In the case of ELLs, successful participation and learning in school depends largely on the attitudes and hidden messages the child receives regarding his/her language, socioeconomic status (SES), culture, race, or ethnicity. If the messages are

negative—limiting the child’s use of his/her language to make meaning, or failing to value or acknowledge the child’s culture—then the child’s ability to successfully participate and learn will be restricted. Therefore, school personnel need to become aware of and minimize the hidden messages, values, attitudes, school policies, curriculum, and methodologies that either value or devalue a specific language, SES, culture, race, or ethnicity.

LINGUISTIC DOMAIN

The linguistic domain addresses the need for students to use and further develop their native language as well as the appropriate instruction that fosters the acquisition of English. Researchers have found that the development of academic skills in English is largely dependent on the conceptual foundation the child has built in his or her native language. According to these researchers, the more time spent in developing a conceptual foundation in the native language of the child, the easier it will be for the child to acquire English. Therefore, instructional programs that teach children in their native languages are the most beneficial for students learning English.

Leadership Components of Successful Schools

The leadership components of the model are developed from a working knowledge of the domains previously discussed. In this model, principals are required to understand the school’s distinct context, appreciate language and culture, develop parent/community engagement, and integrate curriculum with a proper instructional program that includes appropriate assessment practices. The extent to which these four components are understood and implemented in the school through the principal’s leadership contributes to the academic success of ELLs.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

School context refers to the social, cultural, political, and economic setting in which a school is situated. Understanding the context of a school is crucial in order for a principal to address the learning needs of students and families. Culturally competent principals recognize that their responsibility extends beyond the walls of their school building. While they can aptly articulate the needs of their students and their families, they anticipate future needs and make provisions for services that eventually impact the community as a whole. They know the needs of their school and its population and find innovative ways to meet these needs.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

The next leadership component in the model of successful school leadership for ELLs is the teaching and learning process. A student’s success in school is ultimately dependent on the quality of instruction offered. Principals should insist that the content of instruction for all students be aligned, taking into account several elements that research has found to support student learning aligned with state benchmarks and standards: Such content (a) extends across

different grade levels, (b) addresses various learning styles and multiple intelligences, (c) acknowledges students’ prior experiences and families’ funds of knowledge, (d) incorporates instructional technologies, and (e) includes the teaching of higher order thinking skills.

Another important aspect of leadership in curriculum and instruction is the attention given to student assessment. Some advocate that in order for student assessment to be informative in evaluating student learning and improving curricular content, it must (a) assess what students are taught, (b) be relevant to students’ cultural and linguistic needs, and (c) provide accurate and reliable data to assure that all students are learning. The assessment must go beyond highlighting students’ deficits but must take into account students’ strengths as well.

ENGAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY AND PARENTS

Parents and community members should be viewed as resources and not seen as scapegoats for justifying student failure. Principals must strive to include parents in each aspect of the school’s committees and create opportunities to bring families together to celebrate student achievement and learn strategies to help their children at home.

Most schools have traditionally communicated with parents and community members in the form of instructions, mandates, rules, and the like. Holding a conversation with parents and community members is different. It involves listening and engaging these individuals on what they value the most, their children. These conversations build relationships of trust and mutual respect that may contribute to the increase in student achievement.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

The principal’s role is essential in ensuring that the issues of language and culture are incorporated in operationalizing the components of the leadership model. Language and culture should be considered in understanding the school context, in securing appropriate curriculum and instruction, and in engaging community members and parents. Library books, textbooks, and tradebooks should represent the cultural and linguistic diversity of the school. Students ought to be provided opportunities to read and write in either English or Spanish. Furthermore, teachers should be encouraged to use instructional strategies and activities that acknowledge the students’ prior experiences and interweave them into their teaching and instructional content.

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP

The successful schooling of ELLs cannot be left to the principal, teachers, and school staff alone. The district must become a partner in strengthening this effort as well. The same type of knowledge and understanding evident at the school level must be present at the district level, resulting in practices and policies that safeguard the educational attainment of ELLs. In the successful school leadership
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model for ELLs, district leaders are expected to pay close attention and attend to the needs of these students and their families. They do this by taking into account the context of the district stakeholders, the adopted curriculum and instructional methods, the type of parental and community engagement that is taking place, and their distinct language and culture.

Summary

As the successful school leadership model implies, the student is the priority in any school, and principals must be aware of the academic, sociocultural, and linguistic domains that must be addressed throughout the schooling experience. In addition, within these domains the language and culture of the students and their families must be respected, under-

stood, and maintained by the school and its staff. Understanding the school context leads to the appropriate instructional practices and curriculum development that must take into account the needs of ELLs. It is the principal who must be a full participant throughout the instructional program.

The implementation of the successful school leadership model requires that the principal be an instructional leader, an advocate who understands and articulates a clear vision for the success of ELLs. The principal must know how to work with parents, not at a bureaucratic level, but at a level that fosters caring and mentoring relationships.

However, principals cannot serve their schools in isolation. Central office staff needs to become fully immersed in the work of its schools in order to support the culturally competent principal. ☘

Lessons Learned from a Research Synthesis on the Effects of Teachers' Professional Development on Culturally Diverse Students

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Recent research focuses our attention on the teacher as the key to student learning. While we have a fairly substantial knowledge of what constitutes teacher effectiveness for certain kinds of outcomes and certain groups of students, we know little about how to transform less effective teachers into more effective teachers. The challenge intensifies in settings populated by teachers prepared for very different kinds of children, families, and classrooms than they encounter today. Since quality of teaching makes a difference in student performance, this paper focuses on teacher professional development that makes a difference in the performance of students from diverse cultural and linguistic groups. More specifically, the paper reviews the status of research on professional development for teachers of diverse students and summarizes selected findings from a recent synthesis of research on that topic.

Manual and database searches using relevant keywords yielded both qualitative and quantitative studies for the synthesis. Criteria for selecting articles included: (a) evidence of empirical data; (b) inservice as opposed to preservice professional development; and (c) culturally diverse student populations. In addition, only studies conducted in the United States and published in peer-reviewed journals from 1986 to the present qualified.

Findings

The results of the search yielded 21 studies divided into three groups: professional development for specific programs, professional development for multicultural or culturally relevant instruction, and professional development

through learning communities engaged in inquiry. The following sections summarize the findings from each category.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

Eight studies targeted specific programs for bilingual or English as a second language (ESL) students or teachers. Three studies describe bilingual programs (dual language immersion, teaching bilingually, and the Natural Approach), and one describes teachers' perceptions in a Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program. Two of the three bilingual program studies used training models of professional development, while the dual language immersion and TESOL programs used a development/improvement process spearheaded by a teacher leader and study group or a school-university team. All noted positive teacher change in perceptions. Running records of students' reading in the dual immersion study showed improvement in Spanish literacy for all students without a detriment to their English literacy.

In addition to the studies described above, four studies targeted professional development in four effective instructional approaches for culturally and linguistically diverse students—Kamehameha Early Education Program (KEEP), cooperative learning, cognitively guided instruction (CGI), and Instructional Conversations (IC). The KEEP study reported results of professional development for whole-language approaches. Utilizing consultants for support throughout the year, full implementation of KEEP by teachers resulted in improvements in students' writing achievement.

However, consultants concentrated their efforts on teachers who were most likely to obtain full implementation by the end of the year and therefore did not reflect a representative mix of teachers.

Another study focused on 36 teachers in two Success for All (SFA) schools. SFA is a whole-school reform model for reading success in the early grades; it includes cooperative grouping. Teachers implemented the reform after training and received follow-up classroom visits by trainers. The qualitative data revealed that teachers' attitudes about SFA could be grouped into four categories of support for SFA, ranging from strong support to resistance. While teachers generally felt that the model limited their creativity and was too rigid in its parameters, they nevertheless supported the model because it was beneficial to the students.

The third study featured professional development for teachers in a metacognitive instructional approach for mathematics problem solving. The researcher conducted a 3-day workshop for teachers featuring lecture, demonstration, discussion, simulation, and pre-workshop observations. The experimental group of primarily low-achieving Hispanic students who had teachers trained in this method performed significantly better than the control group on criterion-referenced mathematics achievement tests and assessments of attitudes toward mathematics.

The fourth instructional approach study used Instructional Conversations to train nine mainstream and bilingual teachers in the use of IC in their classrooms. Teachers participated in eight 2-hour professional development sessions over the period of 1 month. Sessions included provision of the theoretical basis of the strategy, demonstrations, practice in implementing the strategy, observations of strategy implementation, and time for reflection. All teachers demonstrated an understanding of the strategy in interviews and exhibited classroom behaviors consistent with their training. As a result, the researcher concludes that IC can be used as an effective means of professional development as well as an instructional strategy for English language learners (ELLs).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR MULTICULTURAL OR CULTURALLY RELEVANT INSTRUCTION

Two studies emerged that involved professional development for multicultural instruction. One study operated within a project designed to develop and field-test professional development modules to prepare teachers to work more effectively with diverse students. Prior to participation, teachers typically ignored the effects of culture and reflected a deficit approach when referring to culturally and linguistically diverse students and families. After participation, they became more aware of the impact of culture and made fewer stereotypical or negative comments about students and families. In addition, they stressed the importance of valuing and addressing cultural differences in their instruction.

The second study in this set focused on teachers' application of a professional development experience in

multicultural education to their mathematics instruction. Four themes provided the linkage between culture and instruction: the use of students' cultural backgrounds as an instructional resource, high expectations for mathematics achievement for culturally diverse students, a view of mathematics as a culturally created construct, and the connection of mathematics to students' lives. Thirty teachers participated in nine full-day sessions of professional development to enhance multicultural teaching in the first year and five in the second year. No particular content area was emphasized. Classroom observations over the 2 years revealed little impact on teachers' mathematics instruction despite claims by teachers that they learned a great deal. They taught mathematics as a decontextualized, sequential set of skills and did not apply content from their workshops to mathematics teaching.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LEARNING COMMUNITIES ENGAGED IN INQUIRY

Nine studies comprise the category of professional development involving participation in inquiry within the context of learning communities and represent the efforts of the past 10 years to involve teachers and external partners in the systemic reform of schools. Professional development embodied in this research includes (a) development/improvement approaches in conjunction with collaboration between schools and universities or within reform networks and (b) inquiry in the form of study groups and teacher research or sharing of life histories. Qualitative case-study approaches focused on stakeholders' satisfaction with their professional growth, participant empowerment, and primarily anecdotal reports of positive student outcomes. Positive findings included increased professionalism of teachers and perception of improved student learning, while negative findings highlighted the wide variation in impact across schools and settings and unevenness of stakeholder understandings within a reform setting.

Lessons Learned

The research synthesis yielded several lessons related to the impact of professional development on culturally diverse students. These are necessarily tentative due to the small number of studies that met the criteria for inclusion.

Studies of professional development for teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students provide little guidance for transforming the effectiveness of inservice teachers of these populations. Few studies that focus on professional development exist in journals accessible to researchers and educators in this area. While we found several studies in which we inferred that professional development for teachers of diverse learners took place, either no description or an incomplete description of the professional development was given. While research on the impact of instructional programs or approaches exists, little attention has been given to the link between professional

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development of teachers in the instructional strategy and the impact of the professional development on teachers or students. Many studies neglected to describe how—or even if—teachers acquired the particular strategy. Even among the studies in this review, few devoted more than a few paragraphs to the professional development targeted by the study. Furthermore, many studies of professional development neglected to describe the populations taught by teachers in the study.

Professional development models that included training, a common approach for professional development of teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students, have mixed impact on teacher and student outcomes. Surprisingly, given recent criticism of the passive training model of professional development, almost half of the studies that emerged used some form of training or workshop for professional development. Those that augmented the workshops with follow-up coaching or consulting and designed more interaction and reflection than the typically passive approach appeared to have more positive outcomes. However, use of extended workshops for culturally responsive teaching over a period of time failed to translate to classroom behaviors, even when teachers reported that they had learned a great deal in the training.

Current trends in professional development for teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students favor collaborative models of professional development that involve learning communities, but little is known about their impact on students. Over half of the studies featured the development/improvement approach to professional development and promoted inquiry embedded in networks, study groups, or collaborative teacher research. This new generation of professional development features joint productive activities characterized by meaningful discourse within a community of learners. Collaborative problem solving is connected to issues and problems identified by participants. In contrast to many of the training models, professional development experiences from this perspective focus on complex, ongoing problem solving rather than short-term “quick fixes.” However, the nature of the qualitative case study research reported in many of these studies makes it difficult to link the conclusions drawn to the qualitative data presented. Furthermore, few focus on the student outcomes associated with this type of professional development.

Conclusions

Professional development for diversity is complex, requiring an understanding of the context of current classrooms, adult development, institutional change, views of diversity, and professional development approaches. Although the research is scanty, disparate, and contradictory at times, this review suggests some directions to organize work in the area. Program implementers can join with researchers to fully describe and assess the impact of professional development on teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Because the instructional

approaches for ELLs and other cultural groups involve specialized knowledge and skills, the generic professional development for teachers that dominates in this area may be inappropriate and ineffective. Intensive study of the conditions and approaches for development of effective teachers is considerably less well-developed than studies of student outcomes. ☞

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Reculturing Principals as Leaders for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Augustina Reyes, University of Houston

Today's schools are facing more challenges than ever before. An increasing amount of pressure is being placed upon student standardized test scores and this creates an unfortunate "bottom line" mentality in some administrators and policymakers regarding student and teacher assessment. The "bottom line" these days is that students are expected to score well on tests and teachers are responsible for ensuring that success. However, little consideration is given to the fact that a significant number of today's students are non-native English speakers (or English language learners; ELLs). These students and their teachers face additional challenges when it comes to classroom performance and standardized testing.

While most teachers do all that they can to help ELLs meet their educational goals, achieving those goals is not always within the teacher's control. Indeed, a teacher's success—and a student's—is often enhanced and nurtured by a supportive, qualified principal and superintendent. So why, when today's school populations are more diverse than ever before, are principals and superintendents not receiving the training they need to adequately support the instructional needs of these students? This article documents the attempt one university is making to remedy this problem.

The University of Houston Urban Principals Program

In fall 2000, the University of Houston developed a principal preservice preparation program focusing on rebuilding curriculum and developing staff in order to best meet the needs of ELLs. The goal of the grant program is to revise the principal preparation curriculum by developing participants' knowledge about ELLs, their teachers, their parents, their communities, and their curriculum as relevant to educational administration. The program investigates the purpose, the foundation, and the standards for principal preparation in the United States and explores the development of a preservice principal preparation program that would foster the success of language-minority students. The program's short-term goal is to certify elementary and secondary school principals and superintendents who have a background in English language learning programs. Participants earn a graduate degree and/or state certification for principals and superintendents. The long-term goal is to improve the preservice preparation of principals by embedding all of their certification courses' content—including such topics as instructional and moral leadership and management skills—within a context of leadership for second-language-learning students and their teachers.

The program selection process used a collaborative four-step model. All students were required to meet the admission requirements for University of Houston, College of Educa-

tion, and Department of Educational Leadership and Cultural Studies. Students then participated in a leadership group activity to assess interpersonal skills. The third step in the process required that students complete an on-site administered writing sample. The final step was a panel interview. Department faculty, university administrators, school district administrators, and doctoral students, who were also school administrators, guided the admission process. Selections were made based on activity scores and committee members' recommendations.

The selection process identified participant preconditions, including demographic data, prior educational experiences, experience in leadership positions, and motivation for leadership. Personal demographic data includes gender, ethnicity, birthplace, and the stage of their graduate program. Prior academic information includes GRE scores, MAT scores, and grade point average. Prior educational experiences include colleges attended, degrees completed, the individual's teaching experience, other work experience, goals, and languages spoken. Years of experience in leadership positions includes professional honors, military and international experiences, publications, professional organization experiences, and research interests. Motivation for leadership includes reasons for attending graduate school. Potential for leadership includes items identifying the respondent's support network, including mentors, and questions concerning support from the supervising principal.

The curriculum rebuilding component of the program includes the development of an interdisciplinary curriculum. Preservice principals are required to take classes in business, the liberal arts, social sciences, and education. Requiring close coordination with the collaborating professor of each course assures that the curriculum was aligned with state principal preparation standards and the appropriate needs of second language learners. This study provides the opportunity to investigate the principal preparation curriculum and make recommendations to increase training in instructional, moral, and management skills needed for the changing times and changing populations.

Program Participants

This program targets bilingual/ESL teachers for principal preparation and certification. Private foundation funds from the Sid W. Richardson Foundation were used to seed the project. The U. S. Department of Education Title III Office of English Language Acquisition funded the project. The project is able to provide principal certification and a master's degree, principal certification and a doctoral degree, principal certification, and superintendent certification to 65 individu-

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als. The group includes 8 principals, 15 assistant principals, several instructional specialists, and several consultants. Approximately 55 students will complete the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) by November 2004.

Analysis

Completion data show a 90% first time pass rate for the state principal certification exam for cohort I and cohort II. As of June 2004, 80% of the graduates were employed as principals, assistant principals, regional service directors, Title I directors, instructional specialists, and consultants. Of the total, 50% were assistant principals. Twenty percent were in teacher positions; however, that number includes spring 2004 graduates who may be promoted in summer 2004.

Preliminary evaluations speculate that there may be a relationship between the curriculum foundation, the quality of participant recruitment, the participant selection process, and the passing rate on the state principal certification exam. Participant survey data show that the participants were a group of highly motivated participants with family and school district support systems. Almost 60% of the participants graduated with honors or received professional honors. Some of the participants had leadership experiences in the military, international activities, or in a church. Twenty-nine percent held an office in some professional organization.

Our goal is to have all students pass the state certification examinations and our curriculum efforts focus on the Texas State Board for Educator Certification Standards (SBEC) for principals. The standards are emphasized and discussed in the introduction course, the comprehensive exam, and the internship class. A focus in the introduction course is to introduce the standards, provide a copy of the standards, and provide the web address for the State Board for Educator Certification site. During this first course, participants develop a professional portfolio that is framed and organized using the standards. The portfolio is maintained during the duration of the program.

Title III funding for this program was based on an agreement that Title III participants would be given a comprehensive examination approximately at the program's midpoint. The comprehensive exam consists of two parts. The first is a written question on the theory and practice of school leadership based on the theory from the basic educational leadership class and organizational management instruction. As a part of the leadership question, students are required to read a transcript in which a strategically selected local high school principal discusses his leadership practice. Participants then analyze the principal's leadership practices using the leadership theory they studied. The second task in the comprehensive exam is for students to present their professional portfolio created in the introductory class and maintained with supporting materials from other courses, conferences, other professional development activities, and school-based activities.

The SBEC principal standards are also emphasized in the internship class. The internship class is organized using field-based activities, including focused shadowing, principal

interviews, and 4 half-day Saturday forums. Field-based activities are documented using a standards-based framework. The goal for using the SBEC principal certification standards is not to use them to drive the curriculum, but to make participants knowledgeable of the state standards and provide opportunities that maximize Texas school leadership. While these activities may have contributed to high passing rates on the principal certification examination, they are still exploratory activities that need much refinement.

Challenges to Changing Principal Preparation Programs

A major challenge to preparing principals to successfully influence success for ELL programs is educational administration professors' complete unfamiliarity with bilingual/ESL curriculum or how bilingual/ESL teachers are supervised. The question then is, "Do professors have the time, the will, or the moral integrity to expand their research and teaching repertoire to include the issues of ELLs and other diverse student populations?"

Classes like Information Management and Evaluation have been fairly adaptable to the program's goals and methods. Educational research is easily adaptable to research and studies on bilingual education. In areas such as financial management and resource allocation, there are topics like equity and bilingual/ESL finance formulae; however, there is also the need to explore campus-based resource allocation for ELLs, to plan for their needs, and to make those educational needs a school priority.

Student personnel services, such as student advisement, counseling, and guidance services, are general core course requirements for the degree and directly address the concerns of ELLs. Student and family issues affecting ELLs are easily addressed in communications with faculty, staff, and community.

Issues concerning the creation of a positive school culture, climate, and learning environment for successful programs for linguistically and culturally diverse students are included in organizational theory and management. This program considers ethics, morals, justice, and the integration of curriculum and other programs for culturally and linguistically diverse students, ELL teachers, and ELL parents. Preservice principal preparation programs such as this one can enrich the principal certification process and master's program by providing ongoing special seminars for linguistically and culturally diverse students.

The challenge in changing the preservice principal preparation curriculum is not content; it is the will of professors of educational administration and the will of departments and professional associations to provide appropriate development and research opportunities. Changing the practices of principal preparation programs presents many challenges, but the call for leaders of the profession to reculture the profession provides a foundation and plan for real change.



National, State, and Local Policies: Issues for the Preparation of Quality Teachers for Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students

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California Proposition 227, known by its proponents as the “English for the Children Initiative,” passed with a 61% majority of voters on June 2, 1998. The initiative was an example of “people making law,” written in response to apparent widespread discontent with the state’s theories and policies regarding the education of non-English-speaking children in public schools. Its intent was to inject more English instruction for these students in California’s public schools. Some 25% of California’s students currently fall into this student category and are referred to as limited English proficient (LEP), English language learners (ELLs), and/or as language-minority students. The assumption which underlay the initiative was that teaching children in their native language served only to hold them back in their acquisition of English and therefore in their future educational success.

Immediately upon its passage, Proposition 227 became a part of the California Education Code (#300-340). As it required within its text, districts throughout the state were given only 60 days to implement it. Under this new education code, children entering California’s public schools with very little English must be “observed” for a period of 30 calendar days. After 30 days, school personnel must decide if children have enough fluency in English to manage in a mainstream English classroom. If not, they are eligible to receive one year of Sheltered English Immersion, also referred to as Structured English Immersion, a program of English language instruction not described in detail in the law, which only required that instruction be “nearly all” in English (with a definition for the term “nearly all” left up to the district’s discretion). After one year, children are normally expected to integrate into mainstream English classrooms, where instruction is required to be “overwhelmingly” in English (again, with a definition for the term “overwhelmingly” left up to the district’s discretion). If parents or legal guardians find that district or school personnel, including classroom teachers, “willfully and repeatedly refuse” to provide the English instruction as required, they have the right to sue for damages. This aspect of the law has not yet been fully tested in the courts.

Competing Theories in Action: A District’s Responses to Proposition 227

To understand how competing theories regarding the education of language-minority students materialize into action, we examine select findings from one district’s implementation of Proposition 227. Focusing on the responses of two teachers in the district, we examined of how additive theories (which posit that a student’s native language is a classroom asset and Americanization is *not*

the goal) and subtractive theories (in which Americanization is the goal and linguistic diversity is minimized) influenced and shaped the nature of Proposition 227 implementation.

Teachers

The research on the implementation of Proposition 227 involved four teachers in the Walton Unified School District—two at both Open Valley and Westway schools. This paper focuses on two teachers, “Elisa” at Open Valley and “Connie” at Westway.

Born in Mexico, Elisa was educated in California and grew up in the Central Valley. She had been a teacher for 4 years—all of them at Open Valley and each in a different grade. During the 1999–2000 academic year, Elisa taught a third-grade bilingual classroom of approximately 14–20 students. Elisa’s decision to enter teaching was closely related to her experiences as a child. Elisa had worked in the fields of the Central Valley and felt that experience helped her to identify with the instructional and social needs of her immigrant students.

Connie, a Portuguese American with 11 years of teaching experience, had always been assigned a bilingual classroom but never remembers requesting to be a bilingual teacher. Because the structure of the bilingual program prior to Proposition 227 placed native language instructional responsibility in the hands of teaching aides, Connie never worked directly with her immigrant students in the area of primary language instruction. During the study, Connie taught a third-grade, self-contained English-language-development class of 20 students.

Findings

The manner in which the two teachers responded and reacted to Proposition 227 is illustrative of the way that subtractive and additive theories compete to shape the nature of the policy-to-practice connection. In large part, teachers’ guiding theories about their students influenced the way they mediated and negotiated the policy shifts brought about by changes in bilingual education policy. In the following sections, we explicate the connection between classroom practice and policy shifts by examining the role that teachers’ theories played in the process. We highlight how aspects of a subtractive policy context brought certain aspects of teachers’ additive or subtractive theories to the surface in their decision-making process.

TEACHERS’ THEORIES IN PROGRAMS THAT RETAINED BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Elisa believed that native language instruction provided significant academic, cognitive, social, and cultural
(*continued*)

benefits for her students. For her, the academic and cultural benefits of bilingualism were inextricably linked and her commitment to bilingual education was strengthened. Academic success and participation in American society did not mean that students had to sacrifice elements of their social and cultural identities. For her, these identities served as the basis for student success. She believed that Proposition 227 and its supporters were asking Latino students to abandon crucial elements of their culture and language. She saw her role as a teacher to ensure that this did not happen at Open Valley.

From Theory to Action: Teaching in a Bilingual School

For Elisa, theories about language-minority students lead to particular types of responses to policy shifts. Elisa became a very vocal proponent for bilingual education after the passage of Proposition 227. She used her standing in the school to rally support for the school's bilingual program and helped secure the parental waivers necessary to continue bilingual education at the school. In practice, she used native language instruction in real and substantial ways in her classroom, which included assessments done in English and Spanish. She continually looked for opportunities to defend the school's program and petitioned the district for resources related to bilingual education.

To understand the manner in which teachers' theories serve to mediate their responses to policy shifts, we present the following data excerpt from the first day of English-guided reading groups in Elisa's third-grade classroom. The event illustrates her attempt to create an additive context for learning in her classroom. Elisa commented that the debate over Proposition 227 had made her more committed to making sure that her students saw their home language as a resource. The nature of teacher and student interaction on the first day of English-guided reading was very telling. The message of the exchange was clear: "If you can do it in Spanish, you can do it English." Students were eager participants in these types of conversations and shared stories about bilingual relatives or about community members who spoke English and Spanish fluently.

Elisa's decision to establish an instructional context in which Spanish was presented to the students as a direct way to make sense of English also had important consequences in terms of the way students approached learning tasks in the guided reading group. During the interaction of this group, the students eagerly explored the new ways they would be able to use English. Her framing of learning English as an activity created a sense of excited energy for the students. This excitement surfaced as the students discussed what they would one day be able to do with English. Daniel proclaimed that he "will know the words that he has to know to respond [to questions]." And Betty, unsolicited, offered her English knowledge to the group, suggesting that Elisa substitute "tree" for the Spanish word "arbol." Elisa created an additive context in which she

encouraged students to capitalize on their existing linguistic resources during their acquisition of English. Because the focus of the study was to understand teachers' conceptions of bilingualism, we cannot with certainty claim that this additive conception had a direct impact on students' conceptions of their own bilingualism. For Elisa, however, her additive conceptions of bilingualism influenced the manner in which she reacted to the subtractive policy context created by Proposition 227.

Subtractive Theories of Education for Language-Minority Students

The teaching practices of Connie, a third-grade teacher at Westway Elementary, illustrates how teachers' existing subtractive theories materialize in the classroom. Her case is instructive because subtractive theory mirrored that of many school and district leaders who eliminated their bilingual education programs after the passage of Proposition 227. Proposition 227 did not cause her subtractive orientation but rather reinforced it and gave her new opportunities to act upon it. Connie's theories were undergirded by two major beliefs about the education of language-minority students. First, she believed that the English language served as a unifying force in the United States that was undermined by multilingualism. In this sense, Connie was in striking agreement with much of the political discourse surrounding both the English-only and anti-bilingual education movements. In an interview, Connie commented, "I totally agree that English should be *the* language of this country. You need to have some base and I think English needs to be the base here." A child of Portuguese immigrants, Connie resented the "special treatment" that she felt Latino children and families received. She viewed bilingual education as one such "special treatment."

Second, Connie believed that her students' academic progress was severely limited by their use of Spanish. Thus, rather than seeing students' primary language as a resource, she saw it as one of their primary weaknesses.

From Subtractive Theory to Subtractive Practice

Connie's theory about language-minority students resulted in a particular kind of educational practice which did not focus on the cultural, social, and linguistic resources brought by her students. A significant amount of instructional time focused on phonetic exactness—moments in instruction when Connie focused on the components and sounds of words. During these interactions, Connie's emphasis was on correct pronunciation and strict adherence to following directions. Coding of literacy events revealed that Connie's literacy practice centered on word meaning, grammatical conventions, and phonetic exactness.

Her emphasis on these three types of interactions was influenced by the nature of her school's language arts program (Open Court) and its literacy material. During teacher-run reading events, Connie seldom asked ques-

tions regarding the story events or the plot. Connie often asked students to identify compound words or to circle long vowels. Such interaction contributed to the treatment of text as a puzzle. Texts were viewed as little more than the sum total of their phonetic or grammatical values. During literacy instruction, Connie closely adhered to the script of the Open Court teacher's manual. Beyond the 40 minutes that Connie spent in math instruction, the entire day was occupied with Open Court literacy activities.

Connie believed that her students would experience success if they stopped speaking Spanish in the classroom. During grade-level teacher meetings, Connie voiced this position. Her comments generally related to "deficits" in the students. While it is highly likely that Connie's deficit perspectives of her students existed prior to Proposition 227, she noted that Proposition 227 had allowed her to act on her beliefs about the needs of her students in ways that she had previously not been able to. Because she was convinced that several issues outside the realm of her classroom contributed to the academic failure of the students, she took no actions to change the programmatic and curricular actions at the school.

For Connie, Proposition 227 offered an opportunity to enact a subtractive version of language and literacy practice in her classroom. Literacy instruction in her classroom was heavily influenced by her theories about her students and their bilingualism. Proposition 227 and its subtractive implications for the schooling of culturally and linguistically diverse students complemented Connie's existing views of her students and gave her liberty to attempt to restrict and limit students' use of Spanish in her classroom. While we do not claim that Connie's use of the Open Court literacy series is representative of all uses of the program, Connie's case illustrates how teachers with subtractive theories of their students might utilize and implement aspects of similar skills-based scripted literacy programs.

Conclusion

California has begun a weighty experiment in the instruction of language-minority students based upon subtractive theories of education. The underlying theory of Proposition 227 suggests that linguistic diversity is a problem in need of correction, and instruction exclusively in English provides the best therapy for such deficiencies. Such a theory of instruction suggests that the primary role of schooling is Americanization.

Proposition 227 is not just a theory, but one of the dominating policy voices in California and the nation guiding the schooling of linguistically diverse students. Given that teachers will continue to be the last line of implementation in this growing policy trend, it is important to consider various aspects of the roles they play.

The distinction between additive and subtractive conceptions of schooling for culturally and linguistically diverse students is a useful tool for understanding how

teachers' existing theories were complemented or contrasted by Proposition 227 implementation.

Seeking the day when all language-minority students will conclude that what they do in their classrooms does matter, we suggest that the theories that teachers hold about their students and instruction play a monumental role in the face of educational policies designed to lead to specific practices. Theories can bolster the intent of the policy, as was the case with Connie, or theories can provide teachers with a powerful basis to resist and reshape the intended consequences of certain policies, as was the case with Elisa. If teachers are to capitalize on the linguistic, cognitive, and cultural resources which language-minority students bring to the classroom, then those concerned with education must continue to pursue and develop substantial ways to support and develop additive conceptions of linguistic diversity in teachers.



The LSS REVIEW

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Editor

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