You Can't Have a Rainbow Without a Tormenta: A Description of an IHE's Response to a Community Need for a Dual-Language School[1]

Ellen R. Clark, Belinda B. Flores, Mari Riojas-Cortez,
and Howard L. Smith
University of Texas at San Antonio

Abstract

Schools, with an ever-increasing presence of language minority students, are now compelled to critically analyze the programs and the practices in which they engage their students for academic achievement. This manuscript presents a case study[2] in which a school and a university worked together in a restructuring process to create a community of learners. The implementation of a two-way bilingual model at Tormenta Elementary School was the main mechanism that drove the restructuring process in both settings. The findings may assist universities in realizing their crucial roles as catalysts for change and as learners in and with the community.

Introduction

In the last 15 years, literature on "school reform" and "school restructuring" has burgeoned. Educators and the public are urgently seeking ways to reduce the numbers of dropouts, low achievers, and under-educated high school graduates. Increasing numbers of ethnic minority and poor students challenge the curricula, the epistemology, the philosophies, the values, and the administration of schools. Schools, strongholds of tradition and conformity, are now compelled to critically analyze the ways in which they engage their students for academic achievement and the degree to which they form affiliations with the community. In their attempt to help schools improve, researchers have left one element relatively unexamined: the role of the university.

This manuscript presents a case study in which two educational entities collaborated to create a community of learners. The elementary school partner is located in a poor, predominantly Mexican American neighborhood that began the process of school reform in the fall of 1994. To maintain anonymity, we use the pseudonym, Tormenta (storm) for the school and have changed the names of all participants. The institution of higher education (IHE) partner is part of the largest state university system in Texas and a major Latino-serving institution in south Texas.

The implementation of a dual language model at Tormenta Elementary School was the main conduit through which changes occurred. The university's Division of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies was instrumental in assisting the school during the transformation process, so the study will focus on this aspect. This research is timely in light of the call for the implementation of two-way bilingual programs by former U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley (as cited by Balli, 2000). The findings from this research may assist other schools, which primarily serve low income, language minority children, as they undergo their own restructuring process. The findings may assist universities in realizing their crucial role within the community, specifically in K–16 initiatives.

Professional Development

Today's teachers are no more prepared to teach to a diverse society than their counterparts were at the onset of the civil rights movement. In fact, teacher preparation in the last century has relatively remained unchanged. For the most part, teachers are prepared to teach "Dick and Jane" as if the United State were a monolithic and monocultural society (August & Hakuta, 1997). This type of teacher preparation has created inequities within our society (Valencia, 1991; Valenzuela, 1999). While some teacher preparation programs include one course on diversity, this approach has left teachers feeling inept to meet the growing demands of diverse classrooms (Lewis, Parsad, Carey, Bartfai, Farris, & Smerdon, 1999). Unlike their monolingual counterparts, bilingual teachers have been prepared to teach linguistically and culturally diverse students (García, 1996). A recent Institute of Higher Education Policy (2001) publication indicated that minority teachers are more likely to be effective with culturally diverse and lower socioeconomic students because they can make connections to the students' lives and cultural backgrounds. Similarly, minority students prefer teachers that reflect their ethnicity, bilinguality, and gender (Galguera, 1998). Minority teachers often intuitively know the needs of their minority students because of similar experiences they have had (Flores, 1999). However, given relatively low numbers of minority and bilingual teachers as compared to majority teachers, all teachers have to become cultural brokers between the school and the community (Phelan, Yu, & Davidson, 1994).

In the last 10 years, some universities have begun to acknowledge that minority students form the majority of the school populations. In addition,

schools of education are beginning to restructure their teacher preparation programs to prepare culturally responsive teachers (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b). One of the challenges faced by schools of education is that the majority students are often fearful of going into urban school settings because of preconceived notions (Ladson-Billings). It has been argued that the beliefs of teachers were formed long before they entered the university (Rodríguez, 1993), especially those beliefs they have formed about minority students (Burstein & Cabello, 1989; Cabello & Burstein, 1995; Olmedo,1992). Institutions of higher education (IHEs), specifically the teacher preparation programs, can have a significant influence on the quality of teaching and school reform (Tatto, 1998; see Flores, 1999).

In an attempt to create cultural responsive educators, who are and feel competent in cross-cultural settings, good quality teacher education programs not only offer the knowledge and skills, but also provide field experiences in a variety of settings. In addition, these innovative programs engage their teachers in critical reflection. This type of reflection allows teachers to explore, challenge, and change their preconceived notions (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b).

School Restructuring

Current trends in school restructuring movements emphasize systemic reform, which consists of the examination and comprehensive reorganization of an entire school, including beliefs, power structures, curriculum, assessment, staff, student, and community roles (Cuevas & Fontana, 1996; Lipman, 1997). Cline and Necochea (1997) state that "school organizations are undergoing a paradigm shift in the way student failure is generally viewed, from 'blaming the victim' to taking organizational responsibility for school failure" (p. 147). As such, studies now suggest new roles for teachers (e.g., Smyth, McInerney, Hattam, & Lawson, 1998), new roles for principals (Milstein, 1993; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1997), new roles for parents (Skau, 1996), and other members of the community (Heckman & Peterman, 1996).

School change is complex, difficult, and at times painful for those involved. As Hong (1996) proposes, school change must be comprehensive and simultaneous because of the complexities of school structures and the day-to-day events that occur with the top-down approaches that have been criticized for their lack of consideration for the individuals involved in change and prescriptive nature of the mandate. Efforts that are more successful are characterized by teachers playing a generative role in change (McCarty, 1994; Heckman, 1996). The restructuring process for dual language schools is not different.

During the last 10 years, low-performing schools are being challenged to change their teaching approaches. Current school restructuring research indicates that successful schools have core beliefs about learners and are accountable to the population to which they serve (Scheurich, 1998; Lucas,

Henze, & Donato, 1997). However, there has been limited research in minority schools with ethnically and linguistically diverse populations (August & Hakuta, 1997). As a result of a deficit model, minority students have not experienced school success (Valencia, 1997, 1991). Some researchers have suggested that there must be a cultural match between the school and the population in order to minimize the disengagement of minority students and maximize student outcome (Peña, 1997). Other researchers have noted that restructuring cannot occur unless issues of ideology, race, and power are considered as part of the process (Lipman, 1997).

Although the literature on language minorities and school restructuring is limited, a review of available works reveals several characteristics and conditions of successful school efforts with emphasis on language minority populations. A school-wide vision is fundamental to meet the goal of providing an outstanding education for language minority children (Nelson, 1996). Maintaining the vision and momentum of change requires a stable core of bilingual teachers who believe in the changes taking place and understand the process and its goals (McCarty, 1994; Heckman, 1996). Integration of language minority and majority students, providing academically challenging curriculum, and adapting programs to the needs of the students are common to the schools studied by Nelson (1996) and Heckman (1996). The research on school change (McCarty, 1995; Heckman, 1996) all cite an acceptance and availability of expertise and collaboration from outside the immediate school community as advancing the vision and means of change.

The structures or mechanisms selected for a particular school are dependent on the goals and context of the desired change. There must be a "fit" between perceived problems and needs and the structure that is to resolve them (Lieberman, 1995). A common obstacle to effective restructuring and program implementation is a resistance to change based on teacher's beliefs about teaching, learning, and the goals of the school. There must be a shared belief that the current system is inadequate and that it must be rethought, reorganized, and redeployed to become more effective (Baecher & Cicchelli, 1992). The importance of having a collective efficacy within an urban school setting—a belief that all children can learn—has shown to significantly affect achievement (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000).

Dual Language Model

One of the key elements involved in school change can be a bilingual education model that is either a dual-language or a two-way bilingual education program (Martínez & Moore-O'Brien, 1996). After examining current research and the status of their bilingual programs, across the country a number of schools have chosen to transform from a transitional model to a dual language model (Christian, Montone, Lindholm, & Carranza, 1997). Educators suggested that the transitional model did not adequately meet the needs of the population (Losey, 1995). Normally in the transitional model, language

minority children are exited out of the bilingual program at the end of three years, and some after only one or two years (Baker, 1997). Transitional programs are legislative mandates in which the focus is to learn English; thus, there is a lot of pressure to transition to an English classroom (Brisk, 1998).

Researchers have found that after one or two years, language learners have only begun to develop their basic interpersonal skills in the majority language while the development of cognitive academic language requires six to seven years (Collier, 1992; Lindholm, 1995). Further, since the type of academic language used in the classroom is cognitively demanding, learning and success in the majority language requires academic language proficiency. Thus, the early-exit (transitional) model represents a subtractive/deficit situation because the children are exited before developing their cognitive academic language in the majority language (Collier, 1992). This type of bilingual program is seen as aversive because language minorities are not given equal educational opportunity (Cummins, 1984) or given opportunity for ethnic and linguistic self-determination (Hornberger, 1989; Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). Therefore, although many schools have had transitional bilingual programs, very few, like the Rachel Carson Elementary School in Illinois, have reported successful outcomes (NABE, 2001).

Several studies have shown the effectiveness of U.S. dual language/two-way bilingual programs (Christian et al., 1997; Snow, 1990). In sum, several benefits of this program have been identified:

1. Both English majority and language minority speakers develop bilingual and biliteracy proficiency in all language domains (i.e., speaking, reading, writing, listening).
2. The language minority student's language is given status quo and, in turn, this empowers the language minority student.
3. Two-way bilingual education is seen as a vehicle for preparing individuals for a competitive global economy.

In order to have an effective dual language program, several sociocultural, political, economic, and linguistic factors need to be considered: (a) the language use and proficiencies of both the school and community; (b) the attitudes and expectation of teachers, students, and community; (c) educational cost benefits; (d) the role of cultural knowledge; and (e) federal and local language and educational policy issues (Brisk, 1998; Faltis & Hudelson, 1998). If these factors are not fully addressed, this may mitigate the success of a program.

Methodology

A qualitative approach allows researchers to use different methods and techniques to bring multiple perspectives to a study (Patton, 1990). Thus, the researchers employed a qualitative design as the framework for the case study. Throughout the three-year period, different types of data were gathered,

including classroom observations, archives, and interviews of key participants: teachers, principal, and university faculty.

During the first year, classrooms were observed for about an hour every other week during the fall and spring semesters. Document analysis occurred throughout the three-year period by examining the school's standardized score reports, reflective journals, and federal and state agencies reports about the status of the two-way bilingual program. Since we were often at the school throughout this period, many informal discussions also occurred and were noted. The open-ended interviews lasting one hour to an hour and a half were conducted during fall 2000. Member checking of the transcribed interviews was conducted with the teachers and principal. In addition, one of the researchers met in informal sessions with the participants for clarification purposes of the transcriptions. Data analysis of the interviews included the identification of emerging patterns. The principal reviewed the manuscript before it was submitted.

The multiple sources allowed for triangulation of the data. Triangulation, member checking, and multiple sources assist in establishing the credibility and the trustworthiness of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Patton (1990) reaffirms: "One important way to strengthen a study design is through triangulation, or the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomena or program. This can mean using several kinds of methods or data" (p. 187).

Specifically, the following questions guided us in the investigative and reflective process throughout our study:

1. What was the status quo of the two institutions?
2. What critical incidents occurred during the process? How did these affect the transformation outcomes?
3. What has been learned?

Findings

Weather Bulletin: Status Quo of Tormenta Elementary School

Six years ago, Tormenta's school climate reflected failure. The school's academic program, standardized test scores, and morale embodied the name of the elementary school. It truly was a Tormenta. This school is located in a low socioeconomic neighborhood surrounded by one of the oldest public housing projects in the city. Most of the residents are Spanish speaking. Within the community, there is only an old strip mall and few other commercial entities. Of the 550 students enrolled at Tormenta, most children are Mexican American (98.7%) and are classified as economically disadvantaged (92%). Although half of the children are predominately Spanish speakers, approximately 183

students were being served in a transitional bilingual education program (1996–1997 Campus Improvement Plan). Parental denials of bilingual services accounted for a (5.5%) difference between those requiring bilingual education and the actual number served.

When the current principal, Ms. Lozano, was assigned to Tormenta, the school was plagued by low performance on the state-mandated test: "Our scores were in the single digits, we were probably, if not the lowest, one of the lowest performing schools in our district based on the TAAS test." In fact, the state had placed the school on "warning status" because of its continued low performance. The principal was given the charge to improve the school's Texas Assessment of Academic Skill (TAAS) scores or face loss of accreditation.

The school's self-study (1994) revealed that their bilingual program was being poorly implemented and that children were being rushed into English instruction. The curriculum was not meeting the needs of the learners. One of the first-grade teachers describes the conditions:

> Before Mrs. Lozano came to our school we had several leaders who made it very obvious that they were not interested in the bilingual program. We didn't have support. . . . We lacked a lot of things in comparison to the monolingual classrooms. Our students didn't have the materials that they needed. Teachers . . . we had to scrounge for things. We had to buy a lot of our own materials, out of pocket. . . . If you weren't willing to buy them, well the children lacked a lot. . . . Even in reference to dictionaries, our dictionaries would date back to 1964, 1965, and this was 1992. (2000)

Essentially, the learning environment at Tormenta was neither one that valued bilingualism nor one that viewed the community as a valuable resource. To address these needs, the school community, incorporating parents, professional, and paraprofessional staff, became actively involved in designing a plan of action for restructuring. Not all of the staff supported the move to restructure; some were convinced that there was nothing that could be done to improve the performance of the school. A restructuring committee comprised of teachers, staff, and parents was formed to assure that the goals and objectives of the plan of action were achieved.

Weather Bulletin: Status Quo of the IHE

The university partner celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1994. It is the only public four-year university in the city. The university has a campus that recently opened downtown that is more accessible to students. The downtown campus offers a broad range of undergraduate and graduate courses.

Since its inception in 1973, the Division of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies has provided leadership and expertise in understanding the function of culture,

language, and literacy in the community. The division is interdisciplinary in faculty focus and interest with anthropologists, historians, sociologists, and linguists, working alongside bilingual educators. The research in this division has generally reflected the nontraditional interdisciplinary nature of its mission. The pedagogy and philosophy reflected in the faculty approaches centered on one that is based on critical literacy.

The Division of Education is in charge of teacher certification and provides the professional development component, which includes field experience teaching. The faculty are responsible for most of the teacher training courses. The major for preservice bilingual education students is in Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS), which includes a core curriculum component, the IDS major, and their area of specialization.

Bilingual education preservice teachers take the 24 hours specialization from the Division of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies, but receive the bulk of their teacher preparation course work from the Division of Education. The profile of the faculty in this division reflected the tradition of most teacher preparation programs throughout the United States, largely male and white. Over the years, the bulk of the research in this division concentrated on traditional issues within mainstream settings. Within the curriculum, discussions of diversity were usually confined to special needs or low socioeconomic populations. Little recognition focused on language minority students or on seeing the students and community as linguistic and cultural resources. Pedagogy and curriculum practices in the division reflected a Eurocentric, middle-class orientation approach for teacher preparation.
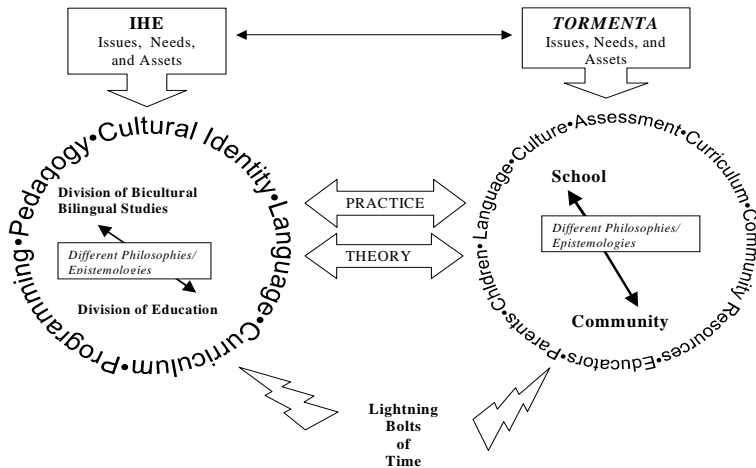
Critical Incidents

Collision of Two Fronts: The IHE and the school's differing perceptions of school restructuring and the dual language school movements

University perspective

The school and the university operated in isolation of each other, each caught up with their own realities. In typical ivory tower fashion, the university failed to peer beyond its walls, only perceiving the local community as a mere receptor of what it had to offer. The university was preparing teachers, counselors, and administrators in a traditional mode. It disregarded the sociocultural contexts of the community and the cultural capital of its constituents. The university did not see the need to change its approach to teacher preparation; rather, the expectation was that the community would eventually conform to reflect the university's reality of what schools should be like. In the attempt to work together, a collision occurred between the differing epistemologies of the two institutions.

Figure 1. Collision of Two Fronts: An Overview of the Institutions'
Status Quo (Clark, 2001)

The Division of Education saw bilingual education as a short-lived phenomena that would eventually wane. There was no recognition of the merit neither in being bilingual or bicultural nor in becoming bilingual educators. One faculty member told students to "leave what they had learned in the Division of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies at the door when they stepped into the real teacher education program." Often, the university had sent bilingual education students into settings that were not supportive or reflective of the best practices in bilingual education. Though faculty members in BBL continue to be leaders at the national level, they were not considered players in the planning discussions for teacher preparation at the university. The Division of Education's philosophy and practices were not aligned with needs of the community. So when schools failed, the university's finger pointed at the community's socialization, language, and cultural practices and not at itself.

Tormenta perception

The school district realized that changes needed to be made and began those changes by appointing a new principal to the school. This new principal, having a background in bilingual education and educational administration, knew that to restore order in the school things needed to change. The first task to conquer was the low scores on the state's standardized test. The principal's reflection captures this:

"Well, in reference to our scores we were rated low performing. . . . Why were our scores so low? So we started looking at what was happening in the classrooms, started evaluating the materials that we were using, and we basically found that our students' native language was not being nurtured (2000)."

If the first language is not being nurtured, even though the school offered a bilingual program, then the discrepancies in students' performance was understood. Teachers realized that not only was the bilingual program not being implemented appropriately, but the attitude that many of the staff had toward the children in bilingual classrooms prevented appropriate implementation. For instance, a first-grade teacher indicated that the bilingual program in the school was not valued and was not consistent across grade levels. The school had adopted a transitional model that was not benefiting children, and the situation was promoting the low performing status.

The principal and the restructuring committee teachers decided that a dual-language program would be the centerpiece of their restructuring efforts. Assuming that all they needed were a few new teaching strategies to make the new program work, they contacted the IHE, requesting a graduate course on dual language instruction. However, there were deeper, more critical issues to address. The university professor who taught the class remembers:

> The night we discussed parent involvement, a kindergarten teacher raised her hand and said that she had a difficult time getting her parents involved because they were all drug addicts. When I asked her "how many children do you have in your class?" she said "18." Then I said to her, "so you have 18 parents who are drug addicts?" She said, "no, maybe about 3 or 4." I continued on by asking her if she tried calling the parents on the phone to get them to come more often. She then said that she didn't speak Spanish, but that anytime a parent came she would try to find somebody to translate, "but still they won't come out." I finally said to her, "Ok, let me get this straight. You don't speak Spanish and you think they're all drug addicts. Why would they want to come to see you? (2000)

The principal was aware of how damaging such beliefs could be. When asked what group gave her the hardest opposition to using the new bilingual model, she quickly responded:

> Staff. It was staff and it was probably some of those people, most of those people moved on, they just . . . they moved on before it was even implemented. . . . And some of them were not even bilingual teachers. And some of them were bilingual, but may not have been successful bilingual teachers. So, I think a lot of it did tie back to their own experiences as well as not believing in it. (2000)

Perception of dual language/two-way language schools

A shock for the university professors was the teachers' general lack of understanding of bilingual education. There was no consensus on language distribution or use of instructional strategies. One of the professors, challenged them by stating, "If you know that it takes five to seven years to acquire academic proficiency in English, why would you exit your students out of the

program by the end of second grade" (2000)? According to a seasoned teacher with (then) nine years at the school:

> The bilingual program was one that really wasn't valued here. It was a transitional program. Even at that I didn't see how it was consistent you know within the grade levels. So, the students wouldn't benefit from it. I think that's why we found ourselves in the situation that we were in with, you know, our low performing status (2000).

The teachers, despite previous workshops and courses, lacked a sufficient knowledge base on bilingualism and bilingual education to successfully implement the proposed program. One teacher, who was certified in bilingual education, described what she knew about the dual language model before taking the course:

> It had been mentioned here and there, but nothing I ever really looked into at the time. . . . I think we went with whatever was . . . being implemented at the individual schools. . . . I didn't really know any better. All I knew was that whatever we were doing . . . was not working and we needed something else. (2000)

The principal concurs:

> They needed to be taught in the language they understood and that was not happening . . . We took a good look at what we were doing with reading—it was just very simple. Were children learning to read in the language that they understood? That wasn't happening. (2000)

The school had used an earlier exit model for so long that many teachers had forgotten the developmental process in becoming bilingual. Tormenta had had a long history of failure with its language minority students. Upon inspection, the history of the school is quite similar to hundreds of schools in the United States. When interviewed, the principal told us that the low academic achievement of the school was the result of years of neglect, "It wasn't just the one principal who was here before me."

Weather Update: Tormenta Elementary School

One of the first tasks undertaken by the restructuring committee was to examine the self-study report conducted in 1994. This self-study was required by the school district because of the low performance of the school. Essentially what they found in this self study was that language minority children were being exited after being in the bilingual program for only two to three years. They also realized that Spanish was being used minimally while children were being pushed into English. Further, they saw a clear connection between the number of failures and the push toward English. In sum, these key factors were identified as possible reasons for the school's low academic performance: (a) an early exit bilingual education model, (b) low school morale, and (c) lack of parental involvement.

The decisions made by the restructuring committee were (a) to initiate a dual language model, (b) to provide inservices and graduate course work for faculty, and (c) to provide parent training. Five years later, the state rating of this school had risen because of the improved performance. The dual language program of the school has been seen as the major catalyst contributing to the success. As the principal reflects:

> When you speak about children, to see how happy and how confident they feel about themselves. Whether they're learning a second language for the first time or experiencing the benefits of being truly bilingual, how good they feel about themselves and how proud they are to help even another student. The parents also feel very validated when they walk into the school and then from the teachers' standpoint to see them feel how proud they are to be a part of something that was at one time so negative. . . . It's a good feeling for all of us. (2000)

Weather Update: The University

The discourse between the two institutions provoked an epiphany—that if a local school has a problem, then the local university is part of the problem. The university was not meeting the needs of the local school districts that needed teachers trained to work with cultural distinct student populations. Recently in an attempt to address this need, two of the co-authors of this article were recruited by the Division of Education. The research and teaching of the Latino faculty in this division has begun to challenge notions of how diversity and multiculturalism exist within in the complex context of schools and society.

The collaborative partnership that occurred between the Division of Bicultural Bilingual Studies and the school resulted in a significant event: The IHE was contracted to assist in this restructuring process. Essentially, the division's role was to provide professional development graduate training and consultation for the school during their transformation.

Spring course

After the initial fall course with the Tormenta faculty, it was evident that the teachers would not be able to implement a dual language program until they had a firm grasp of the foundations of bilingual education. The university class was then focused to provide a broader view of the research on second language acquisition (e.g., Cummins, 1992; Pease-Alvarez & Hakuta, 1992), bilingual education models (e.g., Collier, 1992; Ramirez et al., 1991), historical perspectives (Crawford, 1992), and federal policies (Ruiz, 1995). They were also assigned projects to help them connect theory to classroom practice and program implementation. A second-grade teacher comments:

A lot of the research we were doing at the time for courses we were applying here on campus with our students. . . . What we were being required to do . . . when we had to do research . . . it helped because we could see it happening. We could see it in our classrooms. [The principal] gave us that support. A lot of times we were working on our papers for school, but she would give us time from our teaching time to continue to do the research because it was beneficial to the school. (2000)

The course was also a forum in which to model appropriate instructional practices for additive bilingualism. Many assignments were configured for collaboration, cooperative grouping, and for exploring the funds of knowledge within the community (Moll & González, 1994). Another important element for dual language instruction was language distribution:

One thing that impressed me a lot was the first course that we took. . . . Our monolingual teachers, who already had Masters', decided that they were going to take that on and it was offered in Spanish. . . . One of them was African-American and one of them was Anglo. . . . It was so neat because we were able to model what the [program talks about] . . . That was one of the most memorable moments because it was at the professional level. (third grade teacher, 2000)

For the 16 weeks they were in the graduate course, the teachers and principal examined their beliefs on languages and cultures, and the ways in which they had operationalized their values through their teaching. The principal remembers:

It was offered here at Tormenta. It was an evening class [from] 5 p.m. [to] 8 p.m. We had anywhere from 20–25 teachers enrolled— bilingual [and] non-bilingual teachers. They were very interested in it. At that point, teachers investigated, they researched a 50/50 model, a 90/10 model. They also talked about strategies for learning a second language. We also talk about how would we approach the parents as well as the community for support. You know, we talked about some of the first steps that we would take to initiate the strand that would take place at one grade level at a time. We talk about materials that would need to be used in order for us to be successful. The teachers were very enthused about learning the different models. (2000)

The professor recalls some evenings in which the class was taught entirely in Spanish in order to give the adults a glimmer of what their students felt daily. Even though handouts and other supports were readily available in English, the teachers' reddened faces, sweaty brows, and averted eyes indicated their discomfort with academic discourse in Spanish. Essentially, these

bilingual teachers were situated in a language learning setting in which they were not in command of the language being used.

For their final projects, students explored such topics as *Lau v. Nichols*, basic research in bilingual education, immigration and bilingual education, and The English-Only Movement. One night a teacher raised her hand and stood up. She told the class that at the beginning of the course she did not believe in bilingual education; she felt that more instruction in English was necessary. After the many readings and class discussions, she had a change in her thinking and decided to advocate for additive bilingual programs. Amazingly, another teacher would later reaffirm this metamorphic change.[3]

Lluvia: Cultural Revitalization Process

The field-based graduate course, from a management perspective, was important in several ways. Until 1994, the university had only one campus but it was located far from the center of the city. As a first-grade teacher states:

> Really facilitated . . . my going back to school because they were willing to come to us here on campus and provide . . . support here. I think that made it easier. . . . than having to drive to the campus. . . . I would look into going back for my master's and I wouldn't do it and I know there were other teachers at the time too, who were interested, but . . . wouldn't do it. We would get out of here five, five-thirty and be real tired and you really didn't feel like going back to school. (2000)

Summer 1997 institute

When the spring course ended, the teachers were armed with new information, but also new questions: "Where do we go from here?" and "How do we get there?" In response to these questions, as well as to requests from other local school districts, faculty in the Division of Bicultural Bilingual Studies developed a graduate bilingual education summer institute titled "Restructuring Schools for Language Minority Students." Teachers from Tormenta as well as teachers from other districts registered for this course.

The purpose of this institute was to review the theory and practice of school restructuring as a potential vehicle for increasing the academic achievement of language minority students. In addition, the premise was that since all students are part of the school community, then the schools should reflect the surrounding community. The basis for this institute was that schools should provide a supportive environment for all students. One of the courses was designed to provide elements of classroom and school change. Teachers and administrators were expected to work collaboratively to design models for school change and/or to design integrative curriculum for language minority students.

Some of the schools involved in the summer institute wanted to either implement dual language programs, develop magnet schools, or to just revitalize their current school environment. Teachers and administrators working collaboratively on their restructuring plan felt that the summer institute was one of the most rewarding and successful experiences. Participants addressed various questions: What needs to be restructured? Why does it need to be restructured? For whom does it need to be restructured? And how can we restructure? A reflection from a fifth-grade teacher in the summer institute sums up the experience:

> As Analisa and I began looking at "What's" [problems] to restructure, we realized that they were not hard to come by. We based our "What" question on problems that we have seen surface over and over again. . . . There is also a need to make sure that continuous communication exists among the educational elite, the community, and the school. . . . Overall, this was a great learning experience. It was a lot of work but it was worth every step of the way! Now I am ready to restructure! (1997)

The final product was composed of the group work done by the graduate students in each of the following sections: organizational structure, delivery systems, curriculum, staff development, and parent and community involvement. The restructuring plans were developed with the intent to be implemented in the various schools in the fall. The concluding projects dealt with a basic premise: Latino parents, language minority students, students at-risk, minority school districts, and communities at-large need to be incorporated into the school reform movement. This teacher's reflection reinforces this concept: "As a whole group, we also talked about community resources, model programs, and strategies that can be proven to be successful in involving community in the reform and restructuring process" (1997).

As part of the summer graduate institute, several guest speakers came to present to the class regarding the restructuring components. Luis Moll from the University of Arizona spoke of the importance of teachers knowing the school community. His descriptions of teachers learning about the families and their resources were significant for the students. As one third-grade teacher notes:

> The fourth thing that I learned was that it is very important to include the parents and community in the restructuring process, so that they also feel as if they have some ownership in the new program. In the restructuring process it is also very important for the school to include Luis Moll's Theory of the Funds of Knowledge so that the culture and values of the community will permeate the school building (1997).

Another teacher reiterated: "We felt that the community has much to offer in relation to support for restructuring." Irma Marzan, director of the Dual Language School in New York, spoke of the incorporation of the community's

wish to maintain and develop a second language into the development of a new dual language school. Following is a reflection from a teacher in the summer institute: "Community building requires that the school work alongside parents in order to build a strong foundation so that children do not fail. Public schools are not achieving the educational outcomes that parents and society expect and deserve" (1997).

Educators in districts across the country are undertaking school reform efforts that promise to improve these outcomes by setting high standards, establishing systems of accountability, offering their teachers greater support, and incorporating new research on how children learn best. "Finally, I foresee all teachers and administration working closely with their students' parents and community so that they have a true understanding of their students and what they have to offer to learning that takes place within the individual classrooms and the whole school." This quotation from summer institute teachers reflects that they are educators who want so much for their students and their schools.

Fall 1998 Course

Some of the Tormenta dual-language teachers pursuing their graduate degree enrolled in a course that studied the multicultural art and folklore in the United States. This course offered a study of the visual arts and the folklore of different culture groups that contribute significantly to contemporary society. Through the course, students were able to reinforce and expand their awareness about the scope, depth, and diversity of various artistic mediums and genres expressed by the different Latino cultural groups within the United States. For the teachers, this study of folklore and the visual arts became, in essence, a study of ethnic identity and multiculturalism.

The teachers, as a result of taking this course, understood and were able to contextualize the following: (a) cultural pluralistic expression, (b) cultural similarities and differences, (c) artistic cultural expression, (d) the processes and outcomes of culture contact, and (e) the theoretical framework used to study and describe these processes.

This course challenged the students' perception of identity, ethnicity, and culture. Evident were the instantiation moments provoking a cultural identity revitalization to occur within the teachers. As a second-grade teacher reflected:

> I felt that I found myself again because of the way the professors taught the courses. That they made you feel pride. I think in order for me to have been an educator and do a good job with my students now, I needed to know what was know the importance of my language and my culture first. How could I practice something—preach something I didn't practice. (2000)

A Cycle of Theory to Practice/Practice to Theory

As part of the agreement with Tormenta Elementary School, the Division of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies decided that the school would be fertile ground for the field experiences of preservice teachers. A reciprocal relationship was formed between the university and Tormenta bilingual teachers in which they were to pursue a master's degree in bilingual education and to be mentors for the undergraduate Title VII bilingual education trainees. Several researchers have discussed the importance of field experience in the preparation of preservice bilingual education teachers (Milk, Mercado, & Sapiens, 1994). We felt that this experience would afford our Title VII trainees with the unique opportunities of observing and working with teachers truly committed to bilingual education, of working within a low-income, low-performing school, and working within a school structure undergoing transformation.

The first goal of observing and working with teachers committed to bilingual education was considered of great importance. The trainees were excited to finally have the opportunity to have mentors that reflected their beliefs and training. The second goal of working within a low-income setting school designated as low performing was viewed as an opportunity for trainees to observe the needs of language minority students on a first-hand basis, and more importantly, how these needs can be addressed. These experiences, while working in partnership with their mentor, allowed the trainees to reaffirm a belief that all children can learn in spite of linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic differences. These experiences also allowed trainees to see this community from an asset-based perspective in which the community's linguistic and cultural knowledge were seen as being vital in the education of the children.

The third goal of working within a transforming school structure provided the opportunity for trainees to experience first hand the difficulty of school restructuring. In the past, Title VII trainees would remark that the university had given them a false sense of what teaching within a bilingual education setting required: "You didn't tell us that it was going to be this hard and that we were going to have to fight the world to teach like we have been taught." Essentially, past trainees often felt powerless with the school culture and politics and felt that they were standing alone, fighting for the rights of language minority students. By becoming part of the day-to-day of school restructuring, we felt our trainees would be better prepared to deal with these experiences once they became teachers. Further, they would realize that school restructuring does not occur overnight and that they can and should assist the restructuring process rather than becoming part of the status quo.

The on-going relationship has become fruitful for both school and university alike. The Tormenta principal requested that the completing students be placed at her school during their student teaching. As teachers have retired or left the school, some of these student teachers have been hired in the school.

This continual influx of well-prepared teachers supports the school's mission and vision of being an exemplary dual language model school. As one of our faculty members reflects:

> I felt that in addition to providing preservice teachers with the experience of working within a strong bilingual program, by having the undergraduate students integrate different approaches into teaching, may assist some teachers to move beyond traditional teaching methods. During these first two years of field-basing this course, not only have teachers remarked as to how well prepared the preservice teachers are, they have begun to indicate an interest in incorporating some of the techniques into their teaching. (2000)

Discussion

Lighting Bolts: Process of Change

Change is often measured by observable outcomes, such as student or teacher performance. It is often difficult to measure conceptual change within teachers unless they are engaged in reflective thinking. The critical discourse that emerged from the course work, experiences, and technical activities provoked the teachers to engage in reflective thinking about the process of change. These reflections capture some of the epistemological changes in earlier misconceptions regarding bilingual education, children's ability to learn, the role of the parent, and how change takes time and deliberance. As a teacher clearly articulates how change takes time and deliberation:

> In putting together my vision for restructuring . . . I came to the conclusion that the change might take longer than I expected. The reason being that there are many components within our structure that still need to be analyzed. I have learned along the way that change is not easy and that it takes a lot of effort on the part of everyone involved in order for the change to be effective.

The process of change was evident when the Division of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies was contacted to assist in the restructuring of the school when traditionally the restructuring movement has been lead by educational leadership researchers. Moreover, the offering of a graduate-level field-based course was and continues to be innovative at the university. The specially designed summer institutes to meet school districts' needs displayed the IHE's willingness to go out of the ivory tower into the community.

In sum, the partnership established between Tormenta and the university initiated a collaborative process. The relationship is reciprocal with each entity addressing and meeting the needs of the other. For preservice bilingual teachers, it has provided rich linguistic experiences in a supportive environment. For both preservice and inservice teachers, core beliefs are confirmed: (a) all children can learn if given the opportunity; and (b) children

can be challenged to think critically and creatively. For the school, the field experience was seen as a means of invigorating the school with new ideas and strategies. As the principal remarks, "for us it (the field experience) keeps us on our toes, that we are doing what we say we are doing. For me, it is a very important relationship."

After the Storm, Tranquility?

After beginning restructuring, Tormenta underwent transition from a low performing school to a school with improved performance:

> Our schools have changed so much. Our scores have gone up. Our bilingual students are outscoring our monolingual students. I believe our students in third grade last year, which was our first group of two-way students scored a 100% in math and they're in the high 80s in reading (first-grade teacher, 2000).

The principal suggests that the improved performance had been due to the implementation of a dual language program, "a real bilingual program, not a program in name only" and the commitment of the teachers. Flores' (2000) case study captures the ambiance of the school in this rich description:

> From the moment you enter the building, it is very evident that you are in a bilingual community. The colorful, attractive, and creative bulletin boards and hallways are purposeful and communicative in that they clearly define and exude the philosophy of this school. My own interpretation of this philosophy is as follows: All children can learn and can be successful in an enticing bilingual environment which is print rich, values bilingualism, and has high expectations. An examination of the school's belief statement confirms this interpretation: 'All students will become independent thinkers and lifelong learners through a student-centered environment that promotes participatory learning and enriches their native language.'
>
> I also felt *el respeto* (respect) that is often expressed in Spanish-speaking communities; this sense of respect is evident by the children's manner, friendliness, and the pride exhibited. A metaphor to describe this school is *communidad* [community]. In this *communidad* lives a caring, supportive, bilingual familia—in this case the notion of extended family within the Hispanic community. La familia believes their children can succeed if given the proper nurturing in the native language and culture. . . . This school is clearly a caring, bilingual community of learners, teachers, and parents. (Tormenta Elementary School, 1996–1997 Campus Improvement Plan, p. ii)

Tormenta continues improving in its mission toward becoming a successful dual language school.

The impact in the Division of Education has come in various forms, increased communication across the divisions, the recognition of Tormenta as a model field-based site, and an increased awareness of districts' needs. This past spring, the Division of Education honored the principal and the faculty for their contributions. Summer institutes held by the Division of Bicultural-Bilingual studies have facilitated and set the tone for the school districts' expectation for an early childhood institute to be offered by the Division of Education for their teachers. The university is currently undergoing a process of restructuring where the Division of Education and the Division of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies will become a college that focus on education and human development. The path to success has had bumps on the road; nevertheless, the faculty continues to realize that renewal requires ongoing critical reflection.

Conclusion

Barometer Pressure: Measuring and Understanding Change

We have learned that to restructure a Latino school demands a critical analysis entailing a study of the Latino sociocultural historical experience. The experiences are different from the mainstream creating paradoxes of either being: (a) ethnic minorities, (b) linguistically different, (c) lower socioeconomic, (d) immigrant or native born, (e) formally or informally educated, and the list goes on. The experiences are different, for they are uniquely forged by sociopolitical cultural factors.

A critical cultural analysis of school, community, and family is necessary, required, and should be demanded before forging changes. The restructuring movement should be constituted as a social change movement in which educational institutions need to reflect society with its myriad of cultural and cognitive richness. The transformation process of schools, IHEs, and communities should share a common vision and the mechanism for working together to achieve common goals. The recognition, valuing, respect, and inclusion of both school and community should form the basis for the transformation process. To better meet the needs of language minority students, the restructuring of schools needs to be conducted with guidance, reflection, and a plan of action.

Critical reflection is necessary to determine goals, curriculum, methodology, and pedagogy for our changing school and communities. To change schools, structural factors such as school organization and community organization, educational policies, and regional policies, and school and home practices should be investigated. It is important to reflect how racism, discrimination, and expectations of students' achievement influence schooling. Universities must also be willing to examine their philosophy, pedagogies,

and practices. In addition, there is also a need to study students from a variety of backgrounds, about their home, school, and community and how these experiences have influenced their school achievement.

Given these caveats, we can nevertheless say that school reform that incorporates a strong link to the community can offer hope for change. A well conceptualized bilingual bicultural education program can lead to the creation of richer and more productive learning environments, diverse instructional strategies, and a more profound awareness of the role families, family culture, and language can play in education. In this way, educational success for all students can be a realistic goal rather than an impossible ideal.

According to Henry Giroux, "Education has to be linked to forms of self and social empowerment if the School is to become . . . a force in the ongoing struggle for democracy as a way of life" (1988).

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Endnotes

[1] In this paper, dual language and two-way are used interchangeably, as is often done in topical literature. In addition, the school uses these terms interchangeably. We recognize that two-way bilingual programs involves both majority and minority language speakers, whereas, dual language programs reflect a majority of linguistic minority speakers. At Tormenta, although the majority of the children are Latino, not all are dominant Spanish speakers.

[2] Clark and Flores express gratitude for their University of Texas at San Antonio Faculty Research Grant awards.

[3] Clark (2000) defines metamorphosis/metamorfosis as a conceptual change that one undergoes when there is a transformation in sociocultural consciousness.