

Preparing Bilingual Teacher Candidates: A Linguistic Conundrum in a Changing Political Landscape

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Abstract

Under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the reauthorized ESEA under President Obama, all 50 states are and will be required to have English language proficiency (ELP) standards and state assessments aligned to those ELP standards. Every school's ELL population must show yearly growth in English language proficiency and must meet state standards on state exams in English. Education departments in colleges and universities must adequately prepare bilingual teacher candidates to meet the challenges of increased accountability for the ELLs they will educate. This paper will explore the linguistic conundrum bilingual teacher candidates must consider regarding teaching ELLs in English versus the native language as well as the dispositions bilingual teacher candidates need to exhibit in their work with ELLs.

Background and issues

The passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001 as a reauthorization of the Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was originally passed in 1965, has changed the educational landscape in schools throughout the United States (US). In public schools and school districts across the country, many of the students who consistently score below their white peers on mandated, state, standardized tests in English are those students for whom English is a second language (ESL). Estimates by the US Department of Education (USDE) indicate that more than five million school-age children in the US (more than 10 percent of all K-12 students) are ELLs (Garcia, Jensen & Scribner, 2009). An English language learner (ELL) is a student who speaks another language other than English and who has been assessed with valid and reliable assessments and found to be limited English proficient (LEP). In other words, an ELL is a student who has not yet developed enough English to enable him or her to profit fully from classroom instruction in English. ELLs in the US speak 350 languages and 77 percent spoke Spanish as their native language in the 2000-2001 school year (Hopstock & Stephenson, 2003). In addition, it must be noted that many of the schools and districts with the highest populations of ELLs are located in poor, urban settings. In most states and in Illinois, the majority of ELLs who live in urban and suburban settings qualify for free and reduced lunch, a qualifying characteristic for low-income. ELLs in general are more likely than native English speakers to come from low-income families (Garcia & Cuellar, 2006). In 2000, 68 percent of ELLs in grades preK-5 and 60 percent in grades

6-12 lived in low-income families (below 185 percent of the federal poverty level), compared with 36 percent and 32 percent respectively, of English-proficient students in these age groups (Capps et al., 2005). Under NCLB and under the soon to be reauthorized ESEA, all 50 states are required to have English language proficiency standards and state assessments aligned to those standards. Every school's ELL population must show yearly growth in English language proficiency in all areas: Oral language, literacy, and content vocabulary. These same students who are in the process of acquiring English must also pass state standardized tests in English which were developed for and normed on native English speakers in reading, math and science. When the ELL population within a single school does not meet NCLB requirements on its state tests, that school is denied adequate yearly progress (AYP) and the school district, therefore, is denied AYP. In the *ESEA Blueprint for Reform (ESEA Blueprint)* released in mid-March 2010, the United States Department of Education (USDE), Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development acknowledges that there must be a continued federal commitment to America's schools to help educators meet the needs of the growing number of English language learners.

Through the reauthorization of the ESEA, the USDE proposes to strengthen the federal commitment of helping schools improve programs for ELLs by encouraging innovative programs and practices to support ELLs' while building a broader knowledge base about what works. This interest in "building a broader knowledge base" could signal more funding for research on what works in terms of accelerating the rate that ELLs acquire English and which program models increase the overall academic achievement of ELLs over time. The *ESEA Blueprint* calls for formula grants to help states and school districts implement high-quality language instruction educational programs aimed at "improving the education of ELLs." School district grantees would be able to provide a variety of program models for the ELL population in their districts. Programs named in the brief include dual-language programs, transitional bilingual education (TBE), sheltered English immersion, newcomer programs for late-entrant ELLs, or "other language instruction education programs." Under the reauthorized ESEA, grantees are to evaluate programs and instruction and to provide effective professional development (PD) for all teachers of ELLs, including teachers of academic content areas. The PD provided is to be directly linked to evaluations of program effectiveness for ELLs. Under the College and Career Ready Students program, states will be required to adopt and implement statewide, grade-by-grade, English language proficiency standards that are linked to the state's college and career ready academic content standards. The described proposed changes are similar to many of the regulations found in Title III of NCLB.

The ESEA reauthorized under President Obama will, however, provide new competitive grants to states, districts, and nonprofit partners to support the development of innovative programs and to build the knowledge base regarding promising practices for improving instruction for ELLs. Under NCLB competitive grants for school districts had been eliminated. New ESEA grants will provide funding for state or district partnerships with colleges and universities in the areas of developing effective practices for improving ELL outcomes. In addition, the new ESEA proposes to provide funding for graduate fellowships to support research and leadership as well as to develop effective teachers for ELLs.

Under NCLB, states assessments for ELLs were, for the most part, in English (Garcia, 2009, Goldenberg, 2008). From the *ESEA Blueprint*, it appears that this policy will continue. In many districts across the country under NCLB, native language instruction, which was once seen as a shortcut to learning academic language and content in English, has been reduced or eliminated all together. Administrators and teachers in school districts are moving away from instruction in the native languages of ELLs and are asking bilingual teachers to use more English for instruction. The underlying assumption is that if ELLs have more exposure to English, they will become more proficient in English and, in turn, will do better on state exams. In reality, instructing ELLs mostly in English has not been shown over 40 years of educational research in the field of bilingual education to be the most effective manner for improving the academic achievement of ELLs (Goldenberg, 2008; Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006; August & Shanahan, 2006; Thomas & Collier, 2002; and Ramirez, 1991).

It is clear that colleges and universities that prepare bilingual education teachers must make sure their teacher candidates are well prepared to enter the work force knowing not only how to make a lesson plan, teach math, engage students in learning, use data gleaned from assessments to create interventions, and involve parents, but they also must know how to be advocates for ELLs. These new bilingual teachers must also know and how to operate politically within their communities to improve the teaching/learning environments of ELLs at the school, district and state levels.

Education programs and departments in colleges and universities must also adequately prepare bilingual education teacher candidates to meet the challenges of increased accountability for the ELL students they will educate. Not only do bilingual teachers have to be skilled at teaching reading, writing, math, and other content areas, they also have to be skilled at being change agents within their school districts so that the district's curriculum, instruction and assessment practices are in line with research based, best practices. Being a change agent in these harsh economic times is a challenge for bilingual teachers who will be best served if they can demonstrate a specialized set of dispositions. Best practices in the field of language minority education are tied to appropriate and adequate instruction in the native languages of the ELLs whenever possible along with appropriate English as a second language (ESL), sheltered instruction through content areas such as math, science, and the social sciences. Bilingual educators also must possess the ability to adequately assess ELLs, use assessment data to improve programs and instruction, act as change agents in efforts to improve district and community policies that affect ELLs, and work with the families of ELLs. These challenges are the reasons for the "burnout" and high turnover of bilingual teachers (Crandall, Stein & Nelson, 2006).

Purpose, questions, and limitations

The purpose of this study and paper is to explore the various aspects of the socio-cultural, political landscape within educational settings that bilingual education teacher candidates must navigate when they determine how they will advocate for ELLs at a variety of political levels while teaching in two languages. These new bilingual educators must be adept at developing and, in some cases, translating curriculum; implementing the best instruction possible; and assessing ELLs in English and their native language. This study will also examine how bilingual education teacher candidates reflect on the personal dispositions each bilingual teacher needs in his or her work with ELLs to ensure that students acquire English, academic skills and content knowledge. This investigation asked two questions: 1.) What are the perceptions and pressures that bilingual teacher candidates have experienced during their own educational careers, clinical observations, and student teaching experiences regarding using both English and the native language for instruction and assessment? 2.) What are the dispositions that bilingual candidates believe they must possess to be effective teachers and advocates for students?

These questions were addressed by undergraduate, bilingual education teacher candidates at a Midwest Illinois State university in three 300 level courses in the Bilingual Bicultural Program of the Teacher Education Department during the spring 2009, fall 2009, and spring 2010 semesters. The university, which serves approximately 12,000 students is located in an urban neighborhood. The student population of this university is predominately minority, and the university is a Hispanic Serving Institution offering degrees in the arts, sciences, education, and business. The College of Education of the university is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. Qualitative data regarding these research questions were collected from 1.) in class student presentations and discussions, 2.) in class essay exit slips, 3.) reflective midterm and final exams responses to essay questions, 4.) reflective essays critiquing research articles, book chapters or books, 5.) reflective essays on participation in professional development activities such as interviewing students, teachers, and/or administrators who work with ELLs, 6.) autobiographical reflective essays and 7.) pre and post observation conferences.

In essays, class discussions, and oral presentations, bilingual education teacher candidates voiced their concerns about entering a field that requires so much from them. Many of the bilingual education teacher candidates who were completing clinical experiences and student teaching talked and wrote about the pressure from cooperating teachers and school administrators to teach primarily in English and use the native language as needed for support. Students generally were in agreement that many teachers and administrators believe strongly that since ELL students must take standardized, state exams in English, they should be exposed to as much English as possible. These reflections came from bilingual education teacher candidates who worked in the urban as well as suburban school districts. These issues, related questions, and the scope of this dilemma will be analyzed and discussed in this paper. The limitations of the study lie with generalizability. The findings of the study are limited because the sample is a sample of convenience from one university. Even with caveats, however, our study is significant in that it does provide an analysis of some empirical evidence about the somewhat illusive construct of professional teaching dispositions.

Perspectives, theoretical and conceptual framework

Research in educating linguistically and culturally diverse students now has a relatively long history. Over 40 years ago in Canadian, French-English, immersion programs, researchers such as Elizabeth Peal and Wally Lambert (1962) documented the apparent cognitive benefits of acquiring high levels of proficiency in two languages. Researchers reported that students who were highly proficient in two languages outscored monolinguals on language related tests of cognitive ability. These students were thought to have cognitive flexibility when the tasks were based on analyzing and using language. Cummins (1986) outlined the positive role the primary language plays in educating ELLs. Cummins posits that knowledge of the world is stored in the brain as an underlying proficiency, and that knowledge can be accessed either through the first or second language. Through his research, he further maintains that students require at least five to seven years to become fully proficient and literate in a second language. Cummins' early hypotheses have been confirmed by subsequent research conducted by Ramirez (1991); Thomas & Collier (2002); Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders & Christian (2006), August & Shanahan (2006) and others. With regard to developing literacy in a second language, the research evidence also points to the advantages that ELLs who are literate in their native language have when learning to read in their second language. Native language literacy helps students make sense of reading in their second language (Slavin & Cheung, 2005; Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders & Christian, 2006).

Goldenberg (2008) points out that there have been five well designed and well implemented meta-analyses conducted from 1985 until 2006 (Willig, 1985; Green, 1997; Rolstad, Mahoney, & Glass, 2005; Slavin & Cheung 2005, and Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders & Christian, 2006); and all five have reached the same conclusion: Learning to read in the native language promotes reading achievement in the second language. Goldenberg also states that “Readers should understand how unusual it is to have five meta-analyses on the same issue conducted by five independent researchers or groups of researchers with diverse perspectives. The fact that they all reached the same conclusion is worth noting.”

The Context of Teaching in Bilingual Education Settings

With such evidence that teaching students in their native language has positive effects on their learning of English, why then do bilingual teachers and bilingual education teacher candidates have reservations about teaching in the native language? Obviously this question would vary from state to state depending on each state’s laws and mandated administrative school code. In the State of Illinois under Article 14C of the School Code, Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) and Transitional Programs of Instruction (TPI) are mandated for students who are identified, assessed, and found to be limited English proficient based on assessments developed through the WIDA (World-Class Design of Instruction and Assessment) Consortia of twenty-two states based at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Bilingual education teacher candidates intending to teach in Illinois, therefore, must earn an elementary or secondary teaching certificate and a bilingual approval or endorsement. Currently in Illinois, according to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), there is a shortage of qualified bilingual teachers. This shortage has been long standing and appears to be somewhat resistant to change. Educators in Illinois and other states recruit bilingual teachers from Spanish speaking countries, and several universities in the state offer bilingual approval coursework yet the shortage remains. In fact, the majority of the fifty states consistently report bilingual education and English as a second language as areas of teacher shortage (USDE, March, 2010).

Bilingual teachers and bilingual education teacher candidates who earn their bilingual approvals or endorsements are well aware of research in the field of bilingual education that favors long term (five to seven years) significant amounts of instruction in the native language in program models that can be described as two-way immersion (TWI), dual language, or developmental bilingual education (Thomas & Collier, 2002; Genesee et al., 2006; August & Shanahan, 2006). In Spanish/English TWI and dual language programs, native English speakers are included in those classrooms, and they acquire Spanish as the native Spanish speakers acquire English. In these TWI or dual language programs, usually most ELLs perform quite well academically after four, five or six years in the program and go on to consistently meet or exceed standards in state tests in English (Thomas & Collier, 2002). These bilingual professionals are also well aware of the disconnect between solid research in the field about how long it takes for ELLs to acquire enough academic English (five to seven years) and the use of high stakes assessments that are in English and normed for native English speakers. ELLs in most states are required to take these standardized tests in English after only one or two years of receiving specialized ESL or bilingual services. Clearly under these circumstances, the standardized assessments in English become not tests of content knowledge but tests of English proficiency for these ELLs who are still in the process of acquiring English.

Professional Dispositions in Bilingual Education Settings

In recent years, much has been written about improving teacher quality and the role of professional dispositions of teachers. It is now believed that teacher dispositions play as critical a role in teacher quality and effectiveness as do teacher’s pedagogical and content knowledge and skills. In the 1960’s much attention was given to the principles that govern the nature and effective practice of helping professions (Singh & Stoloff, 2008). Combs and others used the terms dispositions and perceptions as synonyms and posited that teachers are required to use “self as an instrument in doing their job” (Combs et al., 1969). They also defined a person’s behavior as a consequence of all the perceptions that person has, and once perceptions are established, they have the quality of a belief, and those beliefs can have an impact on behavior. Research has shown that the attributes of the classroom teacher significantly affect how well students learn. “Recently it has become clear that the quality of the education that our children receive depends directly upon the quality of the teachers in our schools. Parents, teachers, educators, and researchers agree that effective teaching happens when the teachers thoroughly know their subjects, have significant teaching skills, and possess dispositions that foster growth and learning in students” (Wasicsko, 2002).

NCATE in 2002 required that teacher preparation programs accredited by NCATE must assess the dispositions of their teacher candidates. In 2006, NCATE defined teacher dispositions:

Professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development. NCATE expects institutions to assess professional dispositions based on observable behaviors in educational settings. The two professional dispositions that NCATE expects institutions to assess are fairness and the belief that all students can learn. Based on their mission and conceptual framework, professional education units can operationalize additional professional dispositions.

Another professional association that has played a crucial role in defining teacher dispositions in the field of language minority education is TESOL or Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. In 2007, TESOL developed dispositions that complement five of the TESOL standards:

Standard 1: Language competence dispositions.

Teachers value, respect, and promote:

D1-all languages and dialects as valid systems of communication and as a natural resource to be preserved

D2-the development of language competence in their students

D3-the role of L1 <native language> in the English language learner's (ELLs) social and educational development

D4-the student's developing language skills, encouraging other students and teachers to do the same

D5-the student's personal experiences of learning a new language

Standard 2: Developmental, social, political, and cultural contexts dispositions.

Teachers value, respect, and promote:

D1-home, school, and community relationships

D2-home language(s) and culture(s)

D3-a willingness to learn about the specific cultural and historical backgrounds of the students represented in the classrooms

Standard 3: Curriculum, instruction, and assessment dispositions

Teachers value, respect, and promote:

D1-the diversity and individuality of students

D2-the multiple ways in which students can demonstrate what they have learned

D3-sensitivity to ELLs in all phases of assessment

D4-sensitivity to the differences of ELLs' prior knowledge

D5-high academic achievement for ELLs

D6-special accommodations, as needed for ELLs during teaching and assessment

D7-opportunities to create and maintain educational equity, inclusiveness, and end exclusion, low expectations

Standard 4: The school environment dispositions.

Teachers value, respect, and promote:

D1-collaborative endeavors within and between the school and community

D2-the unique contributions and skills of bilingual paraprofessionals or community liaisons

D3-the awareness of the needs that ELLs have

D4-a sharing of information with colleagues about the students and their cultures

D5-high expectations of ELLs and their families and communities

Standard 5: Professional development dispositions.

Teachers value, respect, and promote

D1-a willingness and enthusiasm for active professional development

D2-self-reflection and self assessment

D3-a willingness to collaborate as a means to further professional development

Reading through the TESOL dispositions linked to TESOL standards makes it clear that the work of educating ELLs is complex. The operationalization and assessment of dispositions that underlie standards is just as complex. A list of eight guiding principals from the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) entitled the English Learners' Bill of Rights sounds similar to the TESOL dispositions except for the inclusion of their fifth principle: The belief of teachers that "English learners benefit from being taught in a way that allows them to maintain their native language while learning English" (CABE, 2009).

Despite all the emphasis on dispositions, it is clear that dispositions are a vague construct that is hard to define, operationalize, and measure. Wasicsko (2002) maintains that dispositions are attitudes, perceptions, and/or beliefs that form the basis of behavior. We can come close to comprehending dispositions when we see them in action in classrooms as teacher behaviors and when we hear and read the stories and comments from teachers and teacher candidates. Other questions that come to mind to consider for the future that proves to be even more complex: How do we effectively and authentically teach dispositions to our teacher candidates? How do we change the dispositions of teacher candidates that would negatively affect students in a given educational setting? Nevertheless, bilingual education teacher candidates need a plethora of opportunities to reflect on what is expected of them in terms of professional content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and professional dispositions as well as how these three areas are inextricably linked.

Methods, Techniques, Modes of Inquiry, Data Sources, Findings

Qualitative data were compiled from teacher candidate autobiographies, essays, class discussions, in class presentations, and in pre and post classroom observation conferences. In courses aimed at teaching language arts and content in bilingual education programs, bilingual teacher candidates at the undergraduate level analyzed their concerns about the apparent disconnect between what they are learning in their coursework and what the expectations are of general education teachers and administrators in the schools where they observe, student teach or work as teacher assistants, tutors and child care staff. In addition, bilingual education teacher candidates engaged in self reflection about their own beliefs and dispositions as well as the beliefs and dispositions of the parents, teachers and administrators in the schools where they observed, student taught or worked. The data collected from these several sources were organized, analyzed, categorized, and synthesized.

Bilingual education teacher candidates developed theories about their dispositions sociocultural dynamics that underlie a belief system maintained at a particular school and/or school district. They developed theories about how changes in a belief system could be negotiated within a given educational setting.

Bilingual teacher education candidates identified both micro-environmental and macro-environmental variables that appear to influence how a belief system develops within the candidates themselves. In this study, macro-environmental variables in an educational setting are defined as larger constructs that involve, concern, or impact the students, parents, and educators with whom the teacher candidate interacts. Such constructs include the links among settings such as the school, home, and neighborhood; relationships and interactions with parents; and the educational practices used in the classroom. The macro-environmental variables on a larger scale also include the overarching patterns of power and status in schools and districts; dominate ideologies regarding educational practices; mandated organizational structures; program models; curricular materials; instructional approaches, methods, and strategies.

Macro-environmental structures also include the varying sociocultural beliefs about subsets of students by teachers, parents, and administrators. In this study, micro-environmental variables in an educational setting are defined as an individual's perception of self and what that individual reflects upon, values, respects, appreciates and promotes. Micro-environmental variables of an individual also reflect that individual's commitment to an endeavor as well as an individual's own perception of his or her ability to have an impact on the academic achievement of students and the actions of other professionals in the educational settings. Figure 1. provides examples of both types of variables that were revealed through an analysis of the data provided by bilingual education teacher candidates in various types of assigned written essays, class discussions, pre and post observation conferences, and written reflections.

Figure 1. Micro-environmental and Macro-environmental Variables

A. Micro-environmental variables	B. Macro-environmental variables
A1. The candidate values the development of his/her own bilingualism, biliteracy, & biculturalism.	B1. The candidate values differences in language use as well as dialects in the native language (L1) & English (L2) of students.
A2. The candidate comprehends the significant role that his/her primary language plays/played in the acquisition of his/her second language.	B2. The candidate appreciates the importance of accommodating students with special needs by adapting L1 & L2 instruction for language arts & content areas.
A3. The candidate is committed to learning as much as possible about the significant contributions from the students' countries, languages, & cultures.	B3. The candidate comprehends the significant role that the primary language plays in the acquisition of a student's second language in listening, speaking, reading, & writing.
A4. The candidate respects the values of his/her diverse culture(s).	B4. The candidate comprehends the linguistic and cultural complexities that each student experiences in the process of becoming bilingual & bicultural.
A5. The candidate comprehends the linguistic and cultural complexities he/she experienced while becoming bilingual & bicultural.	B5. The candidate comprehends the process by which students will adapt & acculturate according to their own particular circumstances.
A6. The candidate is committed to developing a repertoire of appropriate, research based instructional strategies & approaches for use when teaching in L1 & L2.	B6. The candidate comprehends that there will be individual variation within each area of development (linguistic, social, & emotional) & respects the diverse needs of all learners.
A7. The candidate values social & academic meaningful communication across languages.	B7. The candidate comprehends & respects the multiple intelligences & learning styles of students.
A8. The candidate is committed to learning how to create an effective learning environment in the L1 and L2 of the students & seeks out professional development opportunities as a bilingual educator.	B8. The candidate comprehends the stages (levels) of the second language acquisition process & the use of appropriate L1 & L2 instruction in the content areas.
A9. The candidate values the expertise and advice of educational professionals, seeks out support from them, & reflects on these experiences in an on-going process of self-directed learning.	B9. The candidate comprehends the effective and appropriate use of student assessment data in L1 & L2 for improving student learning & developing curriculum.
A10. The candidate values the languages & cultures of parents, parent involvement & communication with parents/families in the school community.	B10. The candidate comprehends that parent involvement & communication with parents benefit the academic & emotional development of students.
A11. The candidate values the use of assessments & is committed to learning about the limitations (i.e., cultural bias), appropriate uses & inappropriate uses of informal & formal assessments.	

Evidence: Candidate Voices

This study focused on two questions that continually surfaced over two years in undergraduate classrooms in a program to prepare bilingual education teacher candidates for the complex profession of educating English language learners. Both questions merited a great deal of reflection and analysis: What are the perceptions and pressures that bilingual teacher candidates have experienced during their own educational careers, clinical observations, and student teaching experiences regarding using both English and the native language for instruction and assessment? What are the dispositions that bilingual candidates believe they must possess to be effective teachers and advocates for students?

Qualitative data regarding these complex questions were collected from 1.) in class student presentations and discussions, 2.) in class essay exit slips, 3.) reflective midterm and final exams responses to essay questions, 4.) reflective essays critiquing research articles, book chapters or books, 5.) reflective essays on participation in professional development activities such as interviewing students, teachers, and/or administrators who work with ELLs, 6.) autobiographical reflective essays and 7.) pre and post observation conferences. Figure 2. provides a few examples from the many reflections both written and spoken that were analyzed, categorized and synthesized into possible dispositions that bilingual education candidates need to understand and further develop as they continue their educational careers.

Figure 2. Voices of Bilingual Education Teacher Candidates

A. Micro-environmental variables	B. Macro-environmental variables
A1. "If I were back in fourth grade, I would want my reading teacher to allow me to read in my native language. I think I would have done better in school if I had learned all my content area curriculum in Spanish."	B1. "I am trilingual because I can speak Puerto Rican, Mexican, and English. Maybe I know four languages because I think I speak two versions of English, too. Seriously, playing with languages makes you really think about words and where they came from."
A2. "I believe it is very important to show the students the great similarities between both English and Spanish. Also that both languages are very beautiful. Just as we learned about cognates, a student will feel better when he/she discovers that English does not have to be scary and distinct."	B2. "During my observations, I noticed that my cooperative teacher talked about these <special education> children as students not capable of doing any work." "Labeling students is discrimination. Every child can learn. They just need the right teacher. I hope I can be the right teacher."
A3. "I feel strongly that language opens pathways to many realms of experience such as art, music, & dance. Knowing two languages has not limited my exposure to new experiences; it has awakened in me a yearning for knowledge about various cultures."	B3. "I think in different ways. For example, if I am reading and I can't understand a question or passage, I can think about the topic in my other language, and I can better understand the point that I had trouble understanding <at first>."
A4. "In the end, being bilingual is much more than knowing two languages; it is knowing two beautiful, distinct worlds – something truly magnificent."	B4. "That was a difficult year for me because I had an extensive vocabulary, but my comprehension of the vocabulary in books was low. I frequently used words in the wrong context because of my misunderstanding when I read. I remember going over readings and understanding them as a whole, but having difficulties with particular words."
A5. "With each culture, there are many ideas, concepts, etc. that cannot be transferred and/or explained 100% in another language or culture. Things really can get lost in translation."	B5. "This <dislike of school> is due to ...almost failing because I talked a lot. I would have liked the teacher to have had a bit more patience with me. I do not think I failed because I was not smart enough, but maybe because I was not given a chance to learn in my learning style."
A6. "I feel that building a strong foundation of teaching strategies is key for a teacher. I must be able to establish an effective language arts program."	B6. "Am I going to confront the issue at hand and work hard to make sure the special needs student feels like part of the group, or am I going to be intimidated, scared, nervous, and not want to put in the extra effort to make the child feel welcome?"
A7. "In my personal experiences, I have been able to travel throughout several states in Mexico without a problem. Because Spanish and Italian have similar words, I was also able to travel in Italy without a problem. Speaking Spanish has allowed me to help many people who come to this country and who do not speak English."	B7. " Rigorous is the term that our leaders are throwing around to reassure parents and populace that we are moving in the right direction in our educational strategy. I did not like what I saw when I looked up that word: Stiff, inflexible, unyielding, and harsh. This mode of thinking has no room in it to accommodate the different styles and levels we as educators work with in our daily lives."
A8. "The teachers collaborate in kindergarten and early primary education when they share creative strategies. The kids benefit by this. I hope I can fit in with a team of teachers so I can learn from them."	B8. "I believe that using the language experience approach is important to help beginning ELLs to acquire their second language <English>. Another approach for these students is teaching them about cognates. Students will quickly increase their vocabulary."
A9. "Teachers need and should be provided with the tools and strategies to work with students. Professional development based on learning effective strategies would help to continuously assess and enrich each classroom. I know I will need that."	B9. "It is ridiculous to test a child when English is not their native language with the ISAT or PSAT. During my observations, I had the misfortune to observe third graders in a bilingual program struggling to read the ISAT, It was devastating not being able to help them. 'Ms. P., I can't read this. What does this word mean? Can you help me?'" These children cried out for help.
A10. "One is capable of helping so many with the knowledge of both languages, especially being a teacher. A bilingual teacher is able to explore and understand the different perspectives surrounding the cultures in the community."	B10. "Being that we are studying to become bilingual teachers, we are able to help a lot of students. We will also be able to help parents. If we help parents, they will be more involved in school. Having involved parents will help the students."
A11. "Standardized testing should serve as a guide for teachers to see where the students stand academically so that the teacher can provide a curriculum that will assist the students on their weakness and strengths." "Translating English language tests into native language assessments has proven to be a problem because there are different dialects among languages, i.e. Spanish."	

Scientific or Scholarly Significance of this Work

As stated earlier in this paper, this study would attempt to explore the aspects of what can be called a linguistic conundrum. Bilingual education teacher candidates graduate from colleges of education and enter teaching positions that are highly complex, much more complex than those positions filled by general education graduates. The socio-cultural, political landscape within educational settings that bilingual education teacher candidates must navigate will determine how they will be able to be advocates for ELLs. Solid research literature in the field of bilingual education encourages model programs based on teaching children in the native language as they acquire academic language in English over at least five to seven years. This research base in bilingual program models is not widely known to many school district policy makers and curriculum directors who advocate for teaching ELLs in as little native language as possible, preferably to use the child's L1 only for support. This philosophical stance leads to using assessments mostly in English. Obviously the disconnect between the research literature on how long it takes to acquire academic English (five to seven years) and assessment policies at the local and state level (administering state tests in English after one or two years of program services) is troubling and presents bilingual educators with difficult decisions. This study examined how bilingual education teacher candidates reflected on these complex issues. This study also examined the developing professional teaching dispositions each bilingual education teacher candidate will need in his or her work with ELLs to ensure that students acquire English, academic skills and content knowledge.

Again, the limitations of the study lie with not being able to generalize about the findings to other colleges of education in other locations. Obviously, the findings of the study are limited because the sample is a sample of convenience from one university. Even with caveats, however, our study does shed some light on the complex issues facing new bilingual teachers. This study is significant in that it does provide an analysis of some empirical evidence about the difficult to define constructs of professional teaching dispositions for bilingual educators. This ethnographic study contributes to theory and the knowledge base by establishing phenomena that require further inquiry and explanation.

Conclusions

Educators in schools and school districts struggle with the task of raising the academic achievement of English language learners so that these students can read and write at grade level; function at grade level in math, science and social studies; and meet state standards on mandated state tests. ELLs must have the highest quality teachers, curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. The bilingual teachers who are responsible for educating ELL students must be highly qualified and be a positive influence within the educational environments where they work. Teachers must be fully aware of the obstacles they may face in the workplace. They must be grounded in all aspects of educational theory, first and second language acquisition, curriculum and instruction best practices, as well as what constitutes appropriate assessment practices.

In addition, bilingual education teachers must be knowledgeable of the obstacles they face in schools and school districts: A lack of knowledge on the part of staff regarding educating ELLs, possible racism, misunderstandings about the appropriate use of native language instruction, and an understanding of how belief systems are developed and changed. This study hopefully has provided some insights into the process that bilingual teacher candidates must go through as they prepare themselves to teach ELLs in bilingual educational settings.

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