

Dual-Language Student Teachers' Classroom-Entry Issues: Stages Toward Gaining Acceptance

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Abstract

This case study examines how three dual-language student teachers gain entry in their student-teaching experience. They confront the challenges of meeting the expectations of their cooperating teachers and field supervisors, become familiar with their students' academic strengths and weaknesses, and deliver effective classroom instruction. Each of the student teachers was observed to move through three stages of teacher development: (a) gaining entry, (b) acquiring competence, and (c) gaining acceptance. Throughout the study, the student teachers examine the influences of their varied cultural experiences, native and non-native language issues, and their role as the instructional leader in their student-teaching setting.

Bilingual teacher education programs are given the charge of preparing teachers to enter the profession ready to apply theory and practices appropriate for second language learners across a variety of content areas. Typically schools of education accomplish this in two parts. The first phase includes enrolling prospective bilingual teachers in a series of theory, pedagogy, and content area courses. The second component is the requirement of a student-teaching experience. Student teaching provides a setting where the novice teacher can apply the new knowledge gained through courses and observations to their own practice under the supervision of a cooperating teacher and a field supervisor. Both the cooperating teachers and field supervisors share the responsibility of mentoring the novice to develop an applied knowledge of teaching. The student-teaching experience is the most significant part of every new teacher's preparation. Gold's study (1996) found that the imprinting process occurred for student teachers through their embedded perceptions and behaviors regarding teaching during the critical period of the student-teaching experience. The phenomenon of imprinting creates striking impressions and feelings about teaching. These impressions and feelings can

have a profound effect on novice teachers, and in particular for bilingual teachers who teach in dual-language settings. Dual-language teachers develop a set of high-level competencies in two languages, Spanish and English. In addition, they develop an understanding and an appreciation of their students' academic, linguistic, cultural, and immigrant experiences. For bilingual student teachers to successfully navigate the student-teaching experience demands intense commitment and multiple layers of support.

Furthermore, how well the student teacher communicates with her cooperating teacher, field supervisor, students' parents, other teachers, and principal are important. However, most vital is how the student teacher engages her students during the student-teaching experience. University faculty, field supervisors, and cooperating teachers join together to support and nurture each student teacher during this experience so that the student teachers gain an understanding of the ability, motivation, and interest in learning of those students under their charge during their student-teaching experience. The successes or shortcomings that student teachers experience in their teacher education program contribute to their ability or inability to fulfill their role as future teachers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was two-fold. First, the study documents the experiences of three student teachers enrolled in a New York City masters program. This case study was part of a broader study designed to understand the integrated experiences of student teachers. By gathering empirical data in the university setting and the student-teaching setting, insight was gained to redesign core preservice education courses and student-teacher classroom experiences to benefit all participants in the program. The findings of this study provide empirical data to support informed decision-making and offer new direction for programmatic changes (Goodlad, 1994).

Two research questions guided this study:

1. What are the stages that student teachers go through in their student-teaching experience?
2. How can the Program in Bilingual/Bicultural Education be improved to help student teachers be more successful in their student-teaching experience?

Background of the Study

The Program in Bilingual/Bicultural Education applied a theoretical framework towards the curriculum that was guided by sociocultural models of teaching and learning for second language learners that takes into

consideration students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and knowledge. It prepares teachers to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of students by understanding sociocultural learning processes and the mediating structures to apply community funds of knowledge to student instruction (Moll, Velez-Ibanez, & Greenberg, 1990; González, et al., 1995; Vygotsky, 1978). Based on sociocultural models of teaching and learning, community members work in partnership toward a collaborative vision. In this situation, it was a partnership between university faculty and school district personnel. Over time, this model of collaboration developed into a professional development school partnership (The Holmes Group, 1986, 1990, 1995). Concurrently, to add to the strength of the partnership, the university/district partner schools implemented a parent-involvement component that was integrated into the instruction (Márquez-López, 1998; Valdés, 1996). The university, district, and family partnership demonstrated to student teachers a model for creating a caring learning community (Noddings, 1992). This theoretical framework was integrated into the bilingual teacher education curriculum and applied to the student-teaching experience.

The preservice education classes offered a rigorous curriculum design based on an interdisciplinary constructivist perspective that has proven to be effective for linguistic and culturally diverse populations. Student teachers studied sociocultural factors that can enhance or diminish students' learning opportunities (Baker, 2006; Nieto, 2004). Student teachers also conducted a series of home visits to study the literacy practices in their students' home lives. Student teachers then designed instructional lessons and applied knowledge gained during the home visits to their instructional practice (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). Student teachers learned how to develop a full biliteracy program that integrated subject matter content and best practices (Au, 1993; Pérez & Torres-Guzmán, 2002; Torres-Guzmán, 1995). The student teachers, enrolled in the bilingual teacher education program, were immersed in a curriculum designed with cultural models of schooling specifically for dual-language students (Torres-Guzmán, 2002).

Because the faculty of the Program in Bilingual/Bicultural Education ascribes to Goodlad's (1994) theory of "simultaneous renewal" for teacher education, it was important to conduct this study and engage all program participants. Rubio's (2006) study included student teachers, cooperating teachers, school site administrators, field supervisors, and university faculty to fulfill the process of simultaneous renewal (The Holmes Group, 1986, 1990, 1995).

To prepare student teachers to enter dual-language settings fully prepared to gain entry, acquire competence, and gain acceptance during the student-teaching experience, issues of building trust were carefully considered. University faculty, field supervisors, and cooperating teachers examined how to incorporate dialogue in their classes and student-teaching experience so

that student teachers could build a pattern of dialogue and performance based on mutual trust and acceptance (Noland & Francis, 1992). It was understood that student teaching is a highly intense experience and support is a key element to building success.

Method

Study Design

Participants for the study were selected from the students enrolled in the student teaching seminar. The students were informed of the study and several students volunteered to participate. We selected three participants.

In our initial meeting, the student teachers were required to read an article entitled, "Changing Perspectives in Curriculum and Instruction" (Noland & Francis, 1992). The article detailed a model for field supervision and the role of the field supervisor to help integrate new perspectives on learning and teacher development. The authors emphasized a collaborative relationship between the field supervisor and the student teacher. The article offered student teachers a paradigm from which to construct their relationship with the field supervisor. In my previous experience supervising student teachers, I found that the semester moved at a rapid pace, therefore, establishing this collaborative relationship early in the semester was important. As field supervisor and participant researcher, it was especially important to establish a sense of trust through honesty, communication, friendliness, and openness (Brewer, 2000). The model described by Noland and Francis clarified our collaborative roles and assisted the student teachers to understand the field supervisor's expectations.

I observed each of the three participants four times during the semester. I used the Student Teacher Observation Report (STOR) when observing the student teachers. The STOR was used to document the observed lesson and provide a format to present an observation overview and feedback to the student teacher. The lesson plan and the STOR served as a guide for both the student teacher and the field supervisor to discuss the observation (Noffke & Stevenson, 1995; Patton, 1990).

After each observation, I met with the student teacher and discussed the observed lesson. The conferences provided a venue for gaining insight into the learning process that the student teachers were experiencing. It also clarified where the student teachers sought and received support. I took analytic notes following our conferences (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

During the weekly student teaching seminar, the instructor made observations and evaluated the progress of her student teachers. As project researcher, I attended the course sessions, took field notes, and analyzed the data to formulate analytic tools to understand the student interactions within

the seminar setting that might contribute to students becoming a community of learners as well as issues concerning the program, planning, and implementation (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). A seminar requirement for the student teachers was to maintain a reflective journal, written in Spanish, to assist them in analyzing their teaching practice. These journal entries were utilized as a data source. Ultimately, our qualitative data included four formal observations using the STOR for each student teacher, four individual conferences and analytic notes, a weekly student-teacher reflective journal, and analytic notes written by the project researcher and the instructor of the student teaching seminar (Ely, Friedman, Garner, & McCoarmack Steinmetz, 1991).

The Immigrant School

The Immigrant School is a K–5 dual-language elementary school in District 3 of New York City. We selected the Immigrant School because of its demographic, socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural features. The ethnic and racial background of the students is 89.6% Latino, 7.4% African American, 2.7% Asian, and .3% White. Seventy-seven percent of the Latino parents surveyed had immigrated to the United States from the Caribbean. A little over 10% of the parents surveyed were from Mexico and Central America, 6% from South America, and 2% from Italy, Jamaica, Haiti and China. Only 5.8% of the students' parents were born in the United States. Sixty-five percent of the parents stated that Spanish was the language spoken at home.

The Immigrant School was undergoing a major reform initiative directed by the new school-site principal. This school was implementing a number of educational reforms, one of which was replacing the transitional bilingual education with a dual-language education program. Prior to the principal's arrival, the school was identified as among the lowest performing schools and designated a School Under Registration Review. During the first year, the principal and the entire staff developed a vision for the school. As school-site leader, the principal offered many opportunities for teachers to receive professional development and collaborative planning time. The initial focus was on literacy and within 2 years, test scores improved sufficiently to remove the School Under Registration Review designation. The reform efforts continued in partnership with the Program in Bilingual/Bicultural Education toward establishing a professional development school relationship. The joint vision between the university partners and school site personnel was creating a new direction that was guided by teaching, research, and reflection.

Participants

The three participants, Karla, Sylvia, and Cristina (pseudonyms) in the study were enrolled in the student teaching seminar concurrent to their student-teaching experience. They attended the student teaching seminar on a weekly

basis. All three student teachers were assigned to the Immigrant School. Karla and Sylvia had completed their first semester of student teaching and were enrolled in their second student-teaching experience. Karla planned to graduate in May with a master's degree. Sylvia planned to receive her master's degree in January after completing two more classes. Cristina was beginning her first semester of student teaching and had a number of classes to complete and planned to complete the master's program the following January.

Karla is a native English speaker from a White, middle-class background. She studied Spanish in college and volunteered in the Peace Corp in Central America, where she further developed her ability to speak Spanish. Sylvia is also from a White, middle-class background, and a native English speaker but lived in Mexico for a number of years during her childhood. She is recapturing her ability to speak Spanish fluently. Cristina was born in the Dominican Republic and is a native Spanish speaker. She immigrated to New York City as a child and began attending public schools in the elementary grades.

Findings

Based on the empirical data collected during the semester and my data analysis, I found that student teachers go through three stages of teacher development: (a) gaining entry, (b) acquiring competence, and (c) gaining acceptance.

Stage One: Gaining Entry

The first stage I observed, I have titled "Gaining Entry: Creating a Personal Space for Entry." This occurred during their first weeks of student teaching in the dual-language program. Student teachers, who are just starting their student-teaching experience, do not initially know exactly how to become active in their role as a student teacher. This stage includes feeling uncertain in the new environment and tentative about how to initiate the role they will perform as a student teacher. To establish acceptance, student teachers need to learn the organization of the instructional program and develop a communicative relationship with the cooperating teacher.

Karla stage 1

Karla writes about the challenges she confronts in this stage in her first reflective journal entry on January 23:

Estoy intentando de comprender la estructura de la clase y como trabaja la maestra . . . Ms. Moreno me dijo que voy a trabajar con un grupo de niños, aunque todavía no sé si será un grupo de los mismos estudiantes todos los días o uno que cambia cada día. . . . Creo que mi presencia no molesta a la maestra ni a los estudiantes.

I am trying to understand how the instructional program is organized and how the teacher manages the class . . . Ms. Moreno has let me know that I will be teaching a group of students, however, I haven't been informed if I will be working with the same group of students daily or with different groups of students. . . . I don't feel that my presence disrupts the teacher, nor the students.

Karla is being positive and open-minded about being accepted into the classroom setting by her cooperating teacher and students. We can sense her multiple areas of concern in her journal entry. This journal entry demonstrates the uncertainty regarding gaining entry experienced by student teachers. Karla is trying to determine how to become engaged in the classroom without being disruptive.

Karla's February 5 journal entry demonstrates how she defines her role in the classroom by articulating her needs to the cooperating teacher. This provides the cooperating teacher with the opportunity to respond and facilitate her development:

Voy a terminar mi tercera semana en la escuela. . . . Cómo pasa el tiempo! Ahora me siento más relajada en la clase como que soy ya parte de ella. También me siento . . . mejor con respecto a mi español. Cada [vez] estoy mejorando y cada día [les] entiendo mejor a los niños. . . . Hablamos hoy de nuevo sobre mis requisitos de la práctica. Le dije de nuevo porque lo había olvidado. También le dije que cuando yo haga las lecciones tengo que prepararme con tiempo.

I've almost completed my third week of student teaching in the school. Now, I am feeling more relaxed in the class, as if I am part of it. I am also feeling more confident about my ability to speak Spanish. My Spanish is improving and I understand my students better. . . . We discussed the assignment and objectives I need to complete during student teaching. I also made a point of stating that when I am responsible for instructional lessons I would like to know and have sufficient time to be well prepared.

Karla begins establishing herself at stage one by focusing on classroom organization and communicating her needs to her cooperating teacher. Karla is also making every effort to complete the assignments for her student teaching seminar. She is expressing her needs with some level of ease since this is her second semester of student teaching. Good communication and clarification early in the semester should help her to establish a partnership with her cooperating teacher and to lay the foundation for mutual trust.

Sylvia stage 1

We can observe how Sylvia responds and adapts to teaching lessons for the first time in her new student teaching setting. Sylvia wrote in her journal on February 12:

Esta semana Ms. García me dio la oportunidad de empezar a enseñar. Ella me dijo lo que [ella] quería, y yo lo [hice] con un grupo de niños. Varias veces no me dijo cual era el propósito de la lección, y eso se me hizo más difícil, o más bien, yo tuve que [decidir cuál iba ser] mi propósito en enseñar la lección aunque no fuera el propósito que ella había [intentado].

This week Ms. García gave me the opportunity to begin teaching. She described how she wanted the lessons taught, and then I instructed a group of students accordingly. On occasion she didn't explain the objective of the lesson and that made it a bit more difficult for me. I found I needed to determine the objective for the lesson even though it may have not been the objective she intended.

Sylvia projects a sense of excitement and anticipation about being asked to participate in teaching lessons. However as a novice, she notes that the objective of the lesson is not clear. She ultimately determines the objective but was left to wonder if she has selected the objective her cooperating teacher intended. Karla's long-awaited opportunity to teach a series of lessons was accepted with the best intentions. She seized the opportunity to gain entry to the role of student teacher. Yet, we see the questions that linger and we can observe how she still feels a bit uncertain in the situation. The journal entry provides her the opportunity to reflect on her teaching and allows her to formulate questions to pose to her cooperating teacher about how to plan an objective for each lesson.

Cristina stage 1

It is important that student teachers look for cues and signals and respond to direct requests from their cooperating teachers to advance in the process of taking on a greater level of responsibility in the classroom. Recognizing those cues allows student teachers to seize the opportunity to become more fully engaged in the classroom setting:

El segundo día, vi que Michael necesitaba ayuda y me lancé ayudarlo voluntariamente. Inmediatamente, los estudiantes me comenzaron a llamar para que le asistiera. Me sentía necesitada y en ese instante me di cuenta que los mismos estudiantes me estaban abriendo las puertas de su clase. [A pesar de] Michael me agradeció la ayuda que le di . . . Creo que también soy bienvenida por él.

On the second day, I noticed that Michael needed help so I voluntarily launched into action, helping him. Immediately, the students began raising their hands and calling upon me to help them. I felt needed and in that moment I recognized that the students were opening the doors to themselves and their class. And Michael thanked me for the help I provided . . . I believe he has welcomed me to his class.

By carefully looking for cues, Cristina was able to gain much needed and appreciated feedback from both her students and her cooperating teacher. She wrote this metaphor in her reflective journal, “los mismos estudiantes me estaban abriendo las puertas de su clase” [the students were welcoming me by opening the doors to their classroom]. She interpreted their request for her help as assurance that they were welcoming her to their classroom. Cristina felt she could take the next step, and as she put it, “me lance.” She acted decisively and “threw herself into action” to assist her students with their lesson. Cristina’s final journal entry on January 29, the first week of her student-teaching experience was:

Terminé la semana descubriendo que a pesar que me siento como “que me mordió un [v]ampiro” –que los niños me sacaron toda mi energía, me voy a mi casa con la positividad de que me gane su cariño y su respeto.

I completed this week discovering that although I feeling like I had been bitten by a vampire – the students have taken every ounce of my energy, I am going home with the positive feeling that I have won their affection and respect.

This was a very powerful statement for the end of the first week of student teaching. Cristina has a strong sense of gaining entry almost immediately. The major factors that contributed to Cristina’s rapid acceptance into the student-teaching setting were her bilingual and bicultural abilities. Cristina’s facility with the language and knowledge of the students’ cultural background allowed her to make strong connections immediately. She is Dominican, as are many of her students. From her journal entry description, just after her introduction to the class, the students demonstrated that they were excited that she is Dominican. There are few Latino/a teachers and even fewer Dominican teachers. The students were uninhibited in conveying their delight toward Cristina. The students were impressed by Cristina’s facility with English and Spanish, energetic personality, and genuine warmth. Cristina was already on her way to being a charismatic role model for her students. Students called on her for help to have an opportunity to know more about her. For most students, she is the first Dominican teacher they have ever had. She ignites a curiosity about who she is and how she came to be their student teacher.

As we look back at the journal entries, we see the first stage of the process of “Gaining Entry” took weeks longer for Karla and Sylvia than for Cristina. It was not until the third week that Sylvia wrote in her February 12 journal about being asked to teach a lesson and feeling a new level of acceptance. Karla felt welcomed, but she was not assigned a permanent group to work with until March 18. Cristina gained a high level of acceptance, allowing her to immediately plunge into the classroom activities. The journey through the first stage varied significantly for each of the three teachers.

Stage Two: Acquiring Competence

The second stage I observed, I have named “Acquiring Competence: Planning, Teaching and Reflection.” In Stage 2, student teachers begin to develop an applied knowledge of teaching and a level of competence in the role of teachers (Hammerness et al., 2005). To accomplish this, student teachers must become knowledgeable about the cooperating teacher’s expectations. This includes becoming familiar with the classroom environment, knowledgeable of students’ academic abilities, and capable of implementing instructional lessons. Moreover, the key component of this stage is taking ownership of one’s own learning. Through reflection, the student teachers examine their actions and plan strategies to improve through the reflective process.

Karla stage 2

Karla’s efforts to take ownership of her learning are demonstrated in her March 18 journal entry:

El miércoles fue la primera vez que había trabajado con este grupo. La verdad es que fue un desastre. Como no sabía sus niveles exactamente organicé una lección del libro, Los seis deseos de la jirafa, demasiado complicada. Tampoco . . . la expliqué bien. Quería que escribirían libremente, pero no sabían o no entendían como hacerlo a causa de mis direcciones. Quería hacer eso para entender mejor los distintos niveles de cada uno.

Wednesday was the first time I had worked with this group. The truth is that the lesson was a disaster. I was not familiar with the students’ academic levels, so when I planned the lesson using the book, *Los seis deseos de la jirafa*, I planned a lesson far too complicated. I also did not explain the lesson well. I wanted the students to write about any part of the book, but I didn’t know how to explain it to them or my directions were not clear. I wanted them to write freely so I could see a sample of their writing ability.

At our conference on March 25, Karla expressed her concern that the lesson had not gone well. She was not sure of the students’ skill levels and she was being very critical of her own work. As Karla’s supervisor, I was

aware of her tendency to self-critique. I began by pointing out the positive aspects of the lesson then assisted her with the instructional design of her lesson and her classroom management techniques. By highlighting the positive aspects of her teaching, she began to focus on her own competence and to seek methods to improve her teaching.

Sylvia stage 2.

Sylvia demonstrated taking ownership of her learning with a slightly different style. Sylvia student taught in Mrs. García's and Ms. Carter's second-grade classrooms. Sylvia and Karla often had areas of concern that seemed to coincide. They taught similar grade levels and seemed to be tackling many of the same issues. Specifically, they had the following areas of concern: improving the instructional design of their lessons, learning the curriculum, teaching the curriculum in their second language (Spanish), and learning age-appropriate classroom management techniques. Sylvia wrote in her journal on March 25, a description of her lesson and reflected upon what she could do to improve her follow-up instruction:

Enseñé cuatro lecciones usando un libro llamado, Es mejor dejar en paz a las serpientes. Yo leí el cuento a toda la clase y después distribuí copias del libro a cada niño. Entonces les hice preguntas. . . . El propósito era ayudar a los niños a buscar información en la lectura. La lección fue un éxito en que a todos les fascinó el libro. Lo 'malo' fue que tantos se acordaron tan bien de lo que les había leído, que no necesitaban buscar la información en la lectura. Por esto, voy a hacer el mismo ejercicio con una lectura más difícil y también voy a pedir que en lugar de darme la respuesta a mi pregunta, me lean la oración dentro de la cual se encuentra [en la lectura] . . . También tengo [que] admitir que aunque no me gusta tener la cámara [de video] enfocada en mí, he aprendido mucho [al ver] mis lecciones . . .

I taught four lessons using the book entitled, *Es mejor dejar en paz a las serpientes*. I read the book to the students and then distributed the books to each student. I followed up by asking questions. . . . The objective was to help the students find information in the text of the story. The lesson was successful because the students loved the book. Unfortunately, they remembered the details so well they did not need to refer to the text to find information. Next time, I am going to do the same exercise with reading at a more difficult level and rather than just asking for an answer, I will ask that students read the entire sentence that refers to the correct answer. Also, I must admit that even though I do not like the camera focused on me, I have learned a great deal from observing my own lessons . . .

Sylvia is very candid in her reflective journal about her strengths and weaknesses. She evaluates her work and offers her own solutions and plans her next steps to improve her teaching. Sylvia states her concerns over immediate issues as well as broader issues in her teaching. She is attentive to the feedback offered by her cooperating teacher and field supervisor. Sylvia seems to demonstrate a level of greater confidence than Karla, although both are taking ownership of their learning.

Sylvia and I held our conference immediately following her lesson. As her supervisor/researcher, I noted in my March 25 analytic notes:

During our conference Sylvia openly shares her impressions of herself and her facility with both English and Spanish in her dual-language classroom setting. Sylvia has two different cooperating teachers. One teacher is the students' English teacher and the second is the students' Spanish teacher. The children alternate classrooms daily along with Sylvia. She discussed her latest revelations after being in both settings for just one month. Sylvia feels she is a better teacher in English than in Spanish. She feels part of this has to do with her English fluency and feels somewhat hindered in Spanish.

Sylvia's two-teacher assignment offers her the challenge of becoming familiar with the expectations of two cooperating teachers. It also offered her the opportunity to compare two teaching environments and to assess them in relation to her own teaching. Sylvia took into account her experiences in both settings when she evaluated her immediate need for improvement. She analyzed what she needed to do to improve her students' ability to find specific information when they read through their reading assignment.

Sylvia raised a broader concern that is often voiced by bilingual teachers about teaching in a second language. Bilingual teachers' ability to communicate effectively in Spanish is a vital concern in a dual-language program. Although, Sylvia's Spanish is native-like and she is able to express her ideas and thoughts, she recognizes that she is able to communicate the nuances of her thoughts more effectively in English. This point is made when she states that perhaps she is a better teacher in English than in Spanish.

Language was a critical issue for Sylvia and Karla. Karla comments on her inability to fully understand what her students were saying in stage one and worries about how well she was able to present a lesson with the desired clarity in Spanish. Sylvia states similar concerns about communicating effectively. This issue begins to define how each student teacher works toward taking ownership of her own learning in order to establish a high level of linguistic competence in the dual-language classroom.

Cristina stage 2

Like many of her students, Cristina has lived the immigrant experience. Her reflective journal goes into lengthy discussion about her lesson planning and the positive responses she elicits from her students. Integrating the language and the culture appears to happen with a great deal of ease as demonstrated in her particular teaching style. Cristina takes ownership of the learning by being reflective and constantly evaluating her performance in the classroom and her students' participation. She strives to make connections with the students' homes by involving parents in homework assignments. She is able to move further along in stage two because of her understanding of the students' language and culture:

Cristina planned a number of interesting lessons from the book, *Todo el mundo cocina arroz* written by Dooley & Freedman. She connected the story to the students' personal experiences. She planned interesting writing activities and provided precise directions. The concluding lesson was a hands-on cooking lesson, which allowed students to create their own recipe, cook it, and then eat it. Her students authored their own cookbook with all the students' recipes. Cristina's students were so engaged in learning that discipline was never an issue.

Cristina videotaped this lesson for her student teaching seminar while I conducted a third formal observation. Her lesson was centered on the children's linguistic and cultural identities. Cristina's lesson recognized the value of the students' cultural experiences. The students' parents were able to make a meaningful contribution to their child's learning by discussing family cooking practices and recipes. The children's mothers dictated recipes to share at school. The collective experiences led to the students authoring a classroom cookbook that was shared with their classmates.

Cristina presented a video of her teaching a lesson to her Spanish reading group in her student teaching seminar. The video was presented in class for the other student teachers to observe and evaluate. Each student was required to present a brief introduction then respond to any questions that others might have about the lesson. The student teachers observing the video were responsible for providing constructive comments. After the presentation of Cristina's video on March 18, the researcher wrote:

I observed the three video presentations by the preservice teachers. Cristina . . . featured different aspects of teaching—and . . . [she] made observations about what [she] wanted to improve by the next lesson. For example, Cristina noticed that she spoke fast, and that she needed to allow students to talk more. We later reflected with her and we assured her that she spoke normally—for Dominican Spanish—and the students appeared quite engaged and seemed to really understand.

Karla, Sylvia, and Cristina demonstrated their competence in their role as student teachers. Overall, they were doing a great job of being critical and reflective and focusing on their overall improvement. The data documents how the three student teachers move through stage two and prepare to enter stage three. In stage two, each student teacher defined her role in the student-teaching setting, strategized how to meet the program requirements while keeping her cooperating teacher's expectations in mind, and planned and delivered instructional lessons appropriate to students' academic needs. These strategies came to be recognized as taking responsibility and ownership for their own learning. Each student teacher developed her own repertoire of teaching techniques and addressed her own individual need for improvement. Yet, the process of arriving at stage two was quite individual and unique.

Stage Three: Gaining Acceptance

The third stage I observed, I have labeled as "Gaining Acceptance: An Earned Sense of Being an Integral Part of the Instructional Program." In stage three, the student teachers know how the instructional program operates and functions as an integral member in the student-teaching setting. They are learning new curriculum, planning the instructional design of their lessons, delivering instruction across the curriculum in two languages (Spanish and English), and evaluating the effectiveness of their teaching on a daily basis. The student teachers take responsibility for classroom management and recognize the various ways they contribute to their students' educational experience. They now have an earned sense that they are an essential part of the instructional program. The students see the student teacher as "the teacher."

Having reached this stage, it is sometimes accompanied by sadness because by the time most student teachers achieve stage three, their student teaching assignment is coming to an end. If all has gone well, student teachers feel this level of engagement near the end of their student-teaching experience. Achieving stage three is an essential step for a student teacher to become a successful student teacher and prepared to manage their own classroom as a novice teacher.

Karla stage 3

Karla demonstrates entry into stage 3 when she was completely in charge of the entire class for the first time. After her formal observation, on April 29, her field supervisor wrote the following in the STOR:

Karla presented a math lesson to the entire class. The cooperating teacher was outside the classroom working individually with a student. Karla began her lesson using math manipulatives to demonstrate a new concept. Students practiced the concept using the manipulatives until it was understood. Last the students solve a puzzle using their newly acquired skills.

Karla had achieved “teacher status;” she was in charge of the lesson presentation and classroom management. Her lesson had gone as she had planned, and her students responded by following the well-defined steps she outlined in her lesson plan. Shortly after this observation, Karla was asked to substitute teach for her cooperating teacher and another teacher in the school.

Sylvia stage 3

Sylvia presented a math lesson using a number of techniques her cooperating teacher had modeled for her a few days before. This lesson was presented during Sylvia’s third formal observation. The field supervisor noted the following in the STOR on April 3:

Sylvia presented a math lesson to the entire class. She introduced the lesson by telling students that they were going to count the number of pockets each student had on their clothing. They would count the number of pockets individually, and then would total the number of pockets in their groups. After the students counted the number of pockets in their group Sylvia would graph the totals on chart paper with the student’s help. Sylvia used one of the groups to model how each group would complete this process. The students . . . quickly began counting all the pockets in their groups. Even though it was a little noisy all [of the] students were very involved. The teacher and the paraprofessional circulated among the groups to help them total all the pockets. . . Sylvia asked the students to report their findings. Each group shared their total and Sylvia graphed their answers on chart paper. Three of the groups sent a member to the board to show Sylvia how to graph the total . . . They entitled the graph, “La cantidad de bolsillos de nuestros grupos” [The number of pockets in our groups]. Sylvia asked the students to analyze the graph . . . Last, Sylvia had the students create their own math problem. Students worked to construct a challenging problem.

Sylvia’s lesson presentation was excellent. She had successfully met her teaching objective and her students were enthusiastic about the lesson. Her cooperating teacher and the paraprofessional assisted the students with their counting, but she was in charge of the teaching and classroom management. Her students were successful in creating new math problems during the lesson.

Cristina stage 3

Cristina wrote the following in her reflective journal on March 25:

Esta semana de “Student Teaching” me ha ayudado a reflexionar en cuanto al trabajo de ser maestro, en especial, ser maestro dentro del salón de clase donde actualmente trabajo y con la comunidad que trabajo. Creo que he llegado a la etapa donde considero que he

aprendido bastante acerca de como trabaja un maestro dentro de un salón de clase, y también acerca de las necesidades que tiene cada uno de mis estudiantes.

A esta etapa, conozco más o menos a mis niños; sus puntos débiles y fuertes, y la manera que cada uno aprende. Es como si los tuviera más o menos figurados. No es que todo sea “un cuento de hada” dentro de mi salón de clase, pero considero que soy dichosa de encontrarme con un grupo de niños con los cuales puedo hacer conexión cultural, y con los cuales puedo conectarme por mis propias experiencias como estudiante en el sistema educativo público de la ciudad de Nueva York.

This week of student teaching has helped me to reflect on my experiences thus far, in particular, of being a teacher in the classroom to which I am assigned and the community. I believe I have reached the point, that I now feel, I have learned a great deal about how to teach in this setting and I understand the needs of each of my students.

I now know my students' weaknesses and strengths, and the way they learn best. It is as if I know and understand my students. It is not that it is all a “fairy tale” inside my classroom, but I feel fortunate to be with a group of students that I have a cultural connection with and that I can draw on my own life experiences as a student in the New York Public School system.

Cristina, having achieved stage three, writes about her level of confidence, her knowledge of her students' abilities, and her role as a student teacher. She talks about the commonalities she has with her students, her cultural connections, and her experience of being a product of New York City schools. What Cristina does not mention, and is one of the keys to her success, is her command of the Spanish language. Cristina was able to teach her students in their first language, draw from her personal knowledge of their cultural background and life experiences, and link this to her instructional practices. In her April 15 journal entry, Cristina wrote:

Finalmente vi el resultado de la unidad de literatura que prepare para mi grupo de literatura. Los resultados me impresionaron porque vi el involucramiento e interés que tenían los niños según el desarrollo de esta unidad. Durante la organización de la presentación, cuando cocinamos el “arroz con leche,” y cuando los niños finalmente compartieron lo que aprendieron a sus compañeros por medio de sus presentaciones, me sentí orgullosa de ellos y de lo que yo logré hacer con tan solo un libro de literatura.

I saw the final result of the literature unit I planned for my reading group. The results were impressive; I saw the level of involvement and interest that the students had as they worked through the unit. During their final presentations when we prepared *arroz con leche* and when the students shared what they had learned with their classmates through their individual presentation, I felt proud of them and what I was able to accomplish simply using one literature book.

Cristina's literature unit yielded successful student participation. Her strong academic language proficiency enhanced her teaching throughout the semester and she now recognizes her students' engagement and learning. Cristina and her students developed a strong mutual respect and affection for one another. As a researcher, I was able to document these exceptional interactions during my observations. She expresses joy about her students' and her own successes.

Discussion

Karla, Sylvia, and Cristina have earned the sense of being an integral part of the instructional program. All three student teachers worked to improve their ability to meet the needs of their dual-language students. They learned to design and implement instruction using sound pedagogical practices that included cultural connections with their students' life experiences. Karla and Sylvia are White, middle class, and Spanish is their second language. The journey they took through all three stages of acceptance and the challenges they addressed in taking ownership of their learning were different than those faced by Cristina. For Karla and Sylvia, the process took two full semesters while Cristina was able to move through the process in one semester. The home visits to students' homes contributed to Karla and Sylvia's ability to make cultural connections with their students.

It is important to document the variation between native Spanish-speakers and non-native Spanish-speakers for future dual-language teachers. This is critical because the level of Spanish competency needs to be higher than for transitional bilingual programs. An additional factor is that 84% of teachers are White and generally from middle-class backgrounds; these teachers need to meet a rigorous linguistic criteria (Toppo, 2003). This has implications for bilingual/bicultural teacher education programs that are preparing dual-language teachers for the demographic shift toward increasingly larger numbers of English learners in the public schools. Teacher education programs need to be equipped to prepare their student teachers to be highly effective linguistically and culturally by providing experiences that address the competencies desirable for dual-language instruction.

In recognition that student teaching is a significant part of the teacher education program, structuring the experience of student teachers to successfully enact the role of teacher across the three stages toward gained acceptance was viewed as a new model. Each of the three stages was viewed as a framework for observing teacher development. The faculty in the Program in Bilingual/Bicultural Education can now anticipate the issues that occur at each of the three stages (Gaining Entry, Acquiring Competence, and Gaining Acceptance). The observed stages and teacher voices inform us of how to make their apprenticeship in the bilingual/bicultural program more successful (Arias & Poynor, 2001; Goodlad, 1994; The Holmes Group, 1986, 1990, 1995; Moll & Arnot-Hopffer, 2005; Phelan, Dqavidson, & Yu, 1993; Stone & Wehlage, 1994).

After analyzing the data and observing how the three student teachers progressed through the three stages, the faculty and researcher concluded that the student teachers advanced through the stages with varying amounts of time and levels of difficulty; thus, several mediational structures to support student development were built into the program. By examining the experiences of the three student teachers, the Program in Bilingual/Bicultural Education was provided insight about how to enrich the experiences of student teachers in the student teaching seminar and with the field supervisor and cooperating teachers. It is important that student teachers develop a broad theoretical knowledge base and pedagogy at each of the three stages. All three student teachers achieved a level of preparation through the student-teaching experience that built a foundation for future success in their career trajectory to become dual language teachers.

The student teacher who moved through the three stages most efficiently was Cristina. We have acknowledged her native Spanish-speaker ability and success in implementing culturally-responsive curriculum. Through the course of this study, one mediational structure that was observed to contribute to Cristina's success was her cooperating teacher, Michael. He was a graduate of the same university so his familiarity with the preservice program requirements and communication with the program gave him an understanding of how to plan Cristina's participation in his classroom. Michael and Cristina demonstrated how the program could benefit by providing linkages between program faculty, seminar instructor, cooperating teachers, field supervisor, and student teachers. Thus, implementing this model for future student teachers appears to offer promising results.

I observed that student teachers were challenged by the demands of the student-teaching experience, classes, and the preparation of daily instruction. The university faculty discussed the benefits of providing student teachers with a timeline that indicates benchmarks and objectives for class requirements and supervisor and cooperating teachers' expectations. In the process of taking ownership of their own learning, student teachers were creating their

own schedule with timelines. Thus, another mediational structure, such as providing a timeline that indicates benchmarks and objectives for class requirements and supervisor and cooperating teachers' expectations and enhanced articulation of program requirements, could serve to assist student teachers to become integrated into the classroom setting sooner. Michael and Cristina highlight how articulation of program requirements can guide the cooperating teachers toward successfully mentoring their student teachers.

Non-native Spanish-speakers in the bilingual teacher education program were observed to need greater support in developing their academic language during the student-teaching experience. For example, Karla and Sylvia, non-native Spanish-speakers, were placed with native Spanish-speaking cooperating teachers. The two cooperating teachers served as strong academic language models. Conversely, Cristina, a native Spanish-speaker, was placed with a non-native Spanish-speaking cooperating teacher, which yielded positive results. Given the strengths that were observed during this study, this is one of the models that has shown positive results and will be prescribed for future use. Therefore, a third mediational structure was recommended by the university faculty to focus on helping non-native Spanish-speaker student teachers to develop their academic language in Spanish by assigning them to cooperating teachers who have strong native language proficiency.

Conclusions

As a result of the qualitative analyses of the program throughout one academic year, the following mediational structures were found to help the student teachers have successful student-teaching experiences:

1. Establishing a framework of communication between the program faculty, school-site administration, cooperating teachers, and field supervisors to be more inclusive of student teachers.
2. Providing a timeline that indicates benchmarks and course objectives for student teachers and cooperating teachers.
3. Adding a Spanish language requirement to the program assignments for strong academic language development.
4. Addressing the three stages of gaining acceptance in the student-teaching setting and in the context of the student teaching seminar.
5. Providing the opportunity for student teachers to tell their stories and make connections with other students in the program to facilitate the process of building of a community of learners.
6. Continuing to observe and define the needs of our diverse student-teacher population and incorporate a response to those needs in the curriculum.

This reform initiative, led by the program faculty, encompasses aspects of Goodlad's (1994) "simultaneous renewal" process designed so that school renewal can occur through the renewal of the teacher education program. Goodlad's theory is that once teacher education programs are effectively changed, the schools will also become renewed. Goodlad calls for profound change to the teacher education paradigm. His tripartite collaboration model includes the university education department, the university department of arts and sciences, and the school district. Each entity comes together as a collaborative in a Center of Pedagogy. The Program in Bilingual/Bicultural Education includes two of the three components: the university education department and the school district. At the time of this writing, both entities were collaborating in establishing a professional development school. The school district administration had invited the program faculty to offer professional development. In turn, the school site offered its best teachers to serve as cooperating teachers for the program. The student teachers are assigned to schools that have dual-language programs that are an innovative model of bilingual education.

The university/school district partnership is breaking away from past models in teacher education and is working together in new capacities utilizing this new paradigm. The program faculty has expanded Goodlad's model by reconstructing the preservice teacher education program and adding cultural and linguistic components relevant to a diverse urban school population and appropriate to the professional needs of the student teachers that serve that population.

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