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Journal of Teacher Education 2005; 56; 104
DOI: 10.1177/0022487104274119

The online version of this article can be found at:
<http://jte.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/56/2/104>

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FACULTY FIRST

THE CHALLENGE OF INFUSING THE TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM WITH SCHOLARSHIP ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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The increasing number of English language learners (ELLs) in U.S. schools requires rethinking teacher education (TE). Most teachers have received little preparation in how to educate ELLs. Change in TE programs is needed to ensure that TE students are prepared to teach ELLs. Such change begins by educating TE faculty first. One catalyst for change, a faculty institute in which faculty, doctoral students, and public school personnel participated, is described here. Analysis of the process, the content, and course changes illustrated this TE program's efforts to infuse the curriculum with ELL scholarship. Change occurred with respect to individual faculty knowledge and awareness and resulted in changes to course syllabi. Emerging issues during the process illustrate how context influenced this change effort. TE programs need to adopt changes in order to graduate teachers confident in their knowledge of and preparation for multilingual and multicultural populations in order to serve all pupils effectively.

Keywords: *faculty preparation; English language learners; teacher education*

The number of pupils who are English language learners (ELLs) in the United States increased dramatically in the past half decade. The 9.6% enrollment of ELLs in public schools in 2000-2001 indicates a 32.1% increase from the percentage enrolled in 1997-1998 (Kindler, 2002). If it is not already true, each classroom in the country will soon be deeply affected by the changing demographics of America's students (Nieto, 2002). This has created a need for all teachers to be prepared to teach bilingual pupils who are now part of English-only classrooms (Gersten, 1998). At present, the overwhelming majority of teacher education (TE) graduates do not have licensure or any significant training in

working with ELLs (Menken & Antunez, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2002).

Most new teachers are powerfully influenced by their own experiences of school, as pupils or when they were student teachers (Feimen-Nemser, 1983). For the predominantly White, middle-class teaching force in the United States, that experience may not have included any challenges to their personal assumptions and beliefs, nor insight into supporting the success of ELLs in their classrooms. They may never have experienced themselves in an educational setting where the lack of proficiency in the language of instruction challenged their ability to

Authors' Note: The first three authors contributed equally to this article. Their names are listed alphabetically.

Journal of Teacher Education, Vol. 56, No. 2, March/April 2005 104-118
DOI: 10.1177/0022487104274119
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progress in school. Feimen-Nemser (1983, p. 157) faulted teacher preparation programs for not challenging aspiring teachers to examine the powerful influence of their personal beliefs *before* they arrived for their 1st year in the classroom. TE programs need to become the site at which TE students' preconceived beliefs about linguistically and culturally diverse pupils and practices are interrogated. Unfortunately, most TE programs have yet to respond to this need. The first step toward this goal is for TE faculty to recognize teaching ELLs as a salient and nuanced topic that needs to be included throughout the TE curriculum.

This article describes the first of a 3-year project offered to the faculty of a TE program, as well as the ideas of and feedback from the institute participants as they worked together to change individual course syllabi. It is anticipated that most of the full-time faculty members teaching required courses for certification will have participated in the faculty institute by the spring 2005 semester and made changes to the course curriculum via the syllabi. This is significant in that the TE faculty can then begin to more fully examine the effectiveness of their program in preparing students to teach ELLs.

FACULTY EDUCATION FOR CHANGE

Most TE programs include themes or courses that treat multiculturalism and multilingualism as "an addition to, rather than a transformation of teacher education philosophy, curriculum and structure . . . , outside the sphere in which teacher education is defined, implemented and reformed" (Nevarez, Sanford, & Parker, 1997, p. 163). Change in TE programs is needed in order to provide space within the TE curriculum for knowledge about theories and practices that facilitate success for ELLs in schools. To accomplish such change, efforts must be made to engage faculty first. Indeed, initiating and sustaining comprehensive faculty development prior to and during curricular change is essential (Nevarez et al., 1997). Successfully engaging faculty in a learning activity requires careful attention to four broad factors: the culture of the academic department, the source of change

efforts, the external influences at play, and the process of faculty education.

The culture of a university academic department, a factor in faculty education, holds five core values: collegiality, autonomy and academic freedom, expertise as the basis of collegiality, trust in reason (traditionally substantiated in the form of scientific method), and local values unique to individual departments (Walvoord et al., 2000, p. 15). Change can be built on each of these five values (p. 20), although the values that a department espouses may not, in fact, be those that are practiced, may be in conflict, and may cause tension (pp. 15-17).

A second factor to attend to in faculty education is the source of the academic program change effort. Faculty development studies show that faculty "are inclined to accept only those changes they deem necessary or desirable" (Travis, 1995, p. 35), and enact changes more readily when they are introduced by colleagues (Quinn, 1994) rather than by outside or top-down mandates (Travis, 1995).

External influences are a third factor to consider in academic program change efforts. The country's political and economic pressures, linked to both changing demographics and questions about the relevance of university curriculum to issues of national importance, influence universities nationwide (Alstete, 2000; Walvoord et al., 2000). These external factors for change occur at a time when internal re-examination of the academy's "historically dominant" emphasis on instruction rather than on issues of learning is taking place as well (Walvoord et al., 2000). Thus, faculty education that addresses the needs of all learners in our nation's classrooms is particularly timely.

Faculty engagement in learning and curriculum change also entails a fourth factor: the process of successfully educating faculty for change. Such a process recognizes that a faculty is comprised of individuals who also compose a professional body experiencing change collectively, and that collaborative efforts they undertake often involve tensions that are an integral aspect of change (Cochran-Smith et al., 1999).

In addition to the four factors mentioned above, those who plan faculty education should

be mindful that the process of change takes place over time (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Nevarez et al., 1997)—it is not a one-time injection of information and opportunity for discussion, but rather entails an ongoing effort that challenges the individual. Such education for change should include all TE faculty, and in doing so becomes a component of the group and institution's identity. When all are included, the opportunities for collegial debate and collaborative endeavors are rich with possibility, even among colleagues who may not have recognized such possibilities in the past.

The results of faculty education can be made public and tangible via course syllabi. The syllabi become tools that allow faculty to compare, share, and integrate their efforts to infuse new knowledge across the curriculum. The syllabus delineates and reifies what is to be taught and learned. "[It] reveals the philosophical disposition of the instructor, [and serves] as a cognitive map showing why the intellectual terrain covered is important. . . . [It is the] link between individual courses and the mission pursued by the wider curriculum" (Strada, 2001, p. 209).

TE Faculty Education on ELLs for Curricular Change

Educating TE faculty about ELLs requires that faculty be intellectually receptive to reflecting on issues and concepts of multiculturalism and multilingualism and to critically examining "the knowledge construction process and text analysis within different disciplines" (Nevarez et al., 1997, p. 166). Faculty must also be ready to examine personal assumptions and to sharpen their awareness of the cultures, languages, and the classroom experiences of ELLs. In this way, TE faculty will be better able to guide TE students.

White, dominant-culture TE students often see culture as something exotic, something that other people have. In short, they lack "socio-cultural knowledge [that] includes the understanding teachers have of their own cultures and cross-cultural knowledge" (Quintanar-Sarellana, 1997, p. 50), including how the dominant culture is privileged and reflected in institutions such as schools. However, TE faculty

can develop curriculum-wide strategies to guide TE students in developing a reconstructionist perspective toward their professional role. Such a perspective entails recognizing and challenging social power structures that subordinate certain groups while working to transform inequitable educational institutions and practices.

The social-class, cultural and language gaps between [classroom] teachers and students call for teachers to critically understand their own ideological orientations about cultural, linguistic and class differences, and to comprehend that teaching is not a politically or ideologically neutral undertaking. (Bartolome, 2002, p. 168)

TE faculty who are themselves versed in the way language factors into classroom learning can also help aspiring teachers increase their awareness of specific language challenges to classroom learning that ELLs face, challenges that are often transparent to monolingual English speakers. For example, regardless of instruction in English that ELLs may receive, they are also *at the same time* struggling to learn all subject matter in English. Without a thorough understanding of how language figures into education, "teachers sometimes assume that there is something wrong with students whose ways of using language are not what they expect" (Fillmore & Snow, 2002, p. 10).

THE FACULTY INSTITUTE ON ELLS

Background

Description of context. A comprehensive effort to infuse the TE curriculum with knowledge about the needs of ELLs began in spring 2003. The first step in this process was the implementation of a semester-long, seven-session educational offering called the Faculty Institute on ELL. The goal of the institute was congruent with the school of education's mission to enact education in the service of social justice and value diversity, including bilingualism and heritage languages and cultures. Importantly, the TE faculty had recently set a programmatic priority of determining better ways to prepare TE students to meet the needs of the culturally and

linguistically diverse school populations, particularly in the absence of a formal bilingual education program at the state level. They agreed on the need to develop resources that identified activities and readings useful for TE students preparing to teach ELLs. As a unified body, they agreed to support a proposal to the U.S. Department of Education to secure funding to help accomplish this priority and expressed interest in participating in a faculty institute on ELL. In this way, faculty implicitly and explicitly agreed to become agents for change.

Funding was secured from the U.S. Department of Education to support the systematic integration of language diversity issues into the TE courses, and the ELL faculty institute is the first step toward such integration. Other activities included monthly workshops for practicum supervisors and the development of two handbooks for elementary and secondary levels. All supervisors and preservice students in field placements received a copy. All direct quotes included in this article are from taped institute meetings that took place between February and May 2003, and in follow-up interviews that took place in October 2003 and in April and May 2004.

The school of education involved in this project annually prepares 800 preservice teachers, approximately 560 undergraduates, and 250 graduate students, representing 30 states. These preservice teachers will eventually work throughout the nation in urban, suburban, and rural schools that serve linguistically diverse students. The TE student population of the school of education is overwhelmingly White and the product of middle- to upper-class suburban, English-only educational backgrounds. This is a student population that will benefit from instruction and experiences that build personal insights and experiences in educating ELLs across the TE curriculum.

Institute Participants and Their Prior Experience

A TE faculty member who is an expert on bilingual learners, bilingual education, and teacher preparation for multilingual classrooms

designed and facilitated the institute. Other participants included 7 TE faculty (including the department chair) representing a variety of disciplines, 1 linguistics professor, the associate director of the practicum office, 3 representatives from urban public schools (PSs; district bilingual education director, school principal, literacy coach), and 3 doctoral students from the TE program. The ethnic backgrounds of the participants included 12 Anglo-Americans, 1 African American, and 3 Latino. Five individuals identified themselves as bilingual, including the institute facilitator. All participation was voluntary.

The knowledge about ELLs and content on ELLs taught by TE faculty members prior to their participation in the institute was not uniform. Some had already reflected deeply about privilege in regard to race, language, and culture in their own lives and in U.S. institutions and in the classroom. Some were aware of strategies to effectively teach ELLs and to engage the parents of ELLs as partners in their children's learning. In TE courses, some professors had already included topics regarding ELLs to varying degrees, whereas others had not yet begun. For example, one professor mentioned that he just "touched on" the concepts of English language learning and uses in his introductory course on diversity. A second professor included the topic of bilingual education toward the end of the semester through a couple of assigned readings, and another included just one reading on language and culture. One of the professors teaching a methods course had included discussion of cultural issues in his course but stated, "What was new for me was the issue of language." Another said he had been aware for a long time of the importance of addressing the needs of ELLs in his methods class but did not have enough current knowledge of concrete strategies to include this topic in his classes.

Institute Goals

The purpose of the institute was to change the teacher education curriculum to better prepare teachers for work with linguistically and

culturally different (LCD) students. Six weeks prior to the first meeting, participants were provided with a folder that included the purpose and expected outcomes for the institute, a syllabus, the readings required for each session, and an observation protocol to be used during a classroom observation activity. The syllabus for the faculty seminar was grounded in research on the successful education of bilingual learners (August & Hakuta, 1997; Brisk, 2005). The material was organized to move from the larger societal context to the school context and finally to the classroom.

As an individual goal, each participant was expected first to look for ways to change his or her syllabus. Each new syllabus was expected to include material concerning the education of bilingual learners and delineate its objectives, topics and core knowledge, readings, assignments, and evaluation approaches. Faculty were to then implement all changes the next time they taught those courses.

To integrate changes at the departmental level, participants would then work together to define the *core knowledge* about ELLs, as reflected in individual syllabus changes, and then decide in concert the best way to present the core knowledge across the curriculum. In this way, the new knowledge could increase in sophistication from one course to the next and share a common vocabulary.

Institute Activities

Faculty institute activities were framed by three key questions: How do we educate ELLs in the present sociopolitical climate of public education? How can we create a school climate that is conducive to learning for all learners? How can we create a classroom context that will promote learning for all pupils? The broad range of topics discussed reflected both theoretical and practical knowledge gleaned from scholarship on ELLs that the facilitator identified for participants. These topics included current and historical controversies in bilingual education in the United States, the social and cognitive factors of bilingualism, engaging the parents of ELLs in school, concrete strategies for

differentiated instruction, and participants' views on the social identities of the TE students they taught or observed.

The institute facilitator adopted a constructivist approach as the institute discussions and activities unfolded. This approach recognized participants as active knowers participating in the construction of their own knowledge, focused on negotiating meaning among participants rather than transmitting knowledge, recognized the need for all participants to be aware of the influence of their prior experiences and personal values on their learning and understanding, and assumed novelty and change to be part of most learning situations (Jackson & Caffarella, 1994, p. 37).

ELLs and the Sociopolitical Climate of Public Education

One aspect of the novelty and change evident in the unfolding of the Faculty Institute on ELL was the way participants tailored group discussions to their own needs. Participants frequently added topics to or preempted general information about ELLs presented in the assigned readings in order to discuss topics that would be more immediately and locally useful. The following section presents an overview of the institute content, activities, and discussions, both planned and unplanned, as framed by the three overarching questions. The first overarching question, How do we educate ELLs in the present sociopolitical climate of public education? was addressed during the first session of the institute.

Answers to this question unfolded against the backdrop of the United States as a multiethnic, multilingual country since earliest recorded history. A great variety of indigenous nations with distinct languages inhabited U.S. territories prior to the arrival of colonizers and the eventual dominance of the English language, proving true, at least in the United States, the old adage, a language is a dialect with an army and a navy. Immigrants, refugees, and sojourners further increased the variety of languages and ethnic groups. Unlike first-language acquisition, second-language acquisition is sup-

ported and constrained by a host of personal as well as external factors. Sociohistorical events mold and change societal attitudes toward various ethnic groups, influencing which languages and their speakers are privileged in any one epoch. Therefore, the education of bilingual students must be situated in a sociopolitical and historical context, and the numerous external factors affecting these students' success must be explored (Brisk, Burgos, & Hamerla, 2004; Tollefson, 1991).

Participants in the Faculty Institute on ELL were given state census data to learn more about the current demographics of school populations and the most commonly spoken languages throughout the state, who is learning English, and the rate of growth and present enrollment figures of bilingual students throughout the state. Prediscussion readings addressed the social context of education, approaches to the education of bilingual learners, attitudes toward bilingualism, fear of social bilingualism, and the confusion and problems with current labels for ELLs. Issues of power and pedagogy involved with language and policy decisions were given considerable attention as participants discussed approaches to education that emphasize English-only education and the influences of high-stakes testing and the standards movement.

The faculty members generated discussions that stemmed from their realization that the demographic data they read did not itemize the actual schools in which ELL learners were concentrated, that demographics were not static but shifted over time, that there was rich cultural heterogeneity within a single language group, and that educators should understand policy better in order to influence it. One faculty member wanted to address a concern he held, stating, "I get uncomfortable with conversations around cultures that don't look at class dynamics."

With the help of the institute participants who were administrators from the local urban school district, faculty members learned firsthand how their local public school system was affected by recent state language policy and learned about local bilingual programs, the

bilingual students' level of achievement, and varying reasons why families participate in the bilingual program.

How to best prepare their TE students to teach ELLs was also an issue of importance for the participants. For teachers to be advocates for social justice and become effective urban teachers, participants recognized that their TE students need to develop (a) deeper respect for the culture of ELLs and their families, (b) the ability to question their own assumptions, and (c) the ability to discuss issues of identity, privilege, and ethnocentricity. Discussions focused on how to educate TE students so that they might be "unyoked" from the shortsightedness of their privileged status. As one participant noted,

I think our students have assumptions about teaching and learning that they don't know they have. They need to know who they are, and they don't. . . . [As] teachers, we [all] have to know who we are as learners and people, and I think that's our greatest challenge.

ELLs and School Climate

Once the participants learned about how schools currently categorize and educate bilingual learners, the faculty institute's focus shifted to how to create a school climate and classroom context more conducive to learning. The second overarching question asked, How can we create a school climate that is conducive to learning for all learners? This was covered in depth during four institute sessions. Participant learning began with important readings on issues of identity development and the impact of culture on families, students, and classroom practices and management.

The values of the dominant culture in the United States are reflected in the curriculum content and lead to assumptions about the background knowledge all students should possess, as well as which learning philosophies, teaching approaches, management styles, and school routines should be familiar to all students. Examples of good programs for bilingual learners exist within good schools (Carter & Chatfield, 1986; Pérez, 2004; Senesac, 2002).

These schools create “a nurturing, family atmosphere with high expectations for learning and personal development” (Senesac, 2002, p. 99) and “an orderly and safe climate” (Montecel & Cortez, 2002) that respects all students and their families as well as their languages and cultures. Such respect is evident in effective communication between school personnel and families and leads to improvements in students’ reading achievement (Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman, & Hemphill, 1989), helps students feel enthusiastic about their education, and helps teachers better understand the culture of the home (Ruiz, 1993). Without such communication, cultural differences between school and students can cause conflict, affect student performance, and color relations with families (Brisk et al., 2004; Nieto, 2002). Pressures from and between the dominant society and their ethnic community play a role in bilingual students’ identity formation (Day, 2002; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Educational practices must consider the fragility of bilingual students’ identity and create appropriate environments that foster a bicultural identity.

Social meaning of curriculum topics. Through collaborative discussion, institute participants recognized that issues of bilingualism and multicultural education were most always placed at the end of their course syllabi and textbooks. This placement sends a message to the TE students regarding the priorities these issues have within the larger context of education. A faculty participant pondered this tendency:

The diversity issues always get put at the end of the course, and . . . I don’t know why I put them there; it’s like after you’ve talked about all of the educational stuff, then you talk about kids. So, I made a note on my syllabus to change where it falls.

Participants began to see possible changes that could be made across the curriculum and discussed the possibility of weaving university coursework together to help TE students address issues of identity, language, inequity, and power.

I could see, when you’re thinking about what the sequence could be in what we do at the university level, that [two introductory education courses] could be a place where people encounter just the

notion of how you use language in a classroom . . . what’s a teacher’s responsibility around this . . . [and] the culture of power. And then, you build on that in the methods classes.

Classroom Context That Supports All Learners

Good instructional practices alone are not enough for students who are trying to learn in a second language. The third overarching question, which was covered in the final session of the Faculty Institute on ELL, asked How can teachers create a classroom context that will promote learning for all learners?

Institute readings on ELLs focused on the need for teachers to address the English language in addition to teaching the subject matter. Indeed, ELLs take from 4 to 7 years to catch up in academic content knowledge to their native English-speaking peers (Hakuta, Butler, & Witt, 2000). The type of language knowledge ELLs need in order to understand classroom instruction is complex and decontextualized (Fillmore, 1982). Students need specific and high-level knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and discourse functions when using language for mathematics, social studies, and science (Solomon & Rhodes, 1995).

Academic language activity. During one session, participants struggled with analyzing textbook readings from various disciplines in order to tease out how academic language can be confounding for ELLs. They found that syntactic and semantic characteristics of academic language varied from one discipline to another and noted that such variation and the difficulty it presents to ELLs is rarely, if ever, discussed with aspiring teachers in TE courses. For example, participants identified the potential difficulty for ELLs trying to understand the “short, chunky, often incomplete” sentences used to give directions in the texts of many disciplines, the use of the historical present in history and social studies texts, and semantic issues within math texts such as discussion of the “legs” of a triangle.

Additionally, ELLs may be confounded by trying to understand, instead of overlooking,

inconsistencies in English. "There are also things in text that aren't meant to be recognized, that [ELLs] will trip over," commented an institute participant who is a linguist.

For example, the text that we looked at here contains two adjacent sentences: "Biologists have described," in the present perfect . . . and then, in the next sentence, "Some biologists estimate" that's in simple present tense. There's a small semantic difference between "have estimated" and "estimate." [I]t's not really relevant and doesn't really push the discourse forward. A conscientious [ELL] student might spend a lot of energy trying to figure out [his or her temporal] orientation to these facts. A fluent [English] reader just goes, "Yeah, yeah, describe, estimate, etc."

As part of this activity, institute participants also analyzed the state standardized assessment tests in math, science, history, and reading and discussed the specialized language used and how this also disadvantaged ELLs, regardless of their knowledge of the subject matter. The facilitator reminded the institute participants more than once, "A test *in* English is a test *of* English" for ELLs. Participants remarked that the language of standardized tests is often designed to try to trick people into choosing a wrong answer, a practice that is especially confounding for students whose native tongue is not English.

One faculty participant commented on the manner in which language structures reflect a specific worldview and social orientation. For example, academic English emphasizes categorizing and classifying specific components into a linear hierarchy and favors a teacher-driven question-and-answer discourse pattern.

Videos. Video presentations catalyzed discussion in two institute sessions about classroom practices. One video presented information on the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model (Echevarra, Vogt, & Short, 2000). The purpose of this model is to help teachers adapt their instruction to better serve ELLs. By analyzing the SIOP model and collectively discussing related issues, participants learned about the essential teaching strategies for instructing ELLs that the protocol was used to identify. Following this discussion, participants

were asked to use the SIOP protocol during an upcoming school visit.

The second video was chosen for its experiential learning impact. It featured a teacher presenting an oral lesson on nutrition in a language that none of the participants understood. Participants expressed frustration and discomfort when presented with extensive information they could not understand. They expressed sympathy for ELLs in classrooms where their peers can understand lessons and they cannot. An institute participant who works in the public schools explained, "[ELLs] try to show they are confident, so they develop these strategies that help them appear [confident]. The issue is, how do you train them to want to ask questions and dare to say, 'I don't comprehend?'" The institute facilitator added, "If you don't have the negotiation of meaning, in which a teacher and a student go back and forth until they actually agree [on a shared meaning], then you don't actually have language development." Another participant commented that classroom teachers need to be careful when helping ELLs understand content to not "take up all the space" in the conversation, to instead allow ELLs to try to express their understanding themselves, even if they are slow or inaccurate.

The second segment on the same video showed the teacher delivering the same lesson in the same language, but this presentation was accompanied by visual aids. Several institute participants expressed relief at the comprehension made possible by visuals. One participant, however, raised concern that graphics make necessary the engagement of a different part of the brain, with the potential to confuse students if their struggle for aural comprehension is distracted by their additional struggle for visual comprehension. In addition, it is important to remember that interpretation of graphical images is not universal, but rather bound by cultural understandings.

School visit. The school visit and related use of the SIOP model was a very valuable activity, particularly for institute faculty participants whose time is spent mostly in university classrooms. One institute participant reflected, "I was struck by the way that questions are con-

structed; even [questions] in texts that are prepared for teachers can be very confusing. They were confusing for me as an English speaker.”

Participants reflected on how important it is for teachers to know English and its idiosyncrasies well in order to understand what linguistic patterns ELLs might be struggling with and to better understand what ELLs might be trying to say or write in English. Institute participants appreciated the difficulty teachers face in trying to both teach academic content and clarify the different linguistic features of specific content areas in order to be an effective teacher for all students. One institute participant who had previously taught in elementary school pointed out, “It’s one thing if you’ve got a specialty, but if you’re an elementary teacher, you’re doing all of this. . . . As an elementary teacher, I never would have thought to differentiate all of this, because I was so overwhelmed with content.”

Discussion shifted to the importance for TE students to learn strategies to ensure that they understand and effectively work with more sophisticated language structures. These include sentence structure and vocabulary that explain relationships between concepts and support effective argument development. A participant who oversees language learning in a public school explained, “We’ve found that kids can get really good at organizing content into webs and clusters and that sort of thing. [However,] if they don’t read aloud the relationships, they don’t really get that extra level of comprehension.”

One group of institute participants linked what was learned in their school visit observations with readings on parent involvement to consider the value of creating an experiential learning activity, a home visit, as part of a required TE course. In this activity, pairs of TE students might spend the evening and an overnight at the home of a family who did not speak English well in order to understand cultural and linguistic practices in the home and to consider how those practices might support or conflict with dominant culture language and cultural practices in the classroom.

Guest speaker. During the last of the regular institute sessions, a well-respected academic and

researcher in the field of multicultural education and bilingual learners presented her recent work, tying together many of the institute topics. The speaker discussed the sociocultural context of school, the need for classroom teachers to maintain a focus on societal equity and equal access to educational opportunities, and enacting classroom practices that support learning for all children. The speaker pointed out the many ways in which power is present in school decisions, such as “which classes meet in the basement, who is teaching which children, and who decides what knowledge is of most worth.” She pointed to the necessarily political nature of teaching, the need for all teachers to be grounded in issues of social justice, critically examining their assumptions and ideologies. She urged the institute participants to push their TE students to “learn other languages [including ‘other Englishes’] in order to better understand the problems and experiences of others, including poverty, immigration, culture shock, oppression, and prejudice.” She also demanded that ELLs and other children of color be supported in learning how to “ask troubling questions and take a stand on important issues.”

The speaker described a school classroom where every parent came to class to discuss things they did or wanted to do, and the teacher used those stories as part of the classroom curriculum. She ended by saying, “We need to find other ways to engage with parents without thinking that parent involvement is [just] going to PTA [parent-teacher association] meetings. There are different ways of engaging the parents, and it’s not just helping with homework.” Following the presentation, one institute participant asserted that most of all, the institute participants needed to maintain a local focus on the TE students in their own TE program and on the students and parents in the nearby schools. This need was addressed in the next faculty institute activity: the participant-facilitator meeting.

Faculty Reflection and Syllabi Changes

Following the last regular session of the institute, faculty participants met individually with

the faculty institute facilitator. Each meeting was a brainstorming session on specific syllabi changes that the individual participants were considering in their own courses or in their roles in the public schools. This was an invaluable opportunity for each participant to resolve questions and test ideas for change. One participant stated, "Developing an action plan was a powerful way for me to force the application of ideas—which may have otherwise only been good intentions." A second participant felt it was "useful to anticipate such a conversation [with the facilitator] in propelling my thinking forward and making it concrete, practical." However, some participants indicated that end-of-semester pressures compromised the extent to which they could benefit from the meeting.

Summer Seminar

The summer seminar was a chance to present to the whole group those ideas for change that individual participants planned to incorporate in their individual courses. The institute facilitator had expected that all faculty would have all syllabi ready and would be ready to identify the key overarching ideas linking those changes. This would set the stage for deciding how best to integrate the new information on ELLs across the curriculum and to later evaluate the effect the new curriculum might have on TE students. At this final meeting, participants began by itemizing their proposed changes (described in the following section) and briefly generating key ideas, but then chose instead to discuss the specifics of those changes and ideas in depth, with little attention to how to integrate such changes across the curriculum or evaluate their success.

Participants characterized the summer seminar as a chance to share and to hear how others are integrating the big ideas of the Faculty Institute into their own practice. Some participants considered it too short and suggested extending the summer seminar to 2 days. Another felt, "It could have been more of a product-oriented experience than a continuation of Faculty Institute discussions."

Program Change

When the new semester began, faculty participants continued to discuss ideas with the ELL faculty institute facilitator. They implemented ideas covered during the institute and considered ways to coordinate topics on ELLs across the curriculum. They began implementing preliminary changes to individual courses during the spring 2003 semester and more systematically during the fall 2003 semester, thus influencing TE students. New initiatives to address issues of ELLs with TE students' practicum supervisors have also been implemented. Adaptations made to courses included readings, activities, and assignments required of students.

Six participants reported that they assigned additional or different readings to TE students based on readings discussed in the institute and/or recommended by the institute facilitator. These readings specifically address the importance of exploring beliefs and practices when preparing to teach ELL. One participant stated, "I need[ed] to look for more ways to incorporate students' experiences into discussion, and to get them to reflect personally on their linguistic beliefs." Two participants indicated they had invited guest speakers as part of an ongoing discussion of how to best teach ELLs. Three participants indicated that they introduced their students to the SIOP model. Public school participants also began using the SIOP to evaluate and counsel teachers on issues pertaining to ELLs when they observed classroom instruction.

Three participants reported adding written assignments to their syllabi that hold students accountable for addressing ELL issues. One participant stated, "We changed the design used for [student] lesson plans. Students had to have a section that dealt with 'problematic vocabulary' . . . words that ELL students would not be familiar with." Other participants provided additional options for students in course projects. For example,

Each student in the [special education] class was responsible for conducting a workshop that bridges

theory and practices on a specific topic. The options included one on bilingual-special ed. Consistent with our course approach to learning about practices, a student shared with us principles for effective bilingual-special-ed.

Another assignment added to a course syllabus as a result of participation in the ELL institute was a child study of an elementary or high school pupil and his or her social context of education. This paper was geared to focus on children from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

More general comments indicated greater consistency in referencing material and experiences related to ELLs. "We would regularly allude to the need for our students to be aware of the ELLs that they would be teaching," stated one participant. Similarly, another indicated, "I specifically and repeatedly addressed the idea of the importance of paying attention to language and the culture in which it is embedded." Two participants pointed to the value of multiple content areas addressing ELLs in varying ways. "The inclusion of topics addressing ELLs seemed to become more important to students as the semester progressed and they were able to tie our on-going discussion of ELLs to discussions of ELLs in other courses." Four participants indicated that the amount and significance of change is not adequately reflected in updated syllabi. One participant stated, "The change appears to be minimal on the syllabus. Bilingual learners and immigrant students were already a topic on my syllabus [but] I think I had better information this semester." Another participant felt he had been addressing cultural issues in courses for many years, but the institute helped further enrich the language component.

One institute participant began targeting the teachers and supervisors in the public schools who oversee the TE students' practicum experiences. She has conducted teacher and supervisor workshops and has included reflective prompts on issues about ELLs in TE courses. She is piloting the use of the SIOP in practicum placements.

Another institute participant brainstormed with the institute facilitator about plans for

engaging other TE faculty in systematically mapping the addition of ELL scholarship and activities about ELLs across the curriculum. The infusion of such information reflects the developmental progression in children (e.g., early childhood, prekindergarten, primary, secondary, etc.), around which the TE courses are organized.

In addition, participants from the public schools demonstrated several culminating activities they had undertaken in response to what they had learned in the institute. For example, one participant developed an implementation plan for professional development in her department based on information from the institute. Other school-based participants used the SIOP model to evaluate and counsel teachers whom they observed in their classes.

DISCUSSION

Participants in the Faculty Institute on ELL succeeded in demonstrating in their discussions and syllabi their commitment to change. This change, consistent with prior studies of faculty change (Quinn, 1994; Travis, 1995), occurred on a personal level, as participants examined assumptions, biases, and instructional practices in their own teaching. This commitment extended to their plans to work with TE students, to help them examine who they are and how classroom practices may inadvertently disadvantage ELLs. A close examination of literature on ELLs, including language acquisition theory, identity development research, and effective classroom practices, expanded participants' awareness of and knowledge about ELLs.

Change also occurred on a program level, as faculty institute participants found application for their new knowledge in their course syllabi, in plans for integrating new knowledge across the TE curriculum. As noted by Strada (2001), the syllabi are the link between individual courses and the wider TE curriculum. The most common changes across courses included incorporating discussion and activities about ELLs across the whole semester rather than in only one class meeting at the end of the semes-

ter, adding readings that addressed issues of learning for ELLs relative to particular academic content, and assignments that addressed the educational development of ELL. The participants working in public schools were invited to the institute to ground TE curricular changes in practice. However, they also used their knowledge to bring changes to their own work. They designed professional development in schools and assisted teachers interacting with ELLs in the classroom through classroom observations and critique.

TE program change could occur because of several concurrent factors. First, the faculty was ready to participate in the institute, as demonstrated by their philosophical agreement with the university's and department's focus on issues of social justice and on their voluntary participation. Second, funding for the institute allowed participants to be compensated for their time and made it possible for the facilitator to supply each participant with important reading material in the form of journal articles, data, and Internet resources, including some readings pertinent to the areas of each participant's greatest interest. Third, the facilitator provided expertise and guidance in navigating the theoretical and practical knowledge about educating ELLs, as well as a plan for enacting concrete change across the curriculum. Fourth, the facilitator's constructivist approach in the institute activities and interactions demonstrated flexibility in allowing participants to approach their learning as they wanted, acceptance of the variety of experiences and points of view that participants brought to the institute, and the valuing of cultural and linguistic differences among participants (Jackson & Caffarella, 1994). In short, through the institute, the facilitator modeled important practices that could be applied in teaching TE students about how to best serve ELLs.

The design of the institute respected the characteristics and needs of adult learners, including recognizing learners' prior experience and knowledge, allowing their active involvement in how learning efforts are designed and carried out, satisfying the need to be connected and supportive in their learning endeavors, and be-

ing cognizant of the context of adult lives that may provide both barriers and support for learning (Jackson & Caffarella, 1994). In addition, the institute provided opportunities for "situated cognition," the opportunity to learn through experiences that are "'situated' as closely as possible to practice they represent in order for learning transfer to become a reality" (pp. 36-37). This occurred both in the experiential learning activities during institute sessions and the school visit, and in the abundance of current, real-life challenges regarding ELLs and classroom practices described by the school-based participants in the institute discussions.

Although faculty education for change in order to improve the teaching of ELLs is desirable for all TE programs, the faculty institute on ELLs and the learning it led to should not be seen as replicable for other universities. Indeed, TE faculty change efforts in other universities may be noticeably different in implementation, direction of faculty learning, and priority of change efforts. In recounting key experiences from the first institute, it is clear that two *local* factors, the specific TE students and TE faculty, created challenges and healthy tension that defined the lens through which faculty viewed their learning. The outcome of a similar education effort might be very different in another University setting.

First, the students in the TE program in the university where the institute was held are relatively affluent members of the dominant culture and are White and monolingual. This appeared to create a situation in which the important information on ELLs that participants were learning in the institute and their commitment to their TE students were held in tension. The comments of both faculty and public school institute participants indicated that TE students needed to be guided to recognize their own dominant culture social identity before they could truly grasp the challenges ELLs face in the classroom. Faculty recognized this as a possibly painful process, but one that was necessary if TE students were to truly understand the importance of knowledge and practices regarding ELLs, especially given all the other teaching issues (e.g., content knowledge, classroom

management) vying for their attention. In discussions, TE faculty and the public school participants indicated that teaching TE students about social issues was a prerequisite and an ongoing corequisite to presenting new information about teaching ELLs.

The second local source of tension, the TE faculty, influenced the institute focus on faculty education for change. Faculty members have been humorously described as “a group of individuals bound together by their mutual interest in a reserved parking area.” This description points to the individualism that is part of the faculty collective, instantiated by values such as autonomy and freedom of expression. Although the institute facilitator succeeded in guiding *individuals* to make changes in their own courses, the facilitator’s plan for integrated curricular-wide changes did not come to fruition within the 4 months of the institute. In other words, the *collective* effort for change did not fully occur with this group. The knowledge about ELLs that the faculty learned was necessarily influenced by the context of the learning environment, including the characteristics of TE students and the TE faculty (see Figure 1).

There are at least two reasons for this influence. First, this group of faculty had not worked together before to jointly discuss the TE curriculum, so the institute goal required a behavioral change, in addition to the intellectual challenge of learning and agreeing on subject matter about ELLs. Second, although TE faculty members had supported the institute and its goal of curriculum-wide change, only one third of the TE faculty was able to attend the institute due to scheduling and/or prior commitments. The individual faculty participants who did attend the institute were clearly ready and committed to change in their own individual courses. Replication of the institute in subsequent years with additional faculty may allow for change at the broad programmatic level because they will share a common intellectual base about ELLs, and eventually a common identity (Nevarez et al., 1997) as advocates for ELLs.

The participants of the Faculty Institute on ELL described here were able to break new ground in infusing topics and activities about

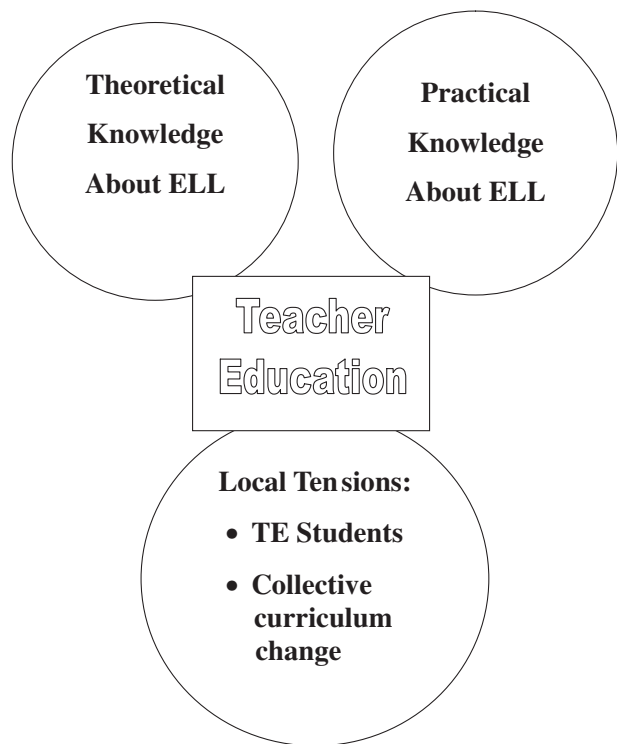


FIGURE 1: Teacher Education (TE) Faculty Education for Change: Institute on English Language Learners (ELL)

ELLs in their syllabi at a key point, given the politics at play regarding bilingual learners in K-12. Future research is needed in several areas to track the growth of individual change into integrated change across the curriculum, the sustainability of such change, and the impact of the change on the current TE students and eventually on the success of ELL pupils in the schools where TE graduates become practicing teachers. The latter is the ultimate measure of the success of the ELL faculty institute.

CONCLUSION

The multilingual, multicultural classroom is an American reality in the 21st century. Typically, aspiring teachers try to extract knowledge from the occasional multicultural course or workshop to address the needs of ELLs in their classrooms. However, the responsibility lies with the faculty first, rather than with the stu-

dents of TE programs. Teacher educators need to learn and to assimilate knowledge of language and culture into their disciplines to pass it on to their students. TE programs must regenerate themselves to prepare their graduates to create responsive classroom environments for all of their pupils.

This article provides an example of how an institution has begun the process of change to prepare aspiring teachers to better serve ELLs. Future stages of this project are designed to reach most TE faculty and infuse scholarship on ELLs across the TE curriculum. The characteristics of the TE faculty and student population play an important role in the direction of any effort that TE program change takes. Therefore, other institutions that are cognizant of the local variations in these two groups and are ready to accommodate their needs and concerns can and should undertake faculty education for change that increases knowledge about ELLs.

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