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"We Make It Controversial"
Elementary Preservice Teachers' Beliefs about Race

By Lisa Brown Buchanan

Introduction

The impetus for this study began during an elementary teacher education course meeting, where, as the instructor, I listened to preservice teachers discuss whether or not it was appropriate to discuss controversial topics—including race—with young children. As the discussion progressed, I was troubled to hear preservice teachers disclose their "uncomfortableness" with race at large and emphasize that discussions about race in the elementary classroom were inappropriate. Their responses compelled me to thoughtfully consider how the topic of race, students' experiences with race, and students' ideas about the presence and function of race in school could be more deliberately woven into my courses in elementary teacher education.

In this short series of exercises about race, I aimed to engage my elementary preservice teachers in thinking about race as a concept, the presence and function of race in their own lived experiences, and their preconceived notions about race. Additionally, I hoped to pose questions that fostered their thinking about race while also positioning them to articulate their beliefs about race. Finally, I wanted to begin a conversation with undergraduate elementary preservice teachers that ultimately would continue and develop both throughout our semester together as well as in my future courses in elementary teacher education.

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Literature Review

The Problem with Race

Often considered a controversial topic too taboo for the classroom (Evans, Avery, & Pederson, 1999), race remains front and center in relation to daily life, teaching, and learning. Race is a continual influence of students' and teachers' lives, shaping how they understand themselves and others, impacting their lived experiences, and contributing to how they understand race. The influence of race also extends to schools, where White teachers continue to dominate the teaching force (Causey, Thomas, & Armento, 2000; Sleeter, 2001), widening the racial identity gap between increasingly diverse students and White teachers. For decades, teacher educators have urged fellow teacher educators and classroom teachers to recognize that race is and continues to be a persistently contentious topic in schools, one that is particularly glossed over or misunderstood by White preservice teachers (Grant, 1988; Haviland, 2008; Howard, 2006; King, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1996; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

Further complicating the classroom divide is the documented avoidance of race and perceived colorblindness among White teachers and preservice teachers (Howard, 2006; Howard, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1999; Laughter, 2011; Williams & Evans-Winters, 2005). These factors point to a need for teachers to frequently examine race during the teacher education experience. Effective strategies for examining race in teacher education include structured seminars and deliberations (Buchanan, 2012; Hess, 2009; Parker, 2001; Parker & Hess, 2001) that position a shared text (e.g., written, filmic, or art text) to elicit shared dialogue, experiences that explicitly bridge coursework with the local community (Cooper, 2007), and structured reflection exercises (Brown, 2004; Dinkleman, 2003; Pewewardy, 2005). Additionally, deliberately couching these course exercises within preservice teachers' field experiences can help elicit more persistent engagement with race in teacher education.

In response, teacher educators propose preservice teachers should examine race as part of a larger construct of multicultural education within their teacher education program, a framework that they assert is central to understanding all other aspects of teachings and learning both in the teacher education program (Howard, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1999; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Milner, 2006; Sleeter, 1993, 2001; Ullucci, 2010) and in schools (James & Peterson, 2013; Landsman & Lewis, 2011). They recognized that teacher education provides a ripe location for moving such exercises with race into a deeper examination of the presence and function of race, including Whiteness, in education and society (Landsman & Lewis, 2011). In fact, Sleeter emphasizes that by not examining the presence and function of race in teacher education or avoiding such conversations, teacher educators are promoting the myth of colorblindness. Other researchers have echoed the impact of not examining race in teacher education, emphasizing the importance of creating frequent exercises with race and other components of diversity in teacher education

(Brown, 2004; Cooper, 2007; Milner, 2006). As a whole, these scholars argue that teacher education programs should begin such work by asking preservice teachers to think about their own racial reality and to question their beliefs about race, then move to well-crafted opportunities within coursework to discuss the presence and function of race in their own lives and the lives of others.

On the other hand, the literature has consistently documented that conversations about race fall short of the potentially rich and problem-posing potential that teacher educators have in mind (Causey et al., 2000; Gomez & White, 2010; Kumar & Hamer, 2013; Sleeter, Torres, & Laughlin, 2004). As a result, some scholars propose specific strategies for achieving such discussions. Teacher educators who have created course experiences where preservice teachers examined race have used written reflections, autobiographical essays, peer journaling, urban field placements, and structured discussions (Gillespie et al., 2002; Kumar & Hamer, 2013; Laughter, 2011; Milner, 2006; Pewewardy, 2005; Ullucci, 2010). Most often, individual written reflections and shared discussions were identified as strategies for examining race in teacher education.

While positioning preservice teachers to examine race in teacher education is critical, challenges to the process have been identified. For example, most programs do not appear to offer a concrete focus on race (Gorski, 2009), and when such experiences are implemented (see for example Brown, 2004; Cooper, 2007; Pewewardy, 2005), they are often isolated experiences in single courses rather than part of a series of experiences across a program. Still, when race was positioned for study within a program, teacher educators and preservice teachers described either disinterest or uneasiness with the topic of race (Jennings, 2007) and preservice teachers' avoidance (Garrett & Segall, 2013) and claims of colorblindness seemed to further impair efforts to place the study of race in teacher education (King, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1999; Laughter, 2011; Williams & Evans-Winters, 2005). Additionally, preservice teachers' prior experiences and dispositions towards race appear to impact how they approach race (Causey et al., 2000; Gomez & White, 2010; Sleeter et al., 2004; Zeichner, 2009) and discussing race can be difficult in settings where one race dominates the group, leading to such conversations being avoided or minimized (Darden, 2009; Glazier, 2003).

Moreover, the White dominance in elementary teacher education underscores the importance of crafting these experiences in elementary teacher education. If teacher education programs are to present a more deliberate examination of race across courses, teacher educators must understand preservice teachers' beliefs about race and how to use this knowledge to provide a more focused and meaningful investigation of these concepts in their individual and collective teaching. In summary, the scholarship related to preservice teachers and race demonstrates the need for deliberate experiences in teacher education that foster preservice teachers' thinking about race and offer frequent opportunities for preservice teachers to articulate their beliefs about race.

Although these findings provide insight into studying race in teacher education, less is known about the extent of inquiry that students engaged during their programs or what is meant by students' lack of interest and discomfort with the topic. This suggests that further research focused on how race is examined in teacher education is necessary to understand the ways in which race is examined and to what extent preservice teachers are involved in negotiating race. While much can be derived from scholarship about preservice teachers' beliefs about race, some gaps exist. Research that identifies and articulates elementary preservice teachers' earliest experiences with race and their beliefs about discussing race with elementary students was not found. Additionally, scholarship that identifies and then examines preservice teachers' beliefs about who they would discuss race with and their level of ease with such discussions was not located.

In this study, I positioned three experiences with race into course meetings in an attempt to continually engage preservice teachers in identifying and articulating their beliefs about race, their childhood and schooling experiences with race, and their beliefs about discussing race. Three research questions guided the design and development of this descriptive case study (Yin, 2003):

1. What are elementary preservice teachers' experiences with race?
2. What are elementary preservice teachers' beliefs about race?
3. What are elementary preservice teachers' beliefs about discussing race?

Methodology

Study Setting and Participants

Three undergraduate elementary methods courses at two mid-sized public universities in the Southeastern United States were the cases studied. Students enrolled in both universities' elementary education programs were clustered in a cohort design, taking methods courses together and attending internships with one another for 8-to-10 hours a week. Each of the courses met three hours a week. I served the dual role of the course instructor and the researcher for each course.

As Table 1 illustrates, the participants were incredibly homogeneous in race, gender, and age group. Each class was predominately White, female, and aged 18-24, which is typical in most preservice teacher programs in the United States (Causey

Table 1
Preservice Teachers' Demographic Makeup

Course	Total Students	F	M	Black	Latino	Multi-racial	White	18-24	25-40	Rank
Social Studies	28	27	1	0	0	0	28	27	1	Junior
Reading	12	11	1	0	0	1	11	11	1	Junior
Social Studies	22	20	2	0	1	0	21	20	2	Senior

et al., 2000; Sleeter, 2001). Pseudonyms were used to protect the confidentiality of participants.

As the teacher and researcher, I was also a study participant. I am a White female, therefore I cannot effectively discuss the study methodology without acknowledging the presence and function of race and Whiteness in my own life (see, for example, Gillespie, Ashbaugh, & DeFiore, 2002; Landsman & Lewis, 2011; James & Peterson, 2013). My own positionality as a White woman teaching three White dominated groups of preservice teachers influenced the ways in which race and Whiteness operated in this study. Additionally, I recognize that I played an integral part in the case study implementation. Because of my dual roles, I was aware that I needed to be adaptive and flexible (Yin, 2003), and I took steps to minimize the threats to the study's credibility that were related to my dual roles in the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For example, I designed data collection methods that were not linked to course grades or assignments. Additionally, the online discussions, questionnaires, and written reflections related to the study were part of a larger structure of regular course components rather than isolated experiences.

Data Collection Methods and Analysis

Data collection occurred in three separate courses. Social Studies Methods (Junior) occurred in Fall 2011 and Reading Methods (Junior) and Social Studies Methods (Senior) took place in Spring 2013. Building on the recommendations of Milner (2006), three data collection methods were utilized in this study: students' written reflections, online discussions, and a questionnaire. The questionnaire instrument completed in class offered Likert format responses and open ended questions, and responses were anonymous. The complete questionnaire is located in Appendix A. Narrative written reflections were completed outside of class in response to questions posed to students following class meetings. Although the reflections were not mandatory, more than half of the students submitted written reflections regularly. Using an online discussion forum, students took part in structured discussions (Hess, 2009) related to race, and the dialogues were then transcribed. Written reflections and online discussions were not anonymous. All written reflection and online discussion prompts are listed in Appendix B.

I analyzed the data using a constant comparative approach (Glaser, 1965; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I began with an initial reading of the data which revealed broad data categories. I then completed initial coding, which involved developing multiple, narrow categories or codes across the three different data sources. Examples of initial codes included *fear of offending*, *relationship*, and *exposure*. After locating the initial codes, I repeated this process in an effort to identify codes that I did not see initially (Stake, 2006). Initial coding was followed with creating broad categories for the multiple codes. Examples of broad categories included *race as controversial*, *discussing race with families*, and *colorblindness*. Finally,

I compared the codes to the three research questions in an effort to increase the credibility of the study (Yin, 2003, 2009).

Limitations of the Study

The study design presents several limitations. First, the dynamics of a White instructor and researcher and predominantly White student body may have influenced the preservice teachers' willingness to participate and extent of participation. Also, given the duration of the study across a single semester rather than a comprehensive series of interrelated courses across a program, it is possible that the study did not accurately capture the preservice teachers' initial and resulting beliefs along a continuum of experiences. Furthermore, as the written reflections were not mandatory, it is possible that only a certain cross-section of students were represented in the written reflection data. Finally, because of the identifiers used in the online discussions, students may not have felt comfortable expressing their beliefs as openly in the online discussions as with the anonymous questionnaire. As coercion is a valid concern in researching teacher and student interactions and course experiences, it is important to recognize that students in this study did not complete the data sources as a part of their course grade. Instead, their course assignments and participation credit were drawn from other course experiences (Maxwell, 2005).

Findings

Study data revealed preservice teachers' earliest experiences with race and three categories of preservice teachers' beliefs about race: race as a controversial topic, discussing race with different groups, and colorblindness and Whiteness.

Preservice Teachers' Earliest Experiences with Race

Ninety-six percent of the preservice teachers in this study were White and their racial identities have influenced their life experiences with race. Through written reflections, the preservice teachers described their earliest experiences with race. The majority of preservice teachers stated that they did not have frequent opportunities to work and learn with students with different racial identities across their childhood and K-12 schooling. Instead, they went to school or lived in neighborhoods with predominately White peers. Preservice teachers who attended school with or live nearby children of different races described isolated or stereotypical accounts of race. For example, Meredith offered,

> In my childhood and schooling, I remember just Black History month. I did not really have any experiences with race otherwise.

Jess shared,

> There aren't too many black people where I'm from. It's weird thinking back now, but I remember in the cafeteria at lunch the black people would sit in their own

section, two booths, and the Whites would have their own section. It's not that we all didn't get along, our friends just happened to be of our own color. I don't know why, but that's how it was. That's how it is for my entire community.

For several preservice teachers, the university was their first schooling experience with students with diverse racial identities. Abby wrote,

I grew up in a small town that was mostly middle class White people and my grandparents grew up during the civil rights time period and still had their negative perception of anyone other than White people. So coming to college was a whole new world for me because I got to see how different people are and I also go to appreciate race in a whole new light.

In contrast, a few students stated that their K-12 schooling and friendships included experiences with students of diverse races. For example, Emory shared,

As a child I grew up in a small neighborhood of all White boys and girls and a single African-American girl. I was fascinated by the few differences between myself and my African-American friend. Her mother made her wear a shower cap in the swimming pool to protect her hair. Some days she couldn't come outside to play because her mother would wash and style her hair for hours, and most summer days her parents wouldn't allow her outdoors until sunset. All of these differences had to do with her hair and skin which was different than mine. I found it very interesting and would ask her about it. She didn't mind answering at all. I also played with African-American and Hispanic children in school. I remember being best friends with an African-American girl in the third grade and going to her birthday party. She was like anyone else to me, although we belonged to different races.

Other preservice teachers described their families' attitudes about interracial friendships or retold childhood memories of overt racism. For example, Camila revealed that her neighborhood and schooling experiences were predominately White, with the exception of her friendship with one child:

During 8th grade, one of my friends, who was African American, stayed overnight with us a lot. She always felt comfortable around my family, and my parents always treated her like one of their own. However, my grandparents seemed to hold a different view about being associated with people of a different race. I'm pretty sure the first time that I brought my Black friend to my grandmother's house she almost had a heart attack. After she figured out that I was still going to bring her to family get-togethers, she finally started accepting her.

Jess shared a similar experience,

The one thing I remember about race from my childhood is my grandfather coming over to visit and we were watching Fresh Prince of Bel Air. He absolutely freaked out and asked my mom why she would let us watch a show with people 'like that' on it. He said something a little more vulgar than that, but I won't repeat it.

As illustrated, they often shared vignettes of their family's inclusive or racist attitudes and beliefs about race and then articulated how those beliefs influenced their friendships and emerging beliefs during their formative years. For other preservice teachers, specific experiences within the community during their childhood or teenage years influenced their attitudes and beliefs about race, especially as it related to the knowledge they were receiving in their teacher education programs. For example, one student described how she identified the function of race in her own K-12 schooling:

> When I began my internships in this program, the schools were a complete culture shock for me. These schools have more White people than all of Washington County, and they have lights that work in the hallway, and classrooms full of supplies instead of a chalkboard and 20 broken desks. That is what our schools back home looked like. This semester, I am in a classroom with three Black children on the roster, where as I was used to being one of three Whites in my classes. So I am used to seeing firsthand how majority Black schools are funded, and I can see now how the only difference is race. Same state, same funding per student, but look at the difference between the schools! You can't tell me it doesn't have anything to do with race.

Years later, the university provided a number of preservice teachers with different peers than in their K-12 years. As Susanne explained,

> I am so thankful that I had the opportunity to go away to college. It has greatly impacted my attitudes about race. I have many African American friends in [city] and have become a lot more open minded to differences among people.

Susanne also contrasted the differences between K-12 experiences and her internship classroom, stating "Through my internship I have the opportunity to work with students of all races and ethnicities." However, she acknowledged the potential influence of her family members' attitudes about race on her own beliefs about race and others. She stressed,

> . . . and I always thought that the attitudes I've noticed in my family would rub off on me somehow. I was always afraid that it would impact how I treat certain students.

This divergence between her family attitudes/beliefs and personal attitudes/beliefs surfaced in course discussions and in Susanne's written reflections, suggesting that she recognized the potential impact of her family's beliefs about race on her own beliefs. While this is important, Susanne's responses did not indicate that she was beginning to think critically about the role of her own Whiteness and race in her teaching. Similarly, Jenn did not describe experiences in childhood with diverse peers or with examining race in school. Instead, she described how her university classes, including teacher education courses, offered opportunities to discuss race:

> In college, I have had many influential experiences in which I was challenged to

think about how different races of people are treated. Because I am from a small town, I did not really know what diversity truly was until I came to college. Professors in my foundations class and my social studies method course encouraged me to think about and consider race in a whole new perspective. Also, from these classes I learned to look at issues from different perspectives like what the stories are telling you, and what is still missing.

In summary, preservice teachers' statements about early experiences that influenced their attitude about race suggest that they either interacted with children of a different race frequently during childhood and adolescence, or they exclusively lived nearby and attended school with other Whites. Additionally, other preservice teachers discussed their first experiences with racial diversity occurring in college. Their earliest race experiences seemed to influence the preservice teachers' current attitudes and beliefs about race.

Preservice Teachers' Beliefs about Race: Race as a Controversial Topic

Across the three groups of preservice teachers, preservice teachers frequently referred to race and discussions about race as controversial, problematic, uncomfortable, and potentially offensive. In a questionnaire response, 91% preservice teachers strongly agreed or agreed that race is controversial. Table 2 includes representative quotes from questionnaires denoting race as controversial.

In an online discussion, students cited contesting viewpoints and varying components of fear (e.g., fear of offending) as central to race being controversial. Students' explained:

> *Jenn*: I think it depends on what perspective a person is getting at, and ultimately, who is involved.

> *Lauren*: I think race can be controversial, but I don't see it the same way some others do.

> *Susanne*: If it's controversial, then obviously the person is afraid of the unknown.

> *Meredith*: It has always been controversial and it always will be.

Table 2
Preservice Teachers' Beliefs about Race as Controversial

It is always hard to talk about opinions with opposing views.
People have all been raised differently and hold strong to their feelings about this topic.
Everyone is raised differently.
Lots of people have strong opinions.
Race has always been controversial and always will be.
It is, even though it shouldn't be.
I think it is even more controversial in the South than in the North, although it's present there.

Blair: We make it controversial.

Similarly, students contended that race incites uncomfortable feelings during conversations, often garnering their avoidance. Students maintained,

Maura: No one ever discusses it!

Jenn: I think it is even more controversial in the South than in the North; although it is definitely present it the North.

Jess: It's very controversial because some people can be very close-minded; I don't think it should be, and maybe it wouldn't be if you provide an environment that is accepting of all differences….but that's not always going to happen.

Skyler: It always has been avoided and it always will be. It's touchy, because people don't want to offend anyone.

Camila: No one wants to really confront that the issue still exists.

Still, other preservice teachers suggested that teachers' ideologies about race influenced how race operates in the classroom. Caroline explained:

I have found that in my internships, the children that the teachers have the most problems with are African American. And to be honest, I am only there one and a half days a week, so I tend to take on the same feelings as my cooperating teacher when it comes to what students are like, because I don't have a lot of other interactions with our students yet. So what does that mean? Does that mean that Black students are bad? That they are always in trouble? Or is the result of how teachers, how we see students? I mean, isn't race a factor here?

In her written reflection, Skyler wrote about the function of teachers' ideas about race. She shared how an elementary teacher that she worked with one semester openly used racist remarks during a grade level meeting, emphasizing how race operates in how students are viewed and discussed. She shared,

In one of our recent grade level meetings, a teacher was talking about a student's name, and the spelling and pronunciation. She described it as "a bunch of ghetto mess." She was saying it as an ending statement to her ongoing rant about how parents should spell names phonetically as much as possible and without extra letters. I was offended by her description of the student's name; it made me feel like she just said that because the student was Black, and I felt like she was implying that Black parents are less educated compared to other parents. During that grade level meeting, I realized that I am not "in Kansas anymore" and that teachers, too, can be racist. For me, it was a reminder that I will always encounter people who I don't agree with on the issue of race, and people who teach elementary school who are racist, and sometimes, I won't really know where they stand on race until something like this is said.

Although Claire and Skyler were able to identify examples of teachers' ideologies about race and examples of enacted racism in the classroom, other students did

not write about similar experiences or discuss the presence and function of racism in elementary grades.

The diversity of opinions or ideas about race seemed to problematize race further for the preservice teachers. Representative quotes included, "Lots of people have strong opinions which makes it controversial," and "It's hard to discuss because racism is still present today." These example responses seemed to indicate that race becomes more difficult when beliefs differ across discussants. An interesting perspective was offered from a student who was on study abroad from Australia. Adam offered,

> After being abroad in a country where race is the number one topic, I just became used to hearing and talking about race. Here in the U.S., it's like a white elephant in the room.

Preservice Teachers' Beliefs about Race: Discussing Race

Preservice teachers indicated that their willingness to discuss race varied depending on the group with which they were engaging a conversation. Students' responses identified four potential circles of discussion that revealed strikingly different levels of interest/willingness to discuss race: family and friends, elementary students, students' families, and university classmates.

Family and friends. Discussing race presented a complicated array of scenarios with family and friends. Written reflections and questionnaires revealed that preservice teachers were generally willing to discuss race with friends or family who shared similar beliefs or with friends with which they were especially close. For example, one student explained, "For me, it's easier to talk to family and friends about it because their views are similar." They shared "it's a usual thing for us to talk about" and "I consider race to be an open topic with family." However, preservice teachers expressed hesitation towards discussions with family members or friends that either held different beliefs about race or those that they did not know well. One student stated, "I have very strong values in this area, and some of my family has strong opposing views; although I feel confident to talk about it, I may not feel comfortable." Still for a number of preservice teachers, race was a "touchy subject" regardless of the relationship they held with individual friends and family members.

Preservice teachers' ideas about conversations with friends and family regarding race revealed varying degrees of difficulty based on who the conversation is with and what aspect of race or what race the conversation is concerning. One student explained,

> With my friends definitely. But with family, it really depends on the subject concerning race.

Another student offered a similar explanation: "It depends on which race the con-

versation is about." Others disclosed, "I get pretty mad with some family members who are close-minded," and "Only if we are all the same race." In considering discussing race with family and friends, preservice teachers pointed to the role of relationships in deciding who they would or would not feel comfortable having conversations with about race. As Karen explained, "I am more comfortable talking about race with friends and family because we typically have similar backgrounds, beliefs and ideas." In summary, preservice teachers seemed to have different idea about discussing race with elementary students and students' families than with their own friends and family.

Elementary students. In all three courses, preservice teachers' fear of offending and propensity to avoid conversations about race was also demonstrated in their responses related to tackling race with their own elementary students and students' families. When asked to consider the role of race and their ideas about discussing race in the elementary classroom, they suggested that doing so was either controversial or risky. They cited competing ideas and race as a complex concept as factors that complicated potential discussions about race. Moreover, preservice teachers in each class believed that race is too complicated for elementary students to understand or discuss. The following excerpt from an online discussion illustrates preservice teachers' beliefs about discussing race in the elementary classroom:

> *Meredith*: It is too controversial; I mean, depending on the subject, I guess if it works with the curriculum, but if not, it is just too controversial.

> *Josie*: I think like the Civil Rights Movement—that should be discussed, but no, race shouldn't be discussed for just a random conversation. It gets too controversial. Tate: It's too controversial, and talking about race is not just black and white. I mean, I would never teach Kindergarten about the violence of the Civil Rights Movement. So I think it can be controversial depending on the content and the age level.

> *Caroline*: I think that there is a right way and a wrong way to discuss it. Absolutely discuss it, but do it without stepping on any toes to create conversation.

> *Skyler*: We make it controversial because everyone tries so hard to not offend each other. Let's face it, everyone cares and worries so much about it, and really, so much is based on race.

Preservice teachers in each class believed that elementary students' home environment informed their beliefs about race and therefore, they perceived race discussions in elementary school as controversial. In a second online discussion, Jess and Alese explained:

> *Alese*: I am still nervous to talk to my students about controversial topics like race because I think I will get in trouble.

> *Jess*: Many people have strong opinions and some of those people could be your students or their family.

Alese: I strongly agree with that, because you don't really know the kids' or their families' beliefs.

Jess: Children come with all different beliefs.

As illustrated in this discussion, preservice teachers demonstrated hesitations about discussing race, often citing fear of offending and concerns about classroom families' beliefs about race.

Because of the perceived inflammatory nature of conversations about race, preservice teachers like Lauren, believed that discussing race with children is inappropriate. She maintained,

> I believe that racism and biases are started because children are introduced to these things. Children are open books and discussing race turns so many pages…close the book and children start to pay attention to other things.

Likewise, for preservice teachers like Jenn, creating and facilitating such discussions is challenging. She admitted, "I don't know how to discuss race outside of the context of the Civil Rights Movement." One student passionately explained,

> It is a scary topic to tackle with students because…it is so controversial! I wouldn't want to step on any toes.

Explanations like "I am not sure of students' backgrounds and I don't want to offend," "I'd rather avoid it," and "I don't want to ruffle any feathers" imply that preservice teachers in each class feared that problems would ensue if they choose to discuss race with children.

In contrast, other preservice teachers believed that conversations related to race should be embraced, regardless of potential conflict with such classroom discussions. For example, this discussion segment demonstrates how preservice teachers' perceived discussions of race in the elementary grades:

Rylie: I feel like it doesn't have to be controversial in the elementary classroom as long as the classroom is inviting.

Jenn: I think that race should definitely be discussed; children shouldn't stay sheltered from reality forever. They should seek to know what went on and is still going on with race today.

Claire: It is important to make students aware. They need to know that it is an issue of everyday life, and that should be taught in our classrooms.

Others pointed to the reality of differences and how differences in race should be broached in the elementary setting. For instance, Meredith urged, "It should be out in the open that we are all different, and children should be introduced to this at a young age." Alese continued, "Students already know they are all different, so it should be discussed."

Students' families. In comparison to elementary students, preservice teachers

were more comfortable discussing race with students' families. Questionnaire responses revealed that 35% of preservice teachers were not comfortable talking to classroom parents about race. Of those who were not comfortable, explanations were offered. Representative responses are illustrated in Table 3.

Others suggested in online discussions that broaching race with families may lead to uncomfortable conversations. For example, one group explained:

> *Toby*: I don't know how the parents will react if we talk about race, and really, I will have to deal with them for the rest of the year. I don't want to create tension with parents.

> *Blair*: Talking with parents is intimidating anyways much less bringing up race.

> *Alice*: I know I have to be very careful because of parents and how things can be misinterpreted.

> *Jess*: I am terrified of disapproving parents!

> *Susanne*: Only if there was a problem with their child would I ever discuss race with a parent.

These excerpts indicate that while the majority of preservice teachers were comfortable discussing race with students' families, others perceived conversations about race with classroom families as potentially offensive. To avoid offending their students or students' families, these preservice teachers stated that they would avoid the conversations altogether.

University classmates. Preservice teachers revealed that discussing race with university classmates is complicated, and in general, students' comments related to talking about race with school peers revealed hesitation or avoidance with less familiar classmates. A few students stated that they were comfortable discussing race in class, sharing, "As long as people agree to disagree and take nothing too personal, and the topic is handled civilly, I'm ok with that," and "I don't mind talking about touchy subjects like race with classmates as long as people are open to listening to others; otherwise, it's just banging your head against the wall." While only 9% of preservice teachers indicated in the questionnaire that they were uncomfortable

Table 3
Preservice Teachers Beliefs about Discussing Race with Students' Families

I would just rather avoid that!
I am afraid to offend parents.
It's too difficult to talk to parents about race.
It's a lot easier to offend an adult when discussing race than a child.
I would be afraid to offend parents more than the students.
I feel like I haven't necessarily learned the proper way to talk about such a controversial topic with the parents of my students.
I don't even know how I would go about doing this!

taking part in discussions about race with their university classmates, their written reflections and online discussions indicated that discussions about race with peers were complicated. Their stance seemed to depend on what classmates they were talking with about race. In an online discussion, one group shared:

Nancy: It depends on what races are in the room and it depends on the class.

Erin: I am comfortable discussing race with our cohort, but not with a random class.

Sarah: I agree. I feel that our cohort is extremely honest but still loving to one another.

In a different group, one student echoed the relationship factor in discussing race with classmates. She offered, "I am comfortable talking about it [race] in this class because have a close relationship with my classmates this semester." These representative responses suggest that within a class where relationships have develop, preservice teachers feel comfortable discussing race whereas with other school peers, they would not be comfortable holding the same conversations.

For other preservice teachers, the teacher education classroom seemed to present a different sort of uncomfortableness. Jenn recognized,

I think that it is difficult to talk about race with my peers in teacher education, because we are all so self-conscious about what we say, and we worry about whether or not what we say will offend somebody. Also, we are so quick to judge and condemn someone else when they hold a different opinion than ourselves.

Others reported that they felt their classmates in teacher education courses were not open in discussions about race, noting "I feel like some of our classmates hold back" and "people get sensitive with racial topics." Yet, other students revealed that their own hesitations ultimately hinder university classroom conversations about race, including those with their tight-knit cohort. They explained:

Katie: I am too afraid to hurt anyone. I have had negative experiences with it in classes.

Amy: I just wouldn't want to offend anyone or hold a heated debate about race.

Heather: I will participate, but, it's not my first choice of topics.

Preservice Teachers' Beliefs about Race: Colorblindness and Whiteness

Preservice teachers also articulated beliefs related to colorblindness and Whiteness. While a small number of preservice teachers voiced that discussions about race are central to teaching and learning in the elementary grades, peers expressed that talking about race is "about accepting other cultures" and "We're all the same." One student asserted that among Whites, race is not present; she explained, "I don't believe race is in my (teacher education) classroom, because we are all White." Similarly, Toby offered,

> This class is made up of all White people, therefore I do not see that my Whiteness has a big impact on my class or on our teacher education program, and I don't believe my own Whiteness has a big influence on my upcoming student teaching or future teaching. The large majority of teachers at my school are White so I do not stand out as being the minority. Therefore I don't see it having a big impact on the school or the students. I think where I teach during my first year will determine how big of an impact my race will have. If I am the minority among the other teachers in the school then I believe students will react to me differently.

Toby's ideas about race varied based on the race of others present in the setting, demonstrated in his idea that his Whiteness is less influential with other Whites but very influential with students or teachers of other races. Similarly, when the three groups of predominantly White preservice teachers discussed how race operates in the elementary classroom, their responses focused on classrooms where students were racially diverse, but no students acknowledged the presence or function of race in classrooms that are dominated by one race.

Even as a few preservice teachers recognized Whiteness as one factor associated with race, most did not articulate an understanding of their own Whiteness in the study. For example, Alese maintained, "It [discussions about race] should happen, especially in schools that are mostly White, because those kids are usually not aware." Although Alese identified the function of Whiteness in elementary schools here, she does not seem to recognize or connect this to her own Whiteness or the function of it in her own classes. Those who shared schooling and childhood experiences with other children of different races, however, found the majority White class at the university to be a challenge. Emory shared,

> It is still a culture shock to me to be in a classroom with only White people. It sounds weird to say because my family is White, but it has been a challenge for me to get used to "all the White people." I guess family is just family and interactions happen naturally, but in the Teacher Ed. program, it has been hard for me to make the connections that I was able to make growing up in school.

Others asserted in questionnaire responses that race was not an important factor in the classroom, suggesting that "race does not define people." The following online discussion excerpt illustrates preservice teachers' assertions of colorblindness and Whiteness:

> *Emory*: Students need to understand that race is not important, but negative issues concerning race are.

> *Grace*: Race is only present physically and should not be acknowledged as anything more than that.

> *Sarah*: I feel like my Whiteness does not really impact anything.

> *Katie*: I have yet to see my Whiteness outwardly influence others in my program and internships.

Jess: I really don't know what impact of being White is.

This conversation demonstrates that across the three groups, preservice teachers often failed to recognize or trouble their own Whiteness, the function of Whiteness, and that their claims of colorblindness further complicated their understanding of race in their lives and in the classroom. In summary, preservice teachers in each class sometimes broached Whiteness and at other times, claimed a colorblind approach to race; still several disregarded race as present or performing in education.

Discussion

In this study, the preservice teachers perceived conversations about race as controversial, and in response, they were hesitant to talk about race and avoided such conversations altogether. This idea itself is problematic, to engage a classroom discussion about a concept that one perceives to be controversial with reservations about digging too deep or offending those involved in the conversation. Additionally, they held contrasting beliefs about discussing race with different groups of people (i.e, uncomfortable with students but comfortable with likeminded family and friends). Perhaps the most significant finding is the impact of students' ideas about race on their beliefs about discussing race in the elementary grades and with peers in teacher education. Study findings illustrated that preservice teachers' ideas about race as controversial impacted their beliefs about discussing race with elementary students and with peers in teacher education. When race was positioned within the elementary classroom, students appeared to believe that it was potentially more controversial than in the context of discussions with their peers and family members. Similarly, their level of comfort in discussing race in the teacher education setting was gauged by their relationships with peers. This collective reservation about discussing race paired with preservice teachers' beliefs about discussing race with others and their prior experiences with race illustrates opportunities for teacher educators to create experiences within and across courses that help preservice teachers identify and articulate their beliefs while also challenging their beliefs about race.

Preservice teachers indicated that their lived experiences and their racial identities influenced their ideas about race and discussing race with others. Regardless of whether their earliest lived experiences with race were positive or negative, participants seemed to make connections between their prior experiences with race and their current beliefs about race. However, White preservice teachers did not articulate that their lived experiences as Whites would later impact their teaching in elementary grades and overall, they articulated few connections to their own Whiteness in this study. The lack of diversity in teacher education only amplifies the impact of preservice teachers' beliefs about race on their future teaching.

As evidenced by their responses in the three data collection formats, preser-

vice teachers seemed to perceive the avoidance of race, their "uncomfortableness" with discussing race, and race as controversial as normal. Furthermore, despite few conversations and examples of resistance to such norms, the pervasiveness of Whiteness in elementary teacher education and the functions of Whiteness in general were not broached. Whiteness ultimately seemed to lie under the surface for the preservice teachers, and as individuals or whole groups, they did not frequently acknowledge and then navigate and deconstruct the presence and function of Whiteness. Instead, a colorblind approach was sometimes maintained. Such assertions of colorblindness confirm the problem with preservice teachers' colorblindness that is widely discussed by teacher educators (Haviland, 2008; Howard, 2006; Kumar & Hamer, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sleeter, 1993, 2001) and further complicate the prevalence and avoidance of Whiteness in teacher education (Garrett & Segall, 2013). Moreover, this demonstrates the function of Whiteness and colorblindness in hindering preservice teacher change and action related to race, two desired outcomes of critical teacher education.

Although the majority of the preservice teachers did not demonstrate a marked development in their ideas or attitudes about race, efforts to intentionally begin the conversation using the questionnaires and then continue it through online discussions and individual written reflections seemed to contribute to experiences with race where preservice teachers were able to identify and articulate their beliefs while recognizing others' beliefs. The intentional positioning of race in the teacher education classroom as well frequently returning to race as a concept to discuss together and think about seemed to help some students to engage the discussions held in class. However, the recurrence of race and race conversations as potentially problematic joined with hesitation and avoidance indicates that, as documented in recent studies (Darden, 2009; Williams & Evans-Winters, 2005), race continues to be a challenging topic with preservice teachers.

Implications for Future Teaching and Research

Implications for Teaching

Given the prevalence of White preservice teachers (Causey et al., 2000; Sleeter, 2001), this study offers several implications for teaching in teacher education. First, this study effectively positions the use of questionnaires and online discussions to examine elementary teachers' beliefs about race. Second, it confirms previous findings from earlier research (see for example Kumar & Hamer, 2013; Marx, 2004; Sleeter, 1993) that White preservice teachers often seem unaware of the function of their own Whiteness, even in conversations focused on Whiteness (Gillespie et al., 2002). As a result, they may claim a colorblind approach to race or resist conversations related to race (Garrett & Segall, 2013). Their avoidance of Whiteness and asserted colorblindness illustrates the need for such experiences in teacher education, and should provoke teacher educators to position deliberate

course experiences with race that unpack both concepts, regardless of the course focus or content. One effective approach is to blend preservice teachers' tasks in the university classroom with their fieldwork in local elementary schools. For example, course instructors could position a reflective journaling component of their course in conjunction with a child case study or observations in the field. Likewise, students might interview teachers and children to identify their ideas about race and then use the interview texts to elicit structured discussions during course meetings. Through more purposeful blending of field placements and coursework, teacher educators can couch recurring opportunities for discussions and reflection related to race, Whiteness, and colorblindness that also encourage preservice teachers begin to unpack their own positionalities.

Third, drawing on prior findings in predominately White settings (Glazier, 2003; Kumar & Hamer, 2013; Marx, 2004; Williams & Evans-Winters, 2005), this study confirms how the racial makeup of the group under study can influence the resulting discussions of race. As 96% of the participants were White, this group's dominant White presence impacted how the preservice teachers approached and then discussed race. Fourth, this study demonstrates that preservice teachers will likely require recurring opportunities across a semester to engage with peers and consider their own beliefs. As the literature illustrates, experiences with race in teacher education are likely to be more meaningful when exercised across multiple courses rather than a single course (Brown, 2004; Cooper, 2007; Gomez & White, 2010; Milner, 2006), further illustrating the advantage of blending course and field experiences. Finally, this study confirms prior findings related to how White preservice teachers perceive race as controversial (see for example Gomez & White, 2010) and contributes to the conversation about how teacher educators can craft course experiences that engage preservice teachers in identifying and articulating their beliefs about race.

This study identified instructional strategies that help preservice teachers examine race. Preservice teachers should be given continual opportunities for both oral and written reflection and whole and small group discussions. Similar to Brown's (2004) findings, using written reflections and questionnaires as modes of self-examination seemed to support preservice teachers' work with race. While many preservice teachers seemed to do their best thinking out loud with others (Turnbull & Mullins, 2007) many required time to consider the question or concept being addressed. As a result, strategies like online discussion forums and written reflections provide the time that preservice teachers needed to respond as well as a less confrontational platform than face to face discussion.

While this study confirms several findings in prior scholarship, it also challenges two aspects of earlier research. This study challenges Glazier's (2003) findings related to White participants' tendency to stick with "safe topics" during discussions by illustrating how White preservice teachers dialogued their beliefs about race with others and at times, attempted to unpack Whiteness. Additionally,

participants in Glazier's study continually moved away from the topic of race. Similarly, preservice teachers in this disclosed that they also avoided conversations about race with particular groups. However in this study, they worked to examine race and then discuss race with peers. Perhaps the difference in the two studies is that in this study, I posed direct questions about race to the discussants, whereas in Glazier's study, participants began and developed conversations in their choice of directions.

This study addressed the following gaps in educational research: elementary preservice teachers' childhood and schooling experiences with race, their beliefs about positioning race in the classroom and their beliefs about discussing race with a variety of audiences. Additionally, this study illustrates the effectiveness of online discussion as a platform for elementary preservice teachers to articulate their thoughts about topics that are often considered controversial (Evans et al., 1999).

Implications for Future Research

The study findings provide meaningful direction for future research related to White preservice teachers' and race. Future research that positions frequent opportunities to discuss, write about, and trouble their beliefs about race within and across courses may provide both a more in-depth examination of preservice teachers' beliefs about race as well as new directions for work that explores race with preservice teachers. For example, research that examines elementary preservice teachers' ideas about race within collaborative course and field experiences throughout a teacher education program would expand the literature. Also, future research that focuses on unpacking race as controversial may contribute to the ongoing conversation about preservice teachers and race. These study findings paired with implications for future research demonstrate potential for contributing to the ongoing conversation about White preservice teachers and race.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Comments
I am comfortable talking about race with friends and family.					
I am comfortable talking about race with classmates.					
Race is a controversial topic.					
Race is a controversial issue in the classroom.					
Race should be discussed in the elementary classroom.					
Teachers should seek out and use a variety of materials that show racial diversity.					
I am comfortable talking about issues of race with my own students.					
I am comfortable talking about issues of race with parents in my classroom.					

How is race present in the classroom?

Is race important in social studies? Explain your answer.

How does race operate in the classroom?

What should a teacher consider if she/he is planning to talk about race with students?

As a student, what can the teacher or your peers do to make you feel more comfortable to talk about controversial issues like race?

What can the teacher or your peers do to make you feel uncomfortable talking about controversial issues like race?

Appendix B

Written Reflection Questions and Online Discussion Prompts

Written Reflection Questions

    1. What have been the most influential events/experiences in your childhood/schooling that have impacted your attitude about race?

    2. What have been the most influential events/experiences in college/internships that have impacted your attitude about race?

Online Discussion Prompts

1. What do you believe is the impact/influence of Whiteness in general? In your current teacher education program/courses?

2. What do you think are the barriers to/difficulties with talking about race with (a) peers in teacher education, (b) students in your classroom, and (c. future parents in your classroom?

3. Some people talk about being "colorblind" or say that they do not "see" race. What are your thoughts about this? What do you think?

Learning to Teach English Learners:
Instructional Coaching and Developing Novice High School Teacher Capacity

By Felice Atesoglu Russell

The number of English learners (ELs) in our schools continues to increase, and at the same time, the academic achievement of ELs consistently lags behind the achievement of native-English-speaking peers (Goldenberg & Coleman, 2010). These second language learners bring with them a set of special needs for teaching and learning, especially for mainstream content area teachers, who often have little or no specialized training for meeting these needs (Bunch, 2010). Although there is not yet extensive empirical work focused on how mainstream content teachers at the secondary level typically teach ELs or how they learn to more effectively teach these children in mainstream classrooms, scholars have begun to address the importance of linguistic knowledge for mainstream classroom teachers (Fillmore & Snow, 2000; Harper & de Jong, 2004; Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008; Walqui, 2000). These scholars have argued that teachers need to provide rigorous, content-rich academic course work integrated with language development strategies to meet the instructional needs of ELs. This push for mainstream teachers to teach all students high-level content, including all levels of ELs, creates a challenging instructional environment, especially for novice teachers.

In addition, few principals possess pedagogical expertise or personal experience with ELs (Reyes, 2006); consequently, English as a second language (ESL)

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teachers are increasingly called on to be the experts in their buildings (Brooks, Adams, & Morita-Mullaney, 2010) and are charged with the task of meeting the instructional needs of ELs both in their ESL classes and in mainstream classes. This leadership responsibility of ESL teachers can include developing the capacity of mainstream teachers to more effectively meet the instructional needs of ELs in content classrooms. Many ESL teachers, however, do not have the time in their daily schedules to do the work that is expected or necessary, nor do they have the training or positionality (Creese, 2002) to provide such support.

Furthermore, recent research has highlighted the role of teacher induction (programs that provide support, guidance, and orientation for new teachers) in novice teacher professional learning (Flores, 2006; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011) and has spoken to the importance of mentoring relationships that support novice teachers in navigating their particular school contexts (Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008). Instructional coaches are on the rise in core subject areas like mathematics and literacy, but we know little about the nature of EL-focused instructional coaching, particularly for novice teachers. This article addresses this important gap in the literature by examining the relationship between an EL facilitator[1] and novice teacher as a support for teacher learning. This analysis focuses on the following research questions:

1. How does the novice teacher learn to meet the instructional needs of ELs?

2. How does a novice teacher and EL facilitator relationship serve as a support for teacher learning?

In this article, I describe and analyze the professional learning of a novice teacher by focusing on her social participation with an EL facilitator within one high school. I argue that this relationship was a support for the novice teacher and that the interactions between these individuals contributed to the professional learning of this high school teacher and, ultimately, to the capacity of this teacher to meet the instructional needs of ELs in her mainstream classroom.

Framing the Problem

The approach that I use to analyze this novice teacher's professional learning draws on Wenger's (1998) *Communities of Practice* as a lens for understanding social participation as a means for learning. The interactions between the EL facilitator and the novice teacher are analyzed as the novice teacher makes meaning of her teaching and comes to understand what it means to be a content teacher in this particular context. I specifically draw on the theory's community component (Wenger, 1998) to understand the professional learning of the novice teacher as she interacts with the EL facilitator to develop sustained mutual engagement, negotiation

of a common joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire through her ongoing work with an EL facilitator. In addition, this framing draws from three main literature strands: (a) instructional needs of adolescent ELs, (b) instructional coaching and school culture, and (c) professional learning of novice teachers in the induction years (the first years in the classroom).

Instructional Needs of Adolescent English Learners

There is a growing consensus in the literature that the instructional needs of ELs in mainstream content classrooms are different than the needs of native English speakers. Some scholars have suggested that to meet these differing needs, instruction should be based on knowledge of second language acquisition (Achinstein & Athanases, 2010; de Jong & Harper, 2005; Harper & de Jong, 2004; Lucas et al., 2008). Adding to this dialogue, Walqui (2006) asserted that the needs of secondary ELs are such that they are engaged in the "double duty" work of learning content and language.

Scholars in this area have argued that the use of scaffolding (Walqui, 2006) and sheltered instruction (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007) can enable the learning of content and language in the mainstream classroom. Drawing on notions of scaffolding can help provide guidance when it comes to the observation of content teaching with ELs at the high school level and contribute to the growing body of knowledge concerning best practices for the instruction of ELs with the dual goals of language and content. Although there is growing consensus on what effective teaching for ELs in content classrooms should look like, research needs to focus on the type of support novice teachers can be provided to ensure their success with an increasingly linguistically diverse student population. Furthermore, as districts and schools continue to put resources into program implementation and professional development for novice teachers, there is a need to understand how this support is designed to meet the specific instructional needs of ELs in content classes.

Additionally, researchers have called attention to the specific linguistic needs of ELs and contended that teaching with a focus on "diversity" is not enough (de Jong & Harper, 2005; Harper & de Jong, 2004; Lucas et al., 2008). These experts have proposed, instead, a linguistically responsive pedagogy (Lucas et al., 2008) that meets the specific linguistic needs of ELs in mainstream classrooms. Scholars who argue for linguistically responsive pedagogy stress the importance of preservice teachers' understanding of second language learning and the pedagogical expertise that characterizes linguistically responsive teaching in mainstream classrooms. This type of teaching includes learning about the ELs in their classrooms (their academic background and language), identifying the language demands inherent in classroom tasks to promote academic language development, and scaffolding learning for ELs.

Though these scholars have asserted that specific attention should be paid to the particular linguistic needs of ELs, cultural diversity also plays a role in EL learning.

In particular, the preparation and professional development that teachers receive through teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts contribute to the development of teachers who are aware not only of the technical aspects of teaching and learning related to ELs but also of the social, political, and cultural contexts in which their students live and in which they teach (de Oliveira & Athanases, 2007). This research has suggested that awareness of the sociopolitical issues impacting ELs encourages teachers to advocate for their students by responding directly to issues of race, language, and class. If the focus is solely on linguistic responsiveness, it is possible that teachers and the school as a whole will not put enough emphasis on the social context in which they are teaching and that the emphasis will be on instructional strategies alone.

Although there seems to be a growing consensus on what effective teaching for ELs in content classrooms *might* look like (e.g., use of scaffolding strategies, focus on linguistic demands, culturally responsive pedagogy, awareness of sociopolitical influences), we know less about how this EL-responsive instruction is enacted or learned by novice teachers in the mainstream.

Instructional Coaching and School Culture

In recent years, the number of individuals in schools with formalized teacher leadership roles, such as serving as instructional coaches, has grown substantially (Portin, Knapp, Alejano, & Marzolf, 2006). Teachers who take on instructional coaching roles can play a powerful role in supporting classroom teachers' learning about ELs (Teemant, 2010). Given the demands of the principalship and the deep content knowledge they require, principals often deem it necessary to reconfigure the instructional leadership work of the school across multiple staff members (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). Indeed, scholars have asserted that successful school leaders for ELs prioritize the student while taking into account the academic, sociocultural, and linguistic domains (Suttmiller & Gonzalez, 2006).

Many schools and districts espouse a theory of action that teacher leaders have the potential to impact teacher practice in classrooms and, ultimately, student learning (Portin et al., 2006; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Teachers with formalized leadership responsibilities are uniquely positioned to maintain connections with teaching and students, while at the same time contributing to the capacity building of teachers and culture in their buildings (Lieberman & Miller, 2004). Research has suggested that tapping into the resource of teacher leaders and instructional coaches in schools with a growing EL population can have positive implications for both students and teaching, in particular, when these individuals are both advocates for ELs and content experts in second language acquisition and development (Penner-Williams & Worthen, 2010).

ESL teachers are often an untapped resource for mainstream teachers' learning. As educators with expertise in language acquisition and development, these professionals can contribute to teacher capacity in this area if they are recognized as

collaborating partners rather than as individuals with sole responsibility for "fixing" second language learners. Developing school cultures and instructional practices that acknowledge the need for all teachers to take responsibility for ELs will require a shift in teacher thinking (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010) and the development of a culture of collaboration (Russell, 2012). Collaborative school cultures for ELs place an emphasis on the inclusion of ELs in mainstream content classes, while having high expectations for staff involvement with these students and teacher development in linguistically responsive pedagogy (Lucas et al., 2008). Enlisting a teacher with expertise in the instruction of ELs to take on a formalized instructional coaching role where the teacher has the ability to influence school culture and classroom practice can potentially impact ELs positively across the school day.

Recent research has claimed that classroom-embedded instructional coaching has the potential to fill the role of instructional mentor and contribute to novice teacher professional learning. This support can lead to novice teacher perception that induction is an initial phase in their professional growth that will span a career (Hoover, 2010). In addition, these experienced teachers can facilitate the process of novice teachers moving into full participation in a professional community (Lambson, 2010) by providing models of appropriate teacher talk, reflection, and engagement with dilemmas of teaching and learning. Furthermore, instructional coaching focused on understanding and meeting the needs of ELs has the potential to encourage teachers to shift their perceptions of what ELs are capable of and to raise their academic expectations, in turn improving academic achievement for ELs (Batt, 2010). The following section specifically examines literature focused on the professional learning of novice teachers.

Professional Learning of Novice Teachers in the Induction Years

There is an understanding among scholars that novice teachers are often ill-prepared for the complexity and challenges of diverse urban classrooms (Bergeron, 2008; Fry, 2009; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). A review of the research, however, indicates that induction programs and new teacher mentoring can have a positive impact on novice teacher instructional practice (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Novice teachers are susceptible to experiencing cultural disequilibrium—a mismatch between their own culture and that of their students that can lead to a sense of instability and confusion—which can impact their ability to provide a culturally responsive curriculum (Bergeron, 2008). Cultural disequilibrium can be mitigated through induction experiences that support novice teacher instructional practice and can include peer support, an encouraging and supportive principal, and ongoing professional development focused on meeting the instructional needs of a diverse student population (Bergeron, 2008). Induction support for novice teachers that is systematic and not left up to chance can also play a role in contributing to novice teachers' sense of efficacy and success in the classroom (Fry, 2009). Novice teachers who are provided with resources and opportunities for professional learning

(Flores, 2006) will be more likely to develop into reflective practitioners able to deal with the challenges of teaching in our increasingly diverse classrooms.

Research has suggested that specific induction programs and policies can contribute to novice teachers' professional learning and their overall effectiveness and sense of success as they enter the profession. This article builds on these findings, adding a more nuanced understanding of the development of novice teacher capacity to meet the needs of ELs and the role of an EL-focused instructional coach as a support for this learning.

Research Methods

The data used in the analysis for this article come from a yearlong qualitative case study of professional learning and the instruction of ELs in one culturally and linguistically diverse urban high school.

School Setting and Context

Over the 2009-2010 school year, Vista International High School (VIHS) enrolled approximately 325 students and was located in an urban school district in the Pacific Northwest of the United States. Among the school population, 70% of students qualified for free and reduced-priced lunch and 30% were identified as ELs. The EL population was linguistically heterogeneous, with the majority speaking Spanish and Amharic. Using purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002), the research setting was selected because it provided (a) a district and high school context in which there was increasing linguistic diversity and (b) a high school setting where there was a focus on teacher professional learning.

VIHS was one of three small high schools that shared the same campus. What used to be one large, comprehensive high school became three autonomous schools with their own leadership and programs. At VIHS, the principal worked closely with the EL facilitator to design the EL program and plan for her limited time in the EL facilitator role. The principal relied heavily on the expertise of the EL facilitator, and the two worked collaboratively to plan for and implement the inclusion of ELs at VIHS. It was within this context at VIHS, with its focus on inclusion for ELs and support for teacher learning in a collaborative setting, that the study was conceived and the research methods designed.

At VIHS, class schedules for ELs enabled these students to move into mainstream classrooms as quickly as possible. The design of EL class schedules provided access to the core content curriculum after ELs moved from the Beginning level to the Intermediate I level. Students identified as Intermediate I, II, or Advanced had a class schedule of entirely mainstream classes, except for one period of EL writing support. The curriculum in the EL writing support class aligned with the mainstream language arts class curriculum and supported the assignments from the mainstream class. The writing support class used similar instructional strategies,

and the EL teachers made it a priority to check in with the language arts teachers to be sure their support classes were on target and supportive of the curriculum and assignments from the mainstream class.

In addition, important school structures, such as advisory, Literacy Team, and professional collaboration time, impacted the inclusion of ELs. Advisory provided all ELs (even Beginners) opportunities to learn alongside native English speakers. Advisory met four times per week, and all full-time faculty and staff had an advisory, including the principal. Students were assigned an advisory teacher in ninth grade and stayed with this teacher for all 4 years.

The Literacy Team included all three of the language arts teachers and the two EL teachers. This had been the arrangement since VIHS was founded. This organization provided this group of literacy teachers ongoing and established time to collaborate and plan for the literacy needs of all students: ELs, exited ELs, and native English speakers. Finally, VIHS teachers engaged in professional collaboration time during early release time on Fridays. Each Friday afternoon, students were dismissed early and the teachers took part in 2 hours of professional learning activities. This block of time rotated between meeting time for advisory, content teams, and whole staff. The focus of professional collaboration time at VIHS for whole-staff meetings for the school year under investigation was on inclusion for special education and ELs. This took on various formats and included teacher-led professional development by content area as well as teacher-led learning opportunities by the EL and special education teachers.

Participants

Focal participants used in this analysis included Sarah and Liz (pseudonyms). At the time of data collection, Sarah held the dual role of ESL teacher (.7) and EL facilitator (.3). In her EL facilitator role, Sarah was heavily involved in guiding and facilitating teacher professional learning to meet the instructional needs of ELs in mainstream content classes at VIHS. In her work with Liz, she acted as an EL-focused instructional coach. Sarah was also the department chair for ESL at VIHS and was National Board Certified in English as a New Language during the study year. These multiple roles situated Sarah as a teacher leader within the context of VIHS, and she was identified in this way by the principal. She had 9 years of classroom teaching experience. She was White and monolingual. She was one of the original teachers at VIHS and had been involved in its transformation into a small school from a large, comprehensive high school.

Liz was a first-year teacher, and her assignment was part time (.6). She was White and monolingual. She had a bachelor's degree in biology, and before getting her master's degree in teaching, she was an outdoor educator and worked in after-school programs. Her teaching responsibilities during the year of data collection included three biology classes. Even though she did not carry a full-time teaching load, Liz was often found in her classroom through the end of the school day and

participated fully as a staff member, attending staff meetings and professional development opportunities and meeting regularly with her content team. Liz received substantial support to meet the instructional needs of ELs in her mainstream biology classes. The EL facilitator spent time in Liz's classroom on a regular basis and engaged this teacher in instructional coaching cycles. The biology course was populated mainly by 10th graders and at least 30% ELs in each class section.

Data Collection

Case study data were utilized, including interviews, observations, and documents, to illuminate the professional learning of the novice teacher and her relationship with the EL facilitator as a support for this learning. A particularly important piece of data for this analysis included audiotaped meetings of an instructional coaching cycle that engaged the novice teacher in autumn 2009. This was the second coaching cycle of the school year for this novice teacher and involved 3 consecutive days of (a) a planning meeting, (b) observation of the lesson, and (c) a debrief meeting. In addition, interviews were conducted at three time points across the year using semistructured interview protocols with both the novice teacher and EL facilitator. The interview data were used as a tool for triangulation with classroom observations and the audiotaped instructional coaching cycle meetings. Numerous staff meetings and professional development opportunities were observed across the school year, as well as informal teacher interactions. Document collection included electronic communication, teaching artifacts (e.g., lesson plans, handouts), and professional development tools and resources. A field notes journal was maintained where experience in the field, including reactions, thoughts, and questions, was processed.

Analysis

The analysis of data was an iterative process, and a constant comparative method was used to better understand what was emerging from the field and from participants along the way (Glesne, 2006). Once all of the data were collected, an initial set of analytic codes was developed from both the conceptual framework of the study and through codes that emerged from the collected data. The approach used for analysis was based on aspects of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and relied on understanding the dimensions and conditions of the phenomenon under investigation, while drawing from the study's conceptual framework. As analysis progressed, codes were refined, and ultimately so were the data analyzed using this final set of analytic codes. From here, an analytic process was used to deduce the main themes that emerged from the data. Finally, triangulation and member checks confirmed and validated the findings, using field notes and the researcher's journal, participant interviews, and collected documents to identify disconfirming evidence (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Findings

In this section, five key findings are discussed: (a) the EL facilitator as a guide for focusing coaching cycles, (b) the EL facilitator as a resource, (c) attention to the individual needs of ELs, (d) engagement in coaching to mitigate tension related to differentiation and lesson pacing, and (e) connecting to resources and practices across the school. These findings demonstrate the support the EL facilitator provided and ultimately the impact of this type of support on novice teacher learning in this context. These findings are illuminated through the in-depth analysis of one coaching cycle. By highlighting the coaching cycle, the data illustrate the engagement of this novice teacher in a specific form of professional development during her initial induction year. Focusing on this particular case within a case serves as a means of unpacking the novice teacher professional learning embedded in the coaching cycle and the support the EL facilitator provides. The findings help us to understand EL-focused instructional coaching as a novice teacher navigates the inherent tensions involved in learning to teach in general and learning to teach with a focus on the linguistic needs of ELs.

A typical coaching cycle involved a joint planning session, a classroom observation, and a debrief session. The joint planning and debrief sessions were typically scheduled during the novice teacher's prep period, during lunch, or after school. The joint planning sessions involved the novice teacher and EL facilitator going over the intended lesson for the planned observation period. Typically, there was an overarching goal that the two were working on (e.g., supportive class structures for ELs, student thinking, writing) to provide instruction that would better meet ELs' needs. The observation consisted of the EL facilitator being present for the teaching of the particular lesson. Sarah was not just an observer during these observations, she also checked in with individual ELs while the lesson was being taught and provided on-the-fly suggestions and check-ins with the novice teacher. The observation debrief involved sitting down and going over the lesson together. The EL facilitator guided the conversation and probed how well the teacher met instructional goals related to supportive class structures for ELs and the needs of particular ELs in the class.

The five key findings that follow demonstrate the impact of this particular coaching cycle on the professional learning of the novice teacher. In addition, the example calls attention to the relationship between the two colleagues as a support for novice teacher learning. The findings suggest the impact of the instructional coaching cycle vis-à-vis a relationship with an EL-focused instructional coach on the novice teacher's ability to work productively with a linguistically diverse class within the context of VIHS.

EL Facilitator Guides the Focus of the Coaching Cycle

In this context, the EL facilitator guided the direction of the coaching cycle—that

is, set the agenda and structured the teacher's attention—to simultaneously address the teacher's stated needs and keep the ELs' needs in the foreground. Whereas the novice teacher possibly had a particular area of interest, the EL facilitator drove the particular focus for the coaching cycle while taking the particular novice teacher's interests, needs, and concerns into consideration. Working with a novice teacher required Sarah to meet the teacher where she was. This meant facilitating the first-year teacher's understanding of the common organizational structures and instructional strategies at VIHS. This was accompanied with a strong focus on structures and strategies deemed particularly supportive for ELs. Drawing on both her knowledge of VIHS and her expertise in meeting the needs of ELs, Sarah was able to guide the coaching cycle in a way that had multiple purposes. The following example from a planning session of an instructional coaching cycle describes how the EL facilitator guided the work with Sarah.

This is the start of Liz's second coaching cycle for the year. The principal decided to join Sarah and Liz for the planning session. The group is meeting in Liz's classroom during her prep period. The plan for their time together is to reflect on the last coaching cycle and make a plan for the current cycle. In particular, the goal is to plan for the lesson that will be observed the next day. Sarah asks Liz what she wants to work on for tomorrow's observation. Liz says students will be taking a vocabulary quiz at the beginning of class. Then she wants to work on questioning strategies and how to do bar graphs. She explains that some students need time to complete their "Ugly Babies" genetics projects.[2] She would like those who are finished to conduct a census and graph the demographics of the "Ugly Babies" population. Sarah goes over Liz's plan, suggesting that students can take their quizzes up in the meeting area[3] and then stay for a mini-lesson on graphing. She describes using an "If . . . Then" chart to help facilitate what students need to work on.

Sarah asks more questions and tries to get a sense of the scene. What exactly will Liz be doing? Liz also has concerns:

LIZ: I have different students in my mind. One that finishes everything early versus an EL student that is working diligently and also processing language.

Liz tries to imagine having different students engaged in varied tasks, and it is a little daunting for her to conceive how this will look. She ends up getting excited about the prospect of students knowing what to do and being able to move on if they are done with their "Ugly Babies" project. She seems unsure how it will turn out and is anxious about the varied abilities in her classroom—those who complete tasks early and quickly versus ELs who need to process language and work more slowly, as well as other struggling learners who need reading and writing support (although, not the focus of this instructional coaching)—and worries about how she will meet all of their needs. Sarah assures her that they can modify the instruction together as the class progresses.

Liz points out that students will also be doing oral defenses[4] of the last unit

while they are doing the other things. Sarah responds, highlighting that if students know the progression of the class period and how to access support, that will help. Sarah tells her not to feel badly about pulling them back up to the meeting area with 1 hour 45 minutes for the class period. Sarah points out that half the class is ELs and that perhaps they will need several examples. She also shares that in algebra and language arts, they are using the same strategy of multiple examples. Liz shares her knowledge that in one teacher's science class, the ELs are staying up front trying to figure out what is going on.[5] Sarah says that in terms of "look-fors" in class tomorrow, she will pay attention to pacing and timing.

Sarah guides the planning for the lesson, maintaining a focus on instructional strategies supportive for ELs. She suggests using multiple examples to support ELs in understanding the graphing concepts. She makes connections to supportive instructional strategies being used in other content classes as a way to encourage Liz to implement some of these ideas, and she also supports Sarah's desire for common instructional strategies across content areas and classrooms.

In this way, the EL facilitator recognized the need to balance the tension between learning to teach in general (how to balance classroom management, curriculum, pedagogy, and individual students' learning needs) and learning to teach ELs using linguistically responsive pedagogy. Not only was Liz inducted into the ways of the school, she was also supported in becoming a content teacher of ELs through her collegial relationship with Sarah.

EL Facilitator as Resource

The EL facilitator acted as an immediate resource within the classroom, providing myriad instructional ideas, strategies, and support in the content classroom before, during, and after the lesson observation. These ideas were grounded in her knowledge of what ELs need to be successful in learning content and language and were framed by her understanding of the organizational structures and common instructional practices used at VIHS. This combination, combined with the EL facilitator's awareness of individual ELs' academic and language backgrounds, provided the novice teacher with strategies that were perceived as supportive for ELs in the context of the content classroom. These on-the-fly and embedded instructional supports led to immediate implementation by the novice teacher. Sarah observed Liz's class as a part of the instructional coaching cycle, but she was also an active participant, providing linguistically responsive support and ideas as the class progressed. The following vignette demonstrates this:

First period biology class is starting, and both Liz and Sarah are present. The class consists of 26 students, mostly 10th graders. The students are sitting in groups of four. Liz reviews the expectations of taking a quiz. Liz tells students that they are going to write a response to the following question on the backs of their quizzes and projects: "What are you still confused about? If not, what is something you know really well?"

Liz passes out the quizzes. An EL comes up and asks Sarah a clarifying

question. After the students are finished, the teacher collects the quizzes. She asks the students to give a thumbs-up, thumbs-sideways, or thumbs-down for how they felt they did on the quiz. There is a mixed response. Students are sitting in their table groups, and Liz begins presenting the mini-lesson on graphing to the whole class. There is quite a bit of side talk, and Sarah suggests bringing the entire class up to the meeting area. Liz agrees and instructs the students to come up with their chairs and composition books to the front of the classroom (there is a space cleared at the front of the room near the document camera for such meetings). She gives the students the option of listening or listening and taking notes. Liz has students brainstorm the types of graphs with which they are familiar. As students provide their responses, Liz records them. Liz has students turn and talk with a partner about the differences between a chart and graph. Sarah suggests another instructional move as a good transition—she asks students to make a prediction about why they are doing a graphing mini-lesson. Liz switches gears and asks, "Who can predict why we are talking about this?"

A student offers the prediction that they will be graphing. The teacher finishes up a brief overview of graphing and provides some examples of what graphs look like. Liz confirms that they will be graphing, but she knows that some students still need to finish their "Ugly Babies." She writes on the whiteboard: "(1) If done with baby . . . then stay here, (2) If not done with baby . . . then about seven minutes to finish, (3) Graphing."

The student census takers who are done with the babies are up front with the teacher. Those who are not done are working on their babies. The census takers are circulating around the room gathering data. During the lesson, Sarah suggests to Liz that she think about pacing and purpose. She suggests authentic language use and opportunities for students to demonstrate their thinking, using content knowledge as possible next steps.

As the class progresses, Sarah asks Liz several clarifying questions about the purpose of her instructional moves. Sarah asks Liz if she has an example of the kind of graph she is looking for from another class to show the students. Liz does and shares this with the class. Sarah wants Liz to be intentional with what she is asking students to do. How are the activities connected? What is the purpose? How can she convey the goals for and purpose of the lesson to the students effectively?

As this example demonstrates, the EL facilitator is an immediate source of support within the classroom. Sarah provides on-the-fly suggestions when she recognizes that ELs are confused or not grasping the ideas presented by the teacher. She helps Liz take a step back from her teaching, while teaching, to be more linguistically responsive to the needs of her students and, in particular, support her ELs in understanding the content and language demands of the lesson.

Attention to the Individual Needs of ELs

The fluid structure of the observation enabled the EL facilitator and novice teacher to maintain consistent and continuing attention to the individual needs of ELs. What emerged from the data was a consistent focus by both participants on the individual needs of students. In particular, in paying specific attention to the

EL facilitator's work, a focus on the individual needs of ELs became apparent. Sarah consistently asked the novice teacher to think about individual ELs, their academic progress, and the possible academic supports required. Sarah's presence in the content class played a role in how she was able to support the novice teacher. She was able to observe ELs in the context of the content class and then follow up with the novice teacher, ask poignant questions, and suggest ways to connect with individual students.

The following example highlights this focus on the individual needs of ELs:

> As the end of the planning session comes to a close, Liz's mentioning of particular ELs of concern garners several suggestions and strategies from Sarah, including checking in with particular ELs and differentiating instruction for students that finish earlier than others. Sarah listens to Liz's concerns when it comes to individual ELs and makes plans to follow up with these students either individually in her ESL support class or through student conferences with Liz within the context her biology classroom. This web of support for both the novice teacher and the ELs in the class ensures that both the needs of the new teacher and the individual and collective needs of ELs will be met.

> As the debrief progressed, Sarah checked in with Liz about additional ELs to ensure their individual needs were being met. They ran out of time to finish Madiha's oral defense during class, so Madiha came back during lunch.

>> LIZ: I love defenses for figuring out like I think everything is going peachy-keen and then I'm like you had no idea what I was talking about, did you? Like she's really focused on vocabulary and like not knowing what terms are and not knowing what terms mean. And so I was like what other questions do you have, what questions does this cell raise for you? She's like, "I want to know the names for things." Like okay, that's a question—what if you had to discover something. But she was still like, "I want to discover the name for something." So it was really interesting.

Liz was able to glean a lot of information from the oral defense (the entire science department uses oral defenses as a form of unit assessment). In particular, she was able to figure out some specifics on what this particular EL understood, or not, about the cell unit. She found value in becoming more aware of this student's understanding and information gaps. In her mind, things were going fine; however, once she was able to sit down with the EL and ask specific questions, she realized that there were some misunderstandings. She was also able to observe how challenging the task was for this particular student. Sarah caught on to this and pushed Liz's thinking in this area, provided support, and assisted in crafting a plan of action for moving forward. The plan involved both Sarah and Liz as collaborating partners with a focus on meeting the needs of this particular EL (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2012; Russell, 2012).

Helping to Mitigate Tension Related to Differentiation and Lesson Pacing Through Engagement in Coaching

The novice teacher's engagement in instructional coaching helped to manage the tension between slowing down the lesson to meet ELs' needs and speeding up to serve the needs of more capable native English speakers. The novice teacher was keenly aware of the range of abilities in her classroom and the necessity to differentiate to meet the needs of her linguistically diverse student population. Native English speakers who were able to breeze through assignments and readings sitting beside students needing to process language and content simultaneously caused the novice teacher to question her instructional strategies. The novice teacher was hesitant to slow down the pace of her class, knowing that her highly capable students would be able to meet the standard of a particular assignment very quickly and get frustrated by the slower pace. The EL facilitator never conceded to increasing the pace of the class without taking into account the needs of the ELs. Instead, she offered suggestions and strategies about how to differentiate the curriculum. The idea of differentiation and the inherent tensions in pacing was a consistent theme across the school year, and the EL facilitator did her best to mitigate it by providing resources and strategies. This included the suggestion that the novice teacher visit more experienced content teachers' classrooms to observe how they handled this tension in differentiating instruction. The following vignette highlights this inherent tension and the conversation that ensued:

> LIZ: I'm really struggling with how to help the EL students without holding up the—like the browbeating things that other students already understand. . . . I don't know how big a focus it should be or whether I should be like all right guys, this is the way it is, like we've got a lot of students in here who need this. . . . I guess how to differentiate that, because I feel like I didn't do a good job of that last time and it was so frustrating.

Liz is concerned that she is not meeting the needs of all of her students as she attempts to individualize instruction for ELs throughout a lesson. She seems to feel caught and not able to effectively differentiate the learning experience for each individual student. Liz wants to talk about the frustrations she experienced during the class. Sarah gets her to step back for a minute by using her notes (her observational data) as a tool for guiding the conversation with Liz, and Sarah slows the conversation down by helping Liz come to her own conclusions about pacing and timing.

Sarah asks Liz how she felt about the pacing. Liz says she was frustrated because they did not have time to do the baby parade and vote on the ugliest baby. It had been a great team-building exercise and wrap-up for her other classes. Sarah discusses the quiz with Liz. She mentions that an EL asked a clarifying question and this made her question if the student understood the actual meaning of the vocabulary word or if he was only able to restate the definition. Liz explains that they had not done in-depth explanations of the meanings yet. Students had encountered the terms a few times, but she recognized that understanding of the

definitions was still a bit fuzzy for students. Sarah confirms with Liz that she is building multiple experiences so that students can understand the concepts in a larger context. Sarah suggests pushing students to use authentic language to demonstrate their thinking about a concept or idea. Liz agrees and wonders about the best way to assess this understanding. Sarah suggests assessment ideas such as having students rate their understanding on a scale of 1 to 10 or having students who already think they understand everything come up with additional questions that they have about the concept. The idea is that all levels of learners can be differentiated for in this way.

Sarah is able to facilitate Liz's thinking about assessing student understanding. She helps her to think through some doable assessment strategies and recognize that formative assessment is ongoing. It is not about doing just one thing but rather is about a combination over time.

Connecting to Resources and Practices Across the School

The instructional coaching connected the novice teacher to resources and practices across the school's teacher community, thereby potentially increasing the consistency in ELs' opportunity to learn across the school. The novice teacher's learning was influenced by and through her engagement with content teachers across the school. The EL facilitator was aware of the common structures and instructional strategies being used in many of the classrooms. This was a result of Sarah's involvement with the founding of the school, her role on the Literacy Team, the literacy coaching she had received by the district in the past, her observation of classrooms across the school, her work as an ESL support teacher and department chair working closely with the principal, and participation in whole-staff professional development and meetings over the years.

This knowledge of what was happening across content areas and across the school was extremely useful in connecting the novice teacher with resources and content teachers either struggling with similar issues or very proficient in particular instructional strategies and methods she perceived as supportive for ELs in content classes. For instance, through Sarah's knowledge of literacy strategies and awareness of their use across content classes, she was able to contribute to the capacity of the novice teacher and develop her repertoire of instructional strategies supportive of ELs in the content classroom. It was through these types of interactions between the EL facilitator and the novice teacher that meaning was negotiated, and ultimately a shared repertoire was developed (Wenger, 1998). These interactions facilitated the novice teacher's ability to meet the needs of ELs in the content classroom. Here Sarah helped Liz think about how she might draw on the resources available within VIHS:

> During the debrief, the conversation shifts to talking about table groups and how students can be arranged physically in the classroom to best support one another and their own learning. Sarah probes Liz on how Liz can encourage

table groups to be resources to one another. She mentions a posted chart in the other science teacher's classroom that directly speaks to the protocol for getting help in that classroom. The first thing on that protocol is to ask someone in your table group. Sarah encourages Liz to set up expectations for work time, noting that because students would be getting new assigned seats (Liz was changing seat assignments to be more intentional about who was working with whom based on her observations and collected student data), it would be a good time to revisit and lay out expectations. First language background and the support of having other students with a common first language in the same table groups is discussed. The conversation is very specific and based on what the two colleagues know about the individual students, their education, and their language backgrounds.

Liz continues the conversation about supportive structures and shares a student check-off sheet that she created for students to keep in their composition books. It is a self-assessment and check-off handout where students keep track of their progress on the unit. Students need to keep track of when they finish specific assignments, and they rate the quality of their work. Sarah mentions that the Advanced Placement language arts teacher uses a similar accountability tool and that the same kinds of tools are used in advisory. Sarah suggests that Liz visit other teachers' classrooms and ask for suggestions and ideas from those on her content team and beyond about how they deal with specific instructional and classroom management issues concerning ELs in their content classes. Sarah helps Liz to understand the link between what happens in her classroom and her colleagues' classrooms, providing her with insight into the connections between what happens inside and outside her classroom. She helps her to see that expectations and structures that align across classrooms enable consistency for ELs across their day. In addition, this sharing of institutional and instructional knowledge empowers Liz to seek support from her colleagues as an informed participant within this context, with the goal of meeting the needs of ELs.

Discussion

The purpose of this analysis was to better understand how a novice teacher develops the capacity to meet the instructional needs of ELs. By illuminating the relationship between an EL facilitator and a novice teacher, we are able to unpack this support as a resource for teacher learning. The EL facilitator acted as a boundary spanner (Wenger, 1998) for the novice teacher and enabled her to connect to multiple communities of practice across the school, as well as inducting the novice teacher into instructional practices and conversations supportive for ELs. In consequence of this boundary spanning, the capacity of this novice teacher was developed. As a result of the EL facilitator's and novice teacher's social interaction and participation in a teacher community, the novice teacher had the opportunity to engage in consistent dialogue and focus related to instruction, expertise, and general awareness of supportive practices for ELs (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007; Walqui, 2006). The instructional coaching provided the opportunity for the two colleagues to develop a working relationship in which they were able to participate

as a result of their sustained mutual engagement focused on ELs in the mainstream. As a result, they negotiated a joint enterprise based on the EL facilitator's and novice teacher's participation and symbiotic relationship to accomplish goals and, ultimately, the creation of a shared repertoire that enabled the novice teacher to draw on the resources that emerged from their work together (Wenger, 1998). These resources included tools and discourse specifically intended to meet the needs of ELs in the mainstream.

As we continue to learn as a field what constitutes positive forms of teacher induction and the impact such programs have on novice teacher instructional practice (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011), the findings from this study will contribute to what we know about mentoring relationships for novice teachers as they navigate their particular school contexts (Wang et al., 2008). In this case, Sarah enabled Liz to be inducted into the school culture through a mentoring relationship with a specific focus on the instruction of ELs—arguably, an important capacity to develop in a school such as VIHS, where inclusion of ELs within content classes is the norm. As is often the case, Liz had not come to her position with much experience or training in the area of linguisically responsive pedagogy (Lucas et al., 2008) or preparation for the culturally diverse classroom in which she found herself (Bergeron, 2008; Fry, 2009). The EL facilitator provided this classroom-embedded support as an advocate for ELs within the content classroom and an expert in second language acquisition and development (Penner-Williams & Worthen, 2010).

Although this study has limitations for generalizability as a result of the narrow sample, I argue that this case study of an EL facilitator and novice teacher illuminates the potential for teacher learning focused on the linguistic needs of ELs in mainstream content classes. This example provides the field with a model of teacher induction in a linguistically diverse context. Specifically, this case helps illuminate the benefits of an EL-focused instructional coaching relationship as a support for inducting novice teachers into the profession in a diverse urban context. Liz was aware that this type of support was unique, and she took full advantage of the classroom-embedded support in becoming a more aware and competent content teacher of ELs. The novice teacher and EL facilitator were vested, collaborating partners, focused on meeting the needs of ELs (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2012). In an interview at the end of the school year, Liz expressed her understanding of and appreciation for using literacy strategies to increase EL thinking and understanding in her classes. She explained that the using literacy strategies came out of her work with the EL facilitator. Liz's involvement with the EL facilitator helped her to learn to focus on the literacy needs of ELs when it came to accessing biology content and on what to look for and how to better assess what ELs were learning in her classes. She was able to make informed observations of what was happening in her class with ELs and determine what her next instructional moves should be based on observations of student behavior and by asking questions that got at student understanding. Furthermore, her professional relationship with the EL facilitator

served as a resource when she had issues related to language in her classroom and empowered her to reach out to her colleagues both within her content team and across content areas when issues related to ELs and instruction inevitably arose.

Although it is not possible for all novice teachers to receive the level of support that Liz did during her first year of teaching, supporting our novice teachers in linguistically diverse contexts is an unresolved issue, and additional studies are needed in this area. We need to think critically as a field about what support our novice teachers require to be successful in their first years of teaching, in particular, when it comes to teaching in schools in low-income communities, with waning resources and increasing linguistic diversity. These issues and concerns are beyond the scope of this article and need to be explored more fully.

Conclusions and Importance

Opportunities for ELs to be successful in high school are often limited (Gold & Maxwell-Jolly, 2006) as a result of programs and instructional strategies that are incongruous with their needs (Dabach & Callahan, 2011). The analysis provides an example of novice teacher learning during an induction year and sheds light on what supports for developing teachers' capacity to meet the instructional needs of ELs in the mainstream might look like.

As more ELs enter high school content classrooms, the supports (or lack thereof) that novice teachers receive that are focused on ELs will play a role in the outcomes for EL learners. This article contributes to the existing scholarship on the instructional needs and challenges of teaching secondary ELs (Gold & Maxwell-Jolly, 2006; Walqui, 2000) and illuminates the role of an EL facilitator as a resource for novice teachers in meeting the needs of ELs. Furthermore, this study adds to the literature by providing an example of how the social participation and collaboration between the EL facilitator and novice teacher contributed to this teacher's emerging understandings of teaching both content and ELs. The findings reveal that a novice teacher can learn through social participation in a community where there is mutual engagement focused on ELs. This participation as learning during a teacher's first year on the job has the potential to counter any preconceptions or lack of understanding the novice teacher may have about what it means to teach content and ELs (Bergeron, 2008; Flores, 2006). The resource of an EL-focused instructional coach in the first year of teaching can contribute to novice teacher capacity to meet the instructional needs of ELs and may ultimately lead to improved academic outcomes for ELs. These findings encourage both researchers and practitioners to consider the impact of an instructional coaching relationship as a support for teacher capacity in our linguistically diverse schools in the induction years and the potential impact on the quality of teaching for ELs.

Notes

[1] In this particular context, the EL facilitator was an ESL classroom teacher for .7 of her position and had .3 release time to work with mainstream classroom teachers as an EL facilitator. Tasked with developing capacity of a novice teacher, her work was synonymous with that of an instructional coach.

[2] The "Ugly Babies" genetics project involved students in the simulation of creating babies using Punnett squares and genetic science. The babies each came out with different genetic traits (eye color, hair color, etc.). The census involved tallying the various genetic traits of the "Ugly Babies" created by the students in the class.

[3] Teachers at VIHS made use of a meeting area in the front of their classrooms. Students would physically pick up their chairs from their table groups and come up to the meeting area, often centered around a document camera and screen so that the teacher could model instruction for students.

[4] Oral defenses are an assessment tool used by the science department to assess student understanding and learning of each unit. Using an oral assessment allows teachers to probe deeply for student understanding one on one. A series of prepared questions connected to the unit is used during the oral defense process.

[5] A gradual release process is used where those who are sure of what to do get to work and those who need more teacher guidance stay and work in a small group.

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Why Do I Stay?
A Case Study of a Secondary English Teacher in an Urban High School

By Ye He, Jewell E. Cooper, & Christopher Tangredi

Recruiting and retaining quality teachers in urban schools remains a significant challenge (Freedman & Appleman, 2008, 2009; Lee, Eckrich, Lackey, & Showalter, 2010). With a quarter of the teaching force leaving their classrooms after one year and almost half leaving within five years, teachers in high poverty, urban schools are even more likely to quit (Ingersoll, 2003, 2004). In addition, Donaldson (2009) found that White and male teachers were more likely to leave teaching compared to their female counterparts. While it is important to study why teachers leave the profession (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, & Meisels, 2007), we believe that studies on factors that motivate teachers to stay would also provide insights to administrators and teacher educators as they consider preparing, recruiting, and retaining teachers in urban school settings.

In the present study, we (two teacher educators) collaborated with one White, male secondary English teacher, Charles (a pseudonym), in exploring his journey from the teacher education program through his fifth year of teaching in an urban high school. Through his critical reflections on his journey over the last seven years, Charles not only shared his challenges and successes, but also offered insights regarding teacher education and teacher retention in urban settings.

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Literature Review

Researchers have explored the role of teacher education (Burstein, Czech, Kretschmer, Lombardi, & Smith, 2009; DeAngelis, Wall, & Che, 2013; Sleeter, 2001; Taylor & Frankenberg, 2009), teacher induction and mentoring (Ingersoll, 2012; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Stanulis & Floden, 2009; Wang, Oddell, & Schwille, 2008; Yendol-Hoppey, Jacobs, & Dana, 2009) and teacher retention efforts (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Hahs-Vaugh & Scherff, 2008; Quartz, Thomas, Anderson, Masyn, Lyons, & Olsen; 2008) in an effort to better understand teacher retention in urban school settings. Specifically related to teacher retention in urban schools, Quartz and the Teacher Education Program (TEP) Research Group (2003) found that urban teachers, "the real heroes of urban schools" (p. 105), discovered ways to remain connected to their profession, their quest for social justice, their colleagues, their students, and their communities. Quartz et al. (2008) determined that it was important for urban teachers who came from their teacher education programs to continually challenge dominant deficit conceptions and perceptions of urban students and their families, and to question much broader societal inequality structures. Additionally, Olsen and Anderson (2007) explored why teachers stay in, shift from, or consider leaving urban schools. Of the 15 teachers studied, only three resolutely remained committed to teaching at their schools. The authors suggested that teachers will remain in urban school settings if they can adopt multiple roles within and outside the classroom, but they must receive professional support during their entire careers.

Williams (2003) interviewed 12 good teachers to ascertain why they endured in settings that drove their colleagues away, what their sources of inner strength were during their most difficult times, and what workplace dynamics contributed to their personal fulfillment and long-lasting success in the classroom. She found that these teachers were able to fulfill strong personal needs of autonomy and creativity in their classrooms. The teachers considered their rewards in teaching to be meaningful relationships with their students and they were certain they were making differences in their students' lives. Additionally, feeling good about their work was tantamount to doing good work. These teachers were also resourceful, resilient, and fragile all at the same time; however, they knew when they needed to rest, reflect, and change their scenery for purposes of professional and personal rejuvenation and renewal.

Nieto (2003) also acknowledged that good teachers remain in urban schools for reasons that go beyond working conditions, disciplinary concerns, and administrative support. Through her interactions with whom she believed to be good teachers, Nieto found that teaching involved a journey of emotions, relationships, and understanding one's self. The students, no matter what their circumstances, became centered in teachers' reasons for remaining in urban schools. Though they acknowledged institutional and structural inequities, these teachers persisted because teaching was how they chose to live their lives and in doing so, they found

purpose, greater meaning, and satisfaction in helping to make others' lives better, especially for students whose daily circumstances were beyond their control. More recently, Freedman and Appleman (2009) found that teachers' sense of mission, their dispositions for hard work and persistence, their targeted teacher preparation which included academic and practical knowledge, the practice of reflection, the opportunity to change schools or districts and still remain in their profession, and sustained ongoing support and access to professional networks were reasons that teachers remained in urban schools.

Sleeter (2004) advocated for teacher educators to do a better job in following up with their teacher education program graduates. By doing so, we can make improvements to our programs and keep up-to-date on the changing nature and needs of teacher education students. Longitudinal studies have been conducted related to first-year teachers' professional growth (Bullough, 1989; Bullough & Baughman, 1997; Bullough, Knowles, & Crow, 1991). For example, Bullough (1989) conducted a longitudinal case study on Kerrie, a junior high school teacher, and described her professional development during her first year of teaching. Using Ryan's (1986) stages of teacher development as an analytical lens, Bullough (1989) acknowledged Kerrie's most difficult problem as a first year teacher—planning for and dealing with issues of classroom management and discipline. Other problems included working through individual differences, student work assessment, motivation, and dealing and working with parents. Bullough shared the benefits of coping strategies Kerrie used and her understanding of teaching through metaphors and reflection of teaching as a profession. While comparing her first and second years of teaching revealed better management of day-to-day teaching tasks and responsibilities as well as increased reflection, Bullough acknowledged the powerlessness Kerrie faced with growing accountability, teacher mentoring, and teacher evaluation. Later, Bullough and Baughman (1997) reported Kerrie's professional development across an eight-year span. For example, by socially situating teaching and teacher development, the authors surmised that Kerrie's role as a teacher became even more complex and demanding. Through her teaching, Kerrie learned about herself, including the evolution, shifts, and changes in principles, attitudes and beliefs, which in turn affected her motivations about being an effective teacher and a professional. Additionally, changing school contexts and dealing with diverse learner needs in light of the pressures of accountability without adequate preparation and support led to increased intensified labor for Kerrie, which ultimately drove her to leave teaching after eight years.

Levin (2003) followed four elementary school teachers for 15 years to find out how their pedagogical thinking developed over time. Her teacher participants developed an understanding of how they thought about their students' behaviors, development, and learning. In addition, the teacher participants shared how their learning and teaching intersected with their personal and professional lives. While the teacher participants sought to more thoroughly understand children's development, they also desired professional assistance from their colleagues and other

professionals in their ongoing reflections about the joys and struggles of their professional practice.

Similar to Bullough and Baughman's (1997) and Levin's (2003) longitudinal studies, we worked with Charles, a White, male secondary English teacher, for the last seven years through a longitudinal study. The study became mutually beneficial in that not only did Charles reflect on his professional development, but through his experience we were also informed on ways we could improve our professional practices and the teacher education program. In this study, we draw upon Charles' reflections on his professional development to address three specific research questions: (1) How does Charles' teaching experience evolve over time? (2) How does Charles perceive the shift of his roles and responsibilities as a teacher? and (3) What are the major factors that influence his professional growth over time?

Methods

School Context

Charles was hired by the urban high school in which he student taught and has remained there for the past five years. During the longitudinal study, the high school was the school district's hub for culturally and linguistically diverse students and served as a professional development high school for the university. Students hailed from over 40 different countries and spoke over 40 different languages. Designated as a Title I high school, the school had experienced teachers, but a great number of teachers were novice in status and the teacher turnover rate remained high at approximately 25% at the time of the study. While the school struggled in reaching academic goals as defined by the school district and the state, it was well known for its athletic achievement and choral distinction. Furthermore, its most academically sound students were awarded millions of dollars in student scholarship funding.

Researchers and Participant

Charles is a White male who has worked in this urban high school for the last five years. He was born in the northeastern United States. The family moved to the South after Charles graduated from high school. Since Charles' father passed away when he was nine years old, his mother raised him and his elder brother. Charles considered his mother's strength during single parenthood and her acceptance of him being gay as loving actions that deeply impacted his values and beliefs. Further, Charles described himself as a very open-minded individual who prides himself on not making snap judgments about people. He also valued improving himself through education.

We first met Charles through the secondary teacher education program at a mid-sized university in the southeastern United States in 2006. Learning to become a high school English teacher, Charles not only took education courses in the pro-

gram, but also completed internships and student teaching in rural and urban high school settings as part of the program.

The teacher education program provided content majors (English, comprehensive social studies, mathematics, comprehensive science, foreign language, and classical studies) an avenue to earn teacher licensure. The 24-credit hour program included courses in literacy in the content area, educational psychology, diverse learners, instructional technology, specific content area methods courses, and student teaching seminar. In addition to coursework, teacher candidates were required to complete a 30-contact hour internship while they took the diverse learners course in their junior year, and fulfilled the requirements of student teaching during their senior year.

Charles took two teacher licensure courses with us: educational psychology and diverse learners. In the diverse learners course, Charles was placed in a rural school for his internship and later in the urban high school. The latter placement was made based on his desire to be in a culturally and linguistically diverse high school and the principal's request to "grow" an English teacher from candidates who student taught there. The second author visited Charles at the high school periodically during the past five years and served as a university mentor.

Data Collection

Working with Charles and his peers since 2006, we followed a small group of teachers from his cohort to track their development as teachers (Cooper & He, 2012, 2013; He & Cooper, 2009, 2011). Data for this study included autobiographies Charles completed as part of the teacher education program, annual interviews with Charles, written reflections, and focus group data collected over the last seven years involving Charles and his peers.

More specifically, during the required educational psychology and diverse learners courses, Charles completed an autobiography at the end of his junior year in which he shared his background, experiences, and vision for teaching. During his senior year, he revisited the autobiography and reflected on his growth as a teacher based on the internship and student teaching experiences. At the end of each academic year, Charles participated in individual interviews (see the interview protocol in Appendix A) to share his teaching experiences, his understanding of himself as a teacher, his understanding of his students, and his understanding of teaching in general. At the end of the first two years of teaching, he also participated in focus group discussions (see Appendix B) with other beginning teachers to share their experiences and insights. We also exchanged emails with Charles through his five years of teaching where he shared his thoughts regarding these aspects as well.

Data Analysis

We collaborated with Charles to analyze the data in a critical and interpretive manner (Denzin, 1997). All data collected over the course of seven years were

uploaded to a secure online website for data sharing. Charles was asked to review the data and offer any additions or modifications.

We analyzed the data together with Charles to identify themes and patterns (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). We analyzed all data chronologically first to summarize Charles' teaching experiences, his beliefs as a teacher, challenges he faced in teaching, and strategies he employed to overcome these challenges. In uncovering the challenges Charles faced and factors that impacted his persistence in teaching in the same urban high school, we served as "critical friends" (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988) to Charles' reflections on the data, asked for details and clarifications, and discussed the interpretations and analysis. Charles reviewed both the data and the identified themes and patterns and together we negotiated and discussed the findings and interpretations. The discussions were also audio-recorded and analyzed to enrich the existing data regarding Charles' journey as a teacher.

Findings

Working with Charles since he entered the teacher education program, we tracked his teaching experiences from his internship and student teaching to his development from a novice teacher to an experienced teacher in an urban secondary school. In this section, we start with an overview of Charles' teaching experiences from entering the teacher education program in his junior year to his fifth year teaching. We then reveal the shifts in his beliefs regarding his roles and responsibilities as he gained more teaching experiences. Based on both his experiences and his beliefs, his professional growth as a teacher is also discussed.

Overview of Teaching Experiences

Charles entered the teacher education program because of his life-long interest in becoming a teacher. While originally he wanted to become a science teacher because he found science, especially chemistry and biology, fascinating, his college experiences reignited his passion for literature. That was when he decided to become an English teacher.

When learning to become a teacher at the university, Charles interned and student taught at an urban high school that is known as one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse high schools in the state. Reflecting on his field experiences, he recalled many positive learning opportunities from both his supervising teacher at the school and the students he worked with. Even though some of the students may have had low test scores, Charles emphasized in his interview that "the kids themselves are great… a lot of them are very smart." He revealed that one of his major challenges was learning the English curriculum in the state. British literature was not included in the curriculum when he attended high school in another state. However, it was part of the state's high school curriculum requirement and it was what he would need to cover during his student teaching. In addition to becoming

accustomed to the curriculum, he was also concerned about establishing his teacher authority in the classroom, especially because he was a student teacher.

After successfully completing his teacher education program, he was hired by the same high school where he student taught. As a first year teacher, Charles taught 10th grade English and worked with three classes every semester. During the second semester, he taught a sheltered English class with English learners from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Most English learners Charles worked with were from Mexico, Vietnam, Cambodia, India, and several African countries.

Charles described his first year teaching as "exhausting but positive." In addition to teaching, he took on many departmental and administrative tasks. He was able to help the school to raise students' passing rates for the 10th grade writing test. His first year teaching efforts were rewarded with the recognition as his school's Rookie Teacher of the Year. Although he was acknowledged for his students' achievements on test scores, he felt his major achievement was seeing the growth of the students not only in academic content, but also in personal maturity—being prepared for the real world:

> Overall they [students] are learning. They are making connections with what they're learning to the real world. I feel like I'm making a positive impact on them, not just in the classroom but also outside of it as well.

He commented that the actual classroom teaching is the part of teaching that he enjoyed the most, and he also felt rewarded being appreciated by parents.

Gaining more experience in teaching, Charles considered his second and third year teaching at the school "much easier than the first." During the second year, he taught eight classes—three of which were 10th grade with 25-30 students. One class was Honors and the other two were college-preparatory (CP). He also taught two CP classes to 11th graders and one Advanced Placement (AP) class with 19 students. His last two classes were English 11, which had 20 students, and an English 10 class that was comprised of 30 students. Similarly, in the third year of teaching, he taught six English classes—one AP 11 class, one Honors 11 class, one CP-inclusion class, two CP classes, and one Honors 10 class. Unlike his first year of teaching, his students were predominately African American and Hispanic. Charles believed his students responded to him better in his second and third year because he was not a new teacher at the school. Charles also was convinced that he had a "built-in respect" which allowed him to have better in-teractions with his students.

Becoming an experienced teacher in his fourth and fifth years of teaching, Charles reported that he taught the same English classes as he did in previous years. While he was always cognizant of his novice teacher status in the school district during the first three years of teaching, at the end of his fourth year of teaching, Charles was officially promoted to a career status teacher. For him, "it was a relief to know that I finally had a sense of job security." He went on to state: "now I can

just focus on making sure my students are learning as much as possible and not on whether or not I am getting a pink slip at the end of the year."

He enjoyed teaching at his school because of the diverse student population. He expressed pride in the academic performance of his students at the end of the academic year. He was especially proud of two students during his fifth year of teaching. He remembered:

> They came to me not even knowing how to write a paragraph. When they were writing, it was just like little blocks of writing. They really didn't have any supporting details; grammar was shaky. Working with me all year, they kept doing what they needed to do. They were motivated. They, too, were able to pass.

Being given more responsibilities to mentor preservice and beginning teachers during his fifth year, Charles embraced this role. Reflecting on his own experiences and his work with new teachers, Charles advocated for early field experiences "because the more interactions with students that you see, and the more teaching strategies that you see from teachers, the more comfortable you're going to be."

Teacher Roles and Responsibilities

Even though content area instruction is one of the key responsibilities of teachers, especially secondary teachers, Charles always held the belief that being a teacher is more than just teaching the content. Given his experiences interacting with students and teaching in the secondary school setting for over seven years, Charles developed the perception of his teacher's role as an advocate, facilitator, and role model for the students he works with.

During the teacher education program, Charles expressed his desire to become a teacher who teaches more than just the specific content. As he recalled:

> I want to become a teacher because I have had many teachers in my past that have been more than just teachers of their specific content area; they have been role models as well. Ultimately, I want to become a teacher that students can learn from and trust; I do not want to limit my teaching to just the literature that we will be reading. … My role as a future English teacher will be to recognize that not every student learns in the same way, and I intend to try to help these students find his or her own methods of learning at some point along the way.

After working with students through internship and student teaching, Charles emphasized that his role goes beyond content area instruction. He wanted to prepare his students to be "ready for the real world and just get them ready for dealing with different people … for different diversities." He commented that being a gay man himself, he was sensitive to students' comments such as "oh, that's so gay" or "oh don't be such a faggot." He wanted to make sure that his students "respect each other, me, and everybody else around them."

Through interactions with students, Charles not only learned about their perception of family, schools, and their favorite movies and video games, but also

some of their challenging family situations. For example, Charles shared that "I had one student who lived in a halfway house and then ran away halfway through the year…I had another student who informed me that he had to send his mom to rehab for crack." Even with such disturbing accounts, Charles was quite proud that he developed very positive relationships with his students. His students were willing to share with him and, in fact, some students actually came to him for advice in terms of handling relationships or negotiating family issues and concerns. Having the opportunity of knowing more about his students during his first year, Charles was challenged to take on an advocate role in working with students beyond being the facilitator of the content knowledge:

> One of my major roles as a teacher is obviously to be a facilitator of content knowledge, especially when it comes to writing. … Another major role that I feel that I should have is to be an advocate for them, whether it has to do with trouble at home or in the school.

Charles' perception of himself being both the teacher of content and an advocate for the students was made salient in his interview after his second year teaching where he commented that he thought of himself as "an advocate for the students, even if it's just a confidante for the students." He provided an example:

> I had a couple of girls, in particular, who were having a lot of problems at home. One actually attempted suicide at the age of eight because she was molested by her father. Then I had another student who was constantly getting sent around to group homes because she did not fit in and wanted to go back to her mother's…Sometimes these kids really need that person to vent to or just that person to give them that guidance and unfortunately they can't find anywhere else to go.

In addition to being the content teacher and the advocate, he also described himself as a "super nanny" because he needed for some of his students to know basic discipline, a value taught to him by his mother and one he continued to practice. Specifically, he yearned for his students to be disciplined enough to be knowledgeable of the difference between "a time to talk and a time to listen." He acknowledged that over time his students became better at recognizing their timing in knowing when to do one or the other. If they could learn this distinction, he believed they could be better prepared for the real world. Even so, his main regret related to his roles and responsibilities as a teacher was not having time to call parents. He woefully said, "I just didn't have the energy to do it."

Continuing to believe that he needs to teach beyond the content and be an advocate for the students, Charles' belief of his roles and responsibilities as a teacher remained consistent in his third, fourth and fifth year of teaching. As a more experienced teacher, he stressed that he serves as a "facilitator of knowledge and a role model" in working with students. It was important for him to make sure his students were "ready for the real world." As a role model, Charles wanted to instill "respect, responsibility, and accountability" in his students. He also modeled acceptance of his students, for

he accepted them as they were. He was determined to assist his students "in one way or another" and teach them "whether it has to do with English, or real world problems at home." He admitted that his students learn from him and he learns from them because the students teach him how to work with them.

Journey of Professional Growth

Both the teacher education program and Charles' professional experiences in his five years of teaching prepared him to become a more confident and competent teacher in the classroom. Sustaining in the teaching profession, Charles experienced growth beyond classroom instruction as well. Through his journey, he revealed how he was able to not only develop confidence in classroom instruction, but also to negotiate the relationship with school administration and educational policy, and balance his professional responsibilities and personal life.

Classroom Instruction. With the teaching belief that teachers need to prepare students for real world application of the content, Charles has always strived to bridge the content to students' real world. In order to do that, it is important that he knows his students and differentiates his lessons for various students' needs. He probably experienced the most growth in terms of differentiation during student teaching. He admitted that at the beginning of student teaching, he would use the same lesson plan with students at different levels. However, toward the second half of student teaching, he started to make conscientious efforts in differentiating his lesson plans to best meet the unique needs and learning styles of each group of students. Through his first and second year teaching, Charles further adapted lesson plans to meet students' needs and shared how he intentionally attempted to learn about his students. Making himself available for his students, he said that "from day one, I let my students know that I am always there if they need to talk about anything that may be on their minds." In addition, being an English teacher, Charles learned about his students through their writings, classroom discussions, and he also engaged students in informal chats in the halls or at lunch to learn more about them. Charles felt he had a lot of similarities with them because of their small age differences. This realization helped him to connect the English content to movies or TV shows students may be familiar with to assist them in visualizing the content.

Charles' confidence in teaching increased significantly after his first year. He felt that he became a "much more confident teacher" and "more comfortable in front of a classroom full of students" even though he still believed that he has much to learn in regards to content knowledge and discipline. When comparing his second year of teaching to his first year, he eagerly admitted, "I'm definitely more confident in front of the classroom, especially in looking back to interning or student teaching." His classroom management had also improved with more teaching experiences. Charles felt like he knew what he was doing after teaching for two years. He said during the third year interview:

> I don't let things bother me nearly as much as I did the first year of teaching. I know how to handle and diffuse situations a lot better, especially if I see that a student is frustrated. ... Now that this is my third year, the word about how I teach has gotten around to the students. They know that I am more laid back and that they can trust me to be somebody who listens to them …

While Charles referred to his students' pass rates on state tests as one of the major indications of his teaching effectiveness during the first two years of teaching, he stressed more on his pride in individual students' successes during the last three years. In his third year, he especially loved his inclusion class because the students were "constantly trying to improve their writing and reading skills."

Not surprisingly, we witnessed the development of confidence and comfort in his classroom instruction as Charles gained more teaching experiences. It was also evident that he developed strategies to get to know his students to further differentiate and adapt his lessons. Even though testing scores continued to serve as one of the major indicators of his teaching effectiveness, Charles shared more and more about his pride in individual students' growth, regardless of whether they were considered successful as was measured through state tests.

Perceptions of Administration and Policy. Beginning with his first year, Charles wished that he could have more consistent support from school administration when handling student disciplinary issues. In his first three years of teaching, he stated that his biggest challenge in teaching was dealing with "bureaucratic nonsense from the administration and discipline issues." To focus on his own teaching responsibilities, he admitted that he did not interact with the administration. He believed that his "hands-off" approach—physically positioning himself far away from administration—had worked for him. Instead of relying on administrative support, Charles chose to be more than just the classroom teacher for the students through additional one-on-one interactions.

The overall student and teacher morale is another concern. After the first two years of teaching, Charles felt that "a lot of the decisions are made without any teacher input." However, he recognized that there were changes in the school that resulted in positive improvement from when he was completing his student teaching there. He explained:

> We have seen improvements, mind you. The morale itself as far as the kids are concerned is definitely increased. The teachers' morale has gone up; although there are definitely not as many teachers transferring from when we were student teaching, more than last year —granted the economy probably helped with that too. But overall, I don't think there would have been as many teachers leaving this year because I think overall things are slowly starting to turn around little by little.

In addition to school administration, Charles was also challenged by educational policies that influenced the overall educational context and demand on teachers.

During his first four years of teaching, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act was implemented. Charles confessed that to sustain his passion for teaching he would prefer that NCLB would end. He adamantly acknowledged that he was "sick and tired of treating students like numbers and having administrators treating teachers like numbers as well." He believed that education should be a "five-prong make-up—teachers, students, parents, administrators, and legislators." However, teachers and students are oftentimes blamed for anything that goes wrong. He believed that NCLB is the bane of the education system and that students are not going to be adequately prepared for college or the real world unless the system changes and stops passing students who have no business passing in the first place.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were adopted in the state to replace NCLB during Charles' fifth year of teaching. Charles received a lot of professional development workshops related to CCSS. Charles learned that "literacy is a shared responsibility. It's not just supposed to be all on us to get students to read and write. It's supposed to be everybody." Charles believed that instituting the CCSS at his school will "really pay off." Even though Charles was happy to see the change of policy and was optimistic about the impact of the new standards, he admitted that CCSS was "a lot of work" for teachers.

Charles' perception of administration and policy probably is not idiosyncratic. Many teachers working in urban secondary school settings may face similar challenges. Charles' negotiation with school administration and his reaction to educational policies provided further insights for administrators, teacher educators, and policymakers in terms of both the implications of educational policy and the support teachers, especially beginning teachers, may need to remain and become successful in the teaching profession.

Professional Demand and Personal Life. Over five years of teaching, another theme that became salient in Charles' professional growth is the challenge of balancing professional demands and his personal life. Like many first-year teachers, during his first year, Charles reported that planning, teaching, grading and other responsibilities that he accepted occupied all his time. He stated:

> I was exhausted my first year, completely and totally exhausted almost every day because I was forever taking home essays or quizzes or tests to grade. … I was just completely shutting everybody else out. I became quite a hermit. ... I would just be home for the most part grading or doing things, preparing for the next week.

Charles set goals for himself to better protect his personal life from work and to have some personal time during his second year teaching.

In order to improve his understanding of the content, especially analyzing rhetoric, Charles decided to pursue a Master's degree during his third year of teaching. He believed that earning a higher degree would assist him in being "better prepared to handle what's coming in the next five years." He felt professionally strengthened through his work on a Master's degree. He readily admitted that the

Master's degree in English has helped sustain him in teaching and specifically aided him in becoming more confident in teaching rhetoric. However, this additional load also made it more challenging for him to balance all his responsibilities during his fourth year teaching. To complete his Master's degree by the following spring, he was taking four classes during the fourth year. In addition, Charles started serving as the lead writing teacher for the school and as a member of the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Team. Added to this load were unexpected family deaths that occurred during second semester. Charles wearily confessed he "had a hard time trying to balance everything." He said that he would feel much more relieved once he completed the program:

> I'm not going to have this giant weight [completion of the Master's degree] on my shoulders constantly pulling me down. I can actually focus on what I want to do with my students. I am actually really, really excited about being able to change my focus. . . I will finally have time for them [his students] to actually use what knowledge I got from the Master's or to teach different things that I like to teach, literature or writing.

Given the enormous requirements from both his teaching responsibilities and going to school, Charles believed his motivation to teach is sustained by "definitely not bringing it [situations that anger or disturb him] home." Charles also kept in touch with his friends who are not connected to school. Further, he unequivocally recognized the strong support of his family.

In addition, Charles credited his on-site teacher educator (OSTE), or cooperating teacher, who is also his novice teacher mentor, as impacting him greatly since he began student teaching. He regretted not having as much time to spend with her since she was department chair and a teacher of seniors. Nonetheless, he sought her out for assistance at times. He also asked for counsel from his departmental colleagues and informally engaged with them outside school during special outings. Furthermore, Charles disclosed that keeping in contact with his former professors was a source of professional support for him as well.

Charles credited his five-year survival as a teacher in an urban school to patience and fairness. He clearly understood that students come from very different backgrounds. Therefore, he attempted to take students where they are academically and socially, including everything that comes with them from their homes and communities.

Discussion and Implications

Charles' experiences do not represent all secondary teachers working in urban settings, but his journey is not idiosyncratic either. The findings of this single case, longitudinal study provided insights for teachers, administrators, and teacher educators in terms of teachers' professional development, school induction and mentoring programming, and university teacher education programs.

Over his five-year teaching career, Charles became attuned to understanding students' backgrounds in an effort to differentiate instruction, bridge the content to students' real world, be available for students beyond offering academic support, and advocate for students. While he taught different classes and different groups of students, his core belief as a teacher, which was student-centered learning experience beyond content instruction, did not change over time. In fact, when asked about why he stayed in teaching given some of the challenges he faced and frustrations he experienced, he responded that "it was the students," a finding corroborated by previous studies of urban teacher retention (Nieto, 2003; Quartz, et al., 2004; Williams, 2003). Research on teacher beliefs tells us that these beliefs not only guide teachers' classroom decision making (Bullough, 1989; Bullough & Baughman, 1997; Chant, 2009; Chant, Heafner, & Bennett, 2004; Cooper & He, 2013; Cornett, Yeotis, & Terwilliger, 1990), but also form their identity as teachers and impact teacher retention (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000). Ongoing reflections on personal visions and beliefs can empower teachers in negotiating challenges in teaching and help build teacher resilience (Fairbanks, Duffy, Faircloth, He, Levin, Rohr, & Stein, 2010).

In addition, Charles' experiences working with administrators, and negotiating national mandates and local policies clearly illustrated that becoming a teacher is much more than classroom teaching (Cooper & He, 2012; 2013; He & Cooper, 2011). Teachers' ability to negotiate the "beyond teaching" aspects sometimes determines teacher retention and teacher success, especially in more complex teaching settings such as in urban schools. In secondary teacher education programs, while the traditional focus has always been on content knowledge and content pedagogical training, it is important to include opportunities for teacher candidates to learn about those aspects beyond teaching before they enter the teaching field. Charles attributed his success today to some degree to his extensive internship and student teaching experiences in rural and urban school settings. The unique professional development school connection between the university teacher education program and the secondary schools where Charles completed his field experiences also allowed for more meaningful experiences and preparation. For both secondary schools and university teacher education programs, continuing to strengthen such collaboration is critical in not only preparing preservice teachers for secondary school settings, but also in engaging inservice teachers in ongoing professional development.

For Charles, the "beyond teaching" aspects included recognition of his need to engage in activities that would be professionally enhancing and emotionally relaxing (Bullough, 1989; Bullough & Baughman, 1997; Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Nieto, 2003; Olson & Anderson, 2007; Williams, 2003). After his first year of teaching, Charles felt his exhaustion and realized he had to have greater balance in his professional and personal life. Not only did he teach, Charles volunteered for other professional roles in his school and maintained professional networks with his mentor and professors from his teacher education program. Additionally, he

desired to become better as a teacher of content through his attendance in graduate school. Earning a Master's degree in English better prepared him for his students and his own professional growth. He was also intentional about spending time with friends who were not teachers. Moreover, he learned how to create opportunities for renewal and revitalization. Charles' journey can provide insight to teacher educators and school induction and mentoring programs by assisting novice teachers in helping them decide upon and discover strategies for balancing their professional and personal lives (Cooper & He, 2012; He & Cooper, 2011).

For our part, we have learned that teachers genuinely appreciated the opportunity to discuss their experiences and reflect on their teaching beliefs. Specifically, during the past seven years, Charles enjoyed meeting with his former classmates (now his colleagues) to discuss the joys and challenges of the teaching profession and to share advice on how to handle various situations within their particular school settings. Charles' participation in this longitudinal study afforded him a vehicle by which he could share with his former classmates over time. Similarly, both teacher education programs and school induction and mentoring programs can provide novice teachers with other opportunities to self-reflect and share with others immediately and regularly, especially during their beginning years. By doing so, teacher education programs and teacher educators can better support their graduates as well as to improve their programs and teacher educators' professional practice (Sleeter, 2004).

Finally, engaging in the process of longitudinal studies with teachers greatly benefited us as teacher educators. It was through the interviews, observations, and focus groups that we began to learn more about the school context, administrative structure and support from teachers' perspectives, and be aware of unique challenges teacher candidates may face in this particular urban school setting. The concrete and current examples allowed us to provide better scaffolding and support for preservice teachers, and also offered us insights in supporting the induction, mentoring and professional development programming at the school. Longitudinal research study is challenging to conduct, but it certainly offers reciprocal-learning opportunities for both researchers and participants alike.

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Appendix A.
Interview Protocol

1. General Teaching Experiences:
     a. How is your teaching this semester?
     b. Which grade level? How many classes? How many students in each class?
     c. How would you describe the diversity in your classroom and your school?
2. Understanding of Self:
     a. How would you describe yourself as a teacher now?
     b. What do you perceive as your major roles and responsibilities as a teacher?
     c. What are some of the experiences you had in the past influence your current classroom teaching?
     d. What kind of teacher do you think you want to be?
3. Understanding of Students:
     a. How do you get to know your students?
     b. What do you know about your students' background? How do you know that?
     c. What do you know about the families? How do you know that?
     d. Describe the interaction you had this semester with one of your students or their families that really impacted your teaching or who you are as a teacher.
4. Understanding of Teaching:
     a. Comparing yourself and your students, do you see many similarities or differences? What are they?
     b. How do you feel about your relationship with your students and their families?
     c. How do you feel about the effectiveness of your instruction? What is the ideal impact? How do you know if your instruction is effective?
     d. If you were to be placed in an ideal classroom, what would it look like? How could your teaching be different from what you are doing now?

Appendix B.
Focus Group Protocol

1. General Teaching Experiences
     a. What is the most exciting thing that happened to you in your classroom this year?
2. Understanding of Self
     a. What are some of your achievements as a teacher?
     b. What are some of your goals as a teacher?
3. Understanding of Students
     a. What have you learned about your students and their families?
     b. What have you learned from the students themselves?
     c. How do you plan on getting to know your students and their families? Given what you already know now, how do you plan on doing it better next semester or next year?
4. Understanding of Teaching
     a. How do you like teaching?
     b. What aspect of teaching do you enjoy most?
     c. If there were one thing you would want to change about your last year's teaching, what would it be?

Designing Teaching Cases
That Integrate Course Content
and Diversity Issues

By AnnMarie Alberton Gunn,
Barbara J. Peterson, & James L. Welsh

Introduction

The U.S. Census Bureau (Ortman & Guarneri, 2009) estimates that between the years 2040 and 2050, the U.S. population will experience the "majority-minority crossover" (p. 4), after which White, non-Hispanics will represent a minority of the population.[1] As a result of immigration from the Pacific, Middle East, Caribbean, and Latin America, as well as population growth patterns within segments of the existing U.S. population (Ortman & Guarneri, 2009; Phuntsong, 2001), this demographic shift will make it necessary for educators at all levels to review their educational philosophies and pedagogy regarding cultural diversity and take action where needed to improve the cultural competence of educators. Teacher education will need to renew its efforts to restructure programmatic experiences so that preservice teachers understand cultural systems (Ladson-Billings, 2004), rather than viewing culture as simply a list of shared habits. Teacher educators must also help

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new teachers develop a complex understanding of their own culture and how it might influence their instruction. These experiences will help teachers understand how student identities such as ethnicity, race, language, gender, sexual orientation, and religion (Banks, 2006) will influence their school experiences.

The educational research community has underscored the importance of preparing teachers to embrace a culturally responsive pedagogy for all their students (e.g., Au, 1980; Kidd, Sanchez, & Thorp, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2005; Phuntsong, 2001). At the same time, teacher education programs have been criticized for being overly theoretical and lacking a bridge for preservice teachers to connect theory to practice (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005). Teaching cases allow a methodology for connecting practical, field-based scenarios within a social constructivist teacher education approach (Beck & Kosnik, 2006) that promotes culturally responsive dispositions (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Based on the research study discussed below and our personal experiences, teaching cases can be used to situate both diversity and content area issues at the center of classroom discussion. Teaching cases also foster a critical discourse that helps preservice teachers think in complex ways about authentic educational situations, and thereby connect theory to practice. The purpose of this article is to (a) provide a brief background and rationale for the use of teaching cases within a social constructivist paradigm that promotes culturally responsive dispositions and (b) discuss a study that modified teaching cases to feature diversity issues and discipline-specific content.

Background and Rationale
for Teachings Cases in Teacher Education

What are Teaching Cases?

The history of teaching cases in higher education began in the late 1800s at Harvard Law School (Shulman, 1992), as narrative scenarios that depicted situations a professional lawyer could face in the field. Over subsequent decades, the use of teaching cases as a methodology spread to many other disciplines and practices, and teaching cases are now used across many disciplines, including business, education, and medicine (Merseth, 1996). Even the teaching of chess now relies on teaching cases to develop expert strategy and skill.

Often teaching cases are short vignettes based on real events that expose teacher candidates to types of problems from which they may gain significant learning and insights. Shulman (1992) explained, "To call something a case is to make a theoretical claim. It argues that the story, event, or text is an instance of a larger class, an example of a broader category" (p.17). Another definition of teaching cases comes from Broudy (1990):

> Cases, therefore, consist of selected problems of professional practice and constitute the problem of the professional curriculum. In the training of prospective professionals they form the core of clinical experience and test whether the student can apply theory…Consensus on this clinical experience in turn must rely on the identification of paradigm cases of professional practice. (p. 432)

Shulman (1992) identified some common characteristics of teaching cases. They are: (a) narrative in form, with a beginning, middle, and end; (b) specific with regard to a time and place; (c) designed to foreground social and cultural dimensions of the situation through case events; (d) multidimensional and open to diverse interpretations; and (e) crafted to critically engage and challenge the reader as dramatic tensions in the plot unfold. Due to their narrative nature, teaching cases can be even more relevant and effective for delivering content than expository text. Teaching cases are designed to foster dynamic, in-depth discussions that demand from professors and preservice teachers high levels of reflective engagement and integration of content knowledge with pedagogy (Shulman, 1992).

The research base on teaching cases that infuse diversity issues within teacher education coursework reveals three overarching findings. First, teaching cases appear to be a useful tool to guide the reader to identify and discuss multicultural issues (Kleinfeld, 1988, 1998; Lee, Summers, & Garza, 2009; Sudzina, 1993). Second, case-based instruction is a useful vehicle to discuss and challenge beliefs and biases preservice teachers hold towards multicultural issues (Brown & Kraehe, 2010; Dana & Floyd, 1993; Lee et al., 2009; Sudzina, 1993). Finally, sociocultural theories can be used as a theoretical framework for scaffolding preservice and in-service teachers' multicultural dispositions and skills during case-based discussion (Brown & Kraehe, 2010; Moje & Wade, 1997).

Theoretical Framework for Case-Based Instruction

Teaching cases are excellent tools for teaching and learning within a theoretical framework of social constructivism (Beck & Kosnik, 2006) that promotes reflective and culturally responsive dispositions in preservice teachers (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Based on the foundational work of Dewey, Piaget, and Vygotsky, social constructivism maintains that powerful learning occurs when knowledge is socially constructed by learners within learning communities that are inclusive and equitable. Discourse between mentors and novices promotes collective knowledge construction through collaborative analysis. The social constructivist paradigm considers knowledge as not only dependent on social interaction, but connected to all other aspects of a person's experiences, thoughts, emotions, attitudes, and actions (Beck & Kosnik, 2006). Integration, critical reflection, inquiry, and community are other important concepts within teacher education programs built upon social constructivist learning principles.

According to Villegas and Lucas (2002), a constructivist perspective on teaching and learning is also central to culturally responsive pedagogy. These research-

ers maintain that teachers need to develop six qualities to successfully teach in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms: (a) sociocultural consciousness; (b) affirming views towards students from diverse backgrounds; (c) commitment and skills for promoting change in schools; (d) understanding of how learners construct knowledge; (e) skills for learning about students' backgrounds, experiences and proficiencies; and (f) the ability to use appropriate instructional strategies for diverse students. Case-based instruction is one method teacher educators can use to incorporate social constructivist learning principles and promote culturally responsive dispositions throughout content area coursework.

In a review of approaches to reform in teacher education implemented over the past few decades, Téllez (2007) critiques approaches focused on multicultural competencies as a predetermined skill set. Generic strategies designed to address an inventory of essentialized cultural traits ignores the complexities of culture and learning needs of multilingual, multicultural students across diverse educational settings. Téllez also argues that reflective and constructivist approaches can be too abstract and fail to "orient preservice teachers around the specific teaching acts that would demonstrate its premises" (p. 559). Preservice teachers require more contextualized instruction through coursework and field experiences to learn how to co-construct knowledge about and with multilingual, multicultural students in order to design effective pedagogical practices.

Teaching Case-Based Approach as Contextualized Learning

The specific content methods, social contexts, and cultural dilemmas integrated within teaching cases can potentially move preservice teachers from abstractions to the type of situated learning paradigm in which contextualized knowledge construction informs problem-solving and pedagogical decision-making. Case-based discussions encourage connections between learners' personal experiences to those they may actually encounter in diverse classrooms, potentially constructing a bridge from content and theory to classroom practice (Shulman, 1992). The professor's role is to scaffold sociocultural and cognitive skills that undergird "reflection-in-action" (Schön, 1987) as preservice teachers consider multiple viewpoints, identify biased perspectives, and challenge specific inequitable practices they might face in diverse K-12 settings. By focusing on diversity issues integrated with content methods for instruction, the professor can facilitate preservice teachers' application of culturally responsive habits of mind (Dewey, 1916/1944; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) to formulate content-based strategies to address specific teaching and learning issues of the case.

Teaching case discussions can contextualize inquiry and problem-solving in a way that values the importance of seeking deep familiarity with students, and constructing a localized knowledge of the classroom and educational community, as recommended by Téllez (2007). Discussion can go beyond the case to identify further information needed to design a well-developed, culturally responsive plan

of action, or to spark service-learning related to social justice issues presented in the case. This type of critical discourse and collaborative inquiry could serve as a model that preservice teachers might implement with their own future students and professional colleagues to co-construct curriculum for transformative change, while setting high expectations for educational rigor and student achievement.

Research Study

The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of preservice teachers in a literacy course that incorporates teaching cases that feature diversity issues as a methodology. Both qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed to answer the research question: How do teaching cases that feature diversity and disciplinary content issues influence preservice teachers' perceptions and insights related to culturally responsive teaching practices?

Context and Participants

The researchers and professor of the course chose to use teaching cases as a methodology and pedagogy to explore diversity issues in a content area course. This study took place at a public four-year college in the southeastern United States, in a course entitled Early and Emergent Literacy. The participants in this study included the professor of the course, Dr. Grace (a pseudonym), and 20 preservice teachers (17 women and three men). Two of the 20 preservice teachers identified themselves as Hispanic; the rest as Caucasian.

Methods

In this mixed-methods study, 10 teaching cases were written or modified to fit the objectives of this course and to feature diversity issues. A panel of experts reviewed all of the teaching cases for content and clarity (see sample teaching case in Appendix A). Each case featured a minimum of one content area component (literacy) and one diversity issue. The panel of experts selected five teaching cases, and then aligned them with weekly syllabus topics throughout this 16-week course. In addition, one teaching case was selected for preservice teachers to analyze at the beginning and end of the semester for a pre- and post- data comparison (see data analysis for further description of pre- and post- teaching case assessment).

Qualitative data sources. The primary researcher (first author) interviewed the professor of the course five times, once after each of the classes in which teaching cases were implemented, and then one final interview. During these interviews, Dr. Grace explored her ideas about the implementation of teaching cases as well as her perceptions of preservice teachers' responses. Dr. Grace also emailed responses from a professor's journal she kept to discuss the teaching cases, questions she might have, or comments and feedback about the study. Other qualitative data sources

included (a) non-participant observational field notes that described and reflected on the flow of classroom activities (Creswell, 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1998); (b) a researcher's reflective journal to record researcher thoughts and potential biases; as well as (c) preservice teachers' written reflections and analytic responses to a pre- and post-teaching case.

Quantitative data sources. The quantitative data sources included the pre- and post-test scores from the Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (CDAI) administered to the preservice teachers. The CDAI was developed by Henry (1991) to examine attitudes of educators towards culturally diverse students and their families. The survey is comprised of 28 opinion statements that address general cultural awareness. Respondents are asked to rate the degree to which they agree with each statement using a 5 point Likert-type scale (e.g., 5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree). The CDAI assesses cultural diversity awareness by measuring attitudes on three dimensions: attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. The following sample items from this survey demonstrate the general assessment of the cultural diversity awareness construct: *I believe I would prefer to work with children and parents whose cultures are similar to mine; I believe cultural views of a diverse community should be included in the school years program planning; and I believe other than the required school activities, my interactions with parents should include unplanned activities (e.g., social events, meeting in shopping centers), or telephone conversations*. This questionnaire was used to determine whether there was significant growth in preservice teachers' cultural awareness from the beginning to the end of the semester, and as an additional data source to triangulate qualitative data.[2]

Data analysis. Grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) provided a systematic method for analyzing the qualitative data. Coding began with a microanalysis of all the data. The primary researcher continued analysis by following these steps (Strauss & Corbin, 1998): (a) open coding, (b) axial coding, and (c) selective coding. Analysis was further documented with a series of coding charts and a code book. These codes were then organized in ATLAS.ti, a qualitative data analysis software program, to assist with management of the data and mapping of conceptual relationships. See Appendix B for coding chart that showed final codes, code descriptors, and exemplar quotes from qualitative data sources.

At the beginning and end of the semester, preservice teachers read and responded to the same teaching case by identifying the cultural and literacy issues presented in the case. They also described what pedagogical strategies they would choose when handling those issues. Participants' responses were tabulated to determine the frequency and type of cultural issues and pedagogical strategies identified in the pre- teaching case as compared with the post- teaching case. Comparison of pre- and post- case responses were used to understand how teaching cases and case-based instruction influenced participants' perceptions and insights regarding

content and cultural diversity issues, and to determine shifts in dispositions and pedagogical strategies over time (Creswell, 2007). A dependent means t-test was used to analyze the pre- and post-test composite scores from the CDAI to determine whether there were significant changes in the preservice teachers' cultural awareness over the course of the semester (α=.05).

Trustworthiness. Our analysis of research data was strengthened by using multiple data sources, methods, and theoretical perspectives to triangulate study findings (Patton, 2002). To minimize researcher bias, the primary researcher established an audit trail to verify the rigor of the research and maximize the accuracy of the final report. The primary researcher also met with an external coder with the goal of establishing an 80% intercoder reliability rate (Miles & Huberman, 1994); an 87% intercoder reliability was obtained between the external coder and primary researcher.

Findings

Findings from grounded theory analysis. The themes that emerged from the qualitative data analysis were: (a) culturally responsive pedagogy, (b) need to be challenged, (c) equality, (d) empowerment, (e) negativity, (f) case-based discourse, (g) personal connection, (h) dispositions, (i) solutions orientation, and (j) attachment. The themes and exemplar quotes from qualitative data sources in Appendix B illustrate the multicultural knowledge construction within the classroom learning community. This data provide evidence that case-based instruction fostered dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy and reflected preservice teachers' journey toward becoming educators committed to social justice (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Pre- and post- teaching case findings. Preservice teachers' identified cultural and literacy issues, and suggested pedagogical strategies based on the pre- and post- teaching case. For example, on the pre- and post- case assessment, question number 1 asked, "What are all the different issues in this case?" One participant stated, "The teacher is unaware of the local heritage and doesn't understand what is going on." Pre- and post- case findings showed an increase in the number of preservice teachers who were able to recognize cultural issues presented in the teaching case. Participants identified a total of 27 issues on the pre- case assessment, as compared to 47 issues identified on the post- case assessment. In addition, post- teaching case data brought to the forefront three new cultural issues within the teaching case that further illustrated a deeper development of participants' culturally responsive literacy pedagogy.

Quantitative findings. Based on analysis of pre- and post- data from the Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (CDAI; Henry, 1991), preservice teachers demonstrated statistically significant gains in cultural awareness after one semester of this literacy course. Quantitative analysis revealed that mean CDAI post-test scores were significantly higher (*M*=91.36, *SD*=7.04) than pre-test scores (*M*=88.00, *SD*=7.18;

$t(18)=3.36$; $p<.05$). The computed effect size of 0.47 represents a medium effect (Cohen, 1988). Despite limitations related to sampling and independence, these data support qualitative data indicating increased awareness of cultural diversity among the participants. Another limitation to this study is the small homogenous sample size; 17 of the 20 participants identified themselves as Caucasians. Because preservice teachers were also enrolled in a 15-hour field-based experience, the gains shown on the CDAI could also be attributed to this experience and the process of maturation over the semester. Results cannot be projected to the total teacher candidate population.

In summary, the qualitative data analysis revealed that case-based instruction and teaching cases that featured diversity and literacy issues appeared to enhance preservice teachers' perceptions and insights related to culturally responsive teaching practices, a finding that is consistent with and supported by the evidence provided by the quantitative data.

Discussion

All teaching cases in this study were written or modified to integrate diversity and literacy issues. Cases were aligned to weekly topics and contextualized within the content area curriculum of the course. For example, the teaching case entitled "Anna" (see Appendix A) featured literacy assessment methods and issues of linguistic diversity. This case was aligned with the week in the syllabus focused on content of early literacy assessment and running records. This contextualized dimension became an integral part of the study because the preservice teachers and the professor were able to conceptually connect course content and diversity issues within teaching cases. Dr. Grace stated, "I connected to it right away because I think it fit really well to what we are talking about" (Interview, March 16, 2011).

Our findings corroborate those of Merseth (1996) who maintained, "Skillful teachers do not operate from a set of principles or theories, but rather build, through experience on contextualized situations, multiple strategies for practice" (p. 724). Each one of the cases in the current investigation featured one or more literacy and diversity issues in order to stimulate social knowledge construction within critical classroom discourse. Culturally responsive literacy pedagogy is developed by integrating preservice teacher's knowledge about diversity into the content areas (Banks, 2006). By allowing the time to discuss these issues in the case, the preservice teachers and professor as a community of learners can examine the many perspectives and biases of everyone in the case-based discussion (Beck & Kosnik, 2006). Generally, our research suggests that instructors who use cases should keep in mind critical dispositions for culturally responsive teaching and keep a list of objectives and content/diversity issues when listening to the classroom discussion and guiding the discourse.

The professor found the use of teaching cases motivated her students, fostered

a deeper discussion of the weekly topics, and powerfully transferred important topics of diversity and literacy from scholarly readings to the center of dynamic classroom discourse. Moreover, teaching cases leveraged learning of content area theory and concepts within pragmatic contexts, effectively bridging theory into practice while promoting culturally responsive dispositions.

Summary

Cultivating experiences that allow preservice teachers and teacher educators to learn about other cultures and embrace cultural differences is a necessary component of developing a culturally responsive pedagogy (Gunn, 2011). We believe that the use of teaching cases is an authentic, engaging, and effective pedagogical tool to teach content area course objectives anchored in contextualized practice, and bring diversity issues to the forefront of classroom discourse.

Notes

[1] As of 2008, the U.S. Census stated Hawaii, New Mexico, California, and Texas have already seen a turnabout in demographics for majority-minority populations. Moreover, as of 2011, more than 50% of the U.S. population younger than one year of age is from what is considered to be a minority background (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009, 2012).

[2] Henry (1995) determined test-retest reliability of the CDAI to be at the .66 level with 506 teacher participants from Texas and Virginia. These districts were chosen because of the states' diverse populations. Each statement of the inventory was appraised by a panel of experts for clarity, significance, and content validity. Cronbach's test for internal consistency reliability yielded an overall alpha coefficient of .90 (Henry, 1995).

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Appendix A

In the following teaching case, content knowledge regarding literacy methods is integrated with issues of cross-linguistic diversity and culturally responsive assessment that would impact instructional decision-making for Juan, and other dual language learners. The teacher (Anna) recognizes Juan's miscues are not "errors," but cross-linguistic substitutions, that according to the district's running record scoring procedures would count as separate miscues and underestimate his reading achievement level and instructional placement. Arbitrary implementation of assessment procedures penalizes dual language learners students like Juan. Although seemingly "minor," culturally insensitive assessments pose significant barriers to achievement and educational equity system-wide (Jordan, 2010). Teaching cases such as this one may be analyzed at several levels with respect to educational policy and practice. Case-based discussion offers opportunities to develop nuanced understandings regarding language and literacy instructional methods (i.e. content), as well as critical perspectives regarding "invisible" yet significant barriers to culturally responsive pedagogy and social justice.

"Anna": Literacy Assessment through Running Records

Anna Cohen is a new teacher in Brown County. Anna just graduated from college and is excited to have been hired as a second grade teacher. Anna is nervous about her first year, but is excited to begin her new career as an elementary school teacher.

During the first month of school, the county requires all teachers to assess their students using a running record form and report the results to the county literacy department. In the classroom, the results of the running records will then be used to level the students into the appropriate reading groups. Anna completed her running records but had a concern about one student's assessment. She was concerned about Juan Ramirez. Juan is Mexican-American, born in the United States. He is an ESOL student who has been in this school since Kindergarten and is considered to be a bright boy. When Juan read with his teacher, he kept mispronouncing the word "chicken." Every time he came to that word he pronounced it, "shicken." According to the Brown County Running Record Assessments Guide his mispronunciation should be counted as a miscue. Anna could tell that Juan was getting nervous as she was marking his assessment paper. She also knew that the three miscues for this specific word would score him into a lower reading group although he knows the meaning of the word. Anna does not know how to handle this situation so she asks the reading coach for guidance. Louise Waites, the reading coach replies to her question by stating, "Anna you need to mark them as miscues and put him in the lower group. This is stated in the county reading record guidelines." Anna feels that this is unjust.

Appendix B
Coding Chart for Grounded Theory Findings

Code	Description of Code	Exemplar Quote	Data Source
Culturally responsive pedagogy	This code was assigned to data that illustrated preservice teachers' understanding of classroom content and cultural concept as one unit.	"Why is only one assessment being used to determine the level of reading? It's only the beginning of the word. We would work on the beginning sounds, since that is what he is saying wrong."	Observation notes
Need to be challenged	This code was assigned to data that illustrated the need for all students to be challenged academically in the classroom.	"I feel stupid, low and different when the teacher gives me problems that are much easier. I want you to give me problems that challenge me so I can learn more. I want to be like everyone else" [reflection from standpoint of student in teaching case].	Preservice teacher's written reflection

Code	Description of Code	Exemplar Quote	Data Source
Equality	This code was assigned to data that illustrated diverse students' desire to be treated equally, not ostracized.	"I am Jose and I feel insulted when my teacher does not challenge me academically because of my ethnicioty. I want you to treat me with the same respect as the other students in my class" [reflection from standpoint of student in teaching case].	Preservice teacher's written reflection
Empowerment	This code was assigned to data that illustrated how preservice teachers' frustration with teaching case issues shifted to a voice of empowerment or consideration of their roles as agents of change or social justice.	"I think because he is saying one word wrong he should only be marked wrong once. We would buck the system."	Observation notes
Negativity	This code was assigned to data that illustrated preservice teachers' written or verbal illustration of being frustrated, upset, or nervous when responding to the teaching case.	"I am nervous and feel like a failure when my grade/reading group depends on one assessment. I want you [the teacher] to test me using various assessments" [reflection from standpoint of student in teaching case].	Preservice teacher's written reflections
Case-based discourse	The preservice teachers and professor engaged in discussion and were introduced to and practiced discourses not only presented in this case, but used in the education profession.	"I heard one group talking about a spelling test. I heard them actually talk about negative things about spelling tests from them growing up …and I thought, gosh— what a great literacy topic, a great literacy case."	Professor interview

Code	Description of Code	Exemplar Quote	Data Source
Personal connection	This code was assigned to data that illustrated how preservice teachers made personal connections with teaching case literacy issues.	"Now they are talking about how much they hated spelling tests when they were young. And I now hear another group discussing the lack of worth of a spelling test."	Observation notes
Dispositions	Dispositions emerged as a theme when the preservice teachers and the professor discussed different ways to handle administrators and situations that could be controversial.	"In a situation like this it's pretty easy in this case to be all bravado— but in the real world, you would never confront an administrator in a challenging manner. One group did a good job of [stating to the administrator] this is how it will help our school instead of this is what I want to do, you need to let me. So it was an unintentional thing that happened, because …maybe they don't know, when it comes to administration you need to mind your P & Q's."	Professor interview
Solution orientation	This code was assigned to data that illustrated preservice teachers expressing the notion that they were trying to fix or find solutions to the issues presented in the teaching cases.	"…it's all very black and white; they want to fix a problem. They don't see that these are things you don't really fix but they are things that evolve and happen and also they see teachers in black and white." Dr. Grace responded with, "That is interesting because in education there are shades of gray… especially in this case with the running records."	Professor interview

Code	Description of Code	Exemplar Quote	Data Source
Attachment	This code was assigned to data that illustrated the preservice teachers asked questions that showed they were concerned about the people represented in the teaching cases.	"Students are starting to filter out and two of them have just stopped me to discuss the case. One just asked me how the student in the case turned out. She commented, "I wonder if he turned out okay." These preservice students are becoming invested in these [cases]."	Researcher reflective journal

Information
on the California Council
on Teacher Education

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Membership in the California Council on Teacher Education can be either institutional or individual. Colleges and universities with credential programs, professional organizations with interests in the preparation of teachers, school districts and public agencies in the field of education, and individuals involved in or concerned about the field are encouraged to join. Membership entitles one to participation in semi-annual spring and fall conferences, subscription to *Teacher Education Quarterly* and *Issues in Teacher Education*, newsletters on timely issues, an informal network for sharing sound practices in teacher education, and involvement in annual awards and recognitions in the field.

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For information about or membership in the California Council on Teacher Education, please contact: Alan H. Jones, Executive Secretary, California Council on Teacher Education, Caddo Gap Press, 3145 Geary Boulevard, PMB 275, San Francisco, California 94118; telephone 415/666-3012; email <caddogap@aol.com>; website <www.ccte.org>.

The next semi-annual conference of the California Council on Teacher Education will be:

October 22-24, 2015, Kona Kai Resort, San Diego

Confronting Assumptions:
Service Learning as a Medium for Preparing Early Childhood Special Education Preservice Teachers to Work with Families

By Patricia Korzekwa Hampshire, Katie Havercroft, Megan Luy, & Jennifer Call

Teacher education programs are called upon to provide field experiences that promote application of pedagogy, collaboration, and reflective practice. Traditionally, field experiences including internships and student teaching provide the opportunity for application and feedback (Briody, 2005). In the field of early childhood/early childhood special education (ECE/ECSE), developing partnerships with families is a foundational practice (Rupiper & Marvin, 2004). More specifically, understanding the nature of working with families becomes especially important given the variety of needs (e.g., economic, social, cultural) practitioners face. Although essential to success, many preservice early educators identify working with families as intimidating (Zygmunt-Fillwalk, 2006). Thus, providing opportunities to confront those fears through hands-on experiences in the field that promote reflection within the safety of a college classroom is essential.

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One area that appears to directly relate to the success that teachers have in developing collaborative partnerships is how they feel about their own ability (i.e., self-efficacy) to effectively work together towards a common goal (Hiatt-Michael, 2006). Often, preservice teachers have negative attitudes about parents even before entering the classroom believing that parents lack competency and the skills necessary for helping their child academically (Sewell, 2012; Staples & Diliberto, 2010). Research (Haitt-Michael, 2001; McBride, 1991; Tichenor, 1998) suggests that many teachers do not feel they were provided with the tools necessary in their teacher preparation program for effectively working with families. Teachers reported either a lack of relevant coursework and/or hands-on learning opportunities. Research further suggests that the attitudes teachers' hold are closely tied to the extent to which they will implement family programs in their classroom (Bingham & Abernathy, 2007; Sewell, 2012). Proactively addressing preservice teacher's need for training in how to establish reciprocal relationships with all families is paramount.

Preparation for Working with Families

Within the field of EC/ECSE there are several identified dispositions that are essential for teachers as they work with families including (a) engaging families as partners; (b) valuing and supporting cultural and social differences; (c) a commitment to effective communication; and (d) envisioning the teacher as learner (Baum & Swick, 2008). Children whose families are involved in school partnerships have been shown to score higher on achievement tests, have higher self-esteem, demonstrate motivation for learning, have higher rates of graduation, and are more likely to attend college (Christie, 2005; Zygmunt-Fillwalk, 2006). In addition, teachers who also benefit from collaborative partnerships with families report higher moral and job satisfaction. Parents involved in these collaborations tend to be more confident, have better decision-making skills, and have increased access to community resources (Christie). When families and educational professionals work together, school personnel become active members in the community and families feel validated.

Although the benefits of collaboration between home and school are easily identified, research suggests that universities are not adequately preparing educators for developing collaborative partnerships with families and community agencies (Bingham & Abernathy, 2007; Sewell, 2012). Current efforts in teacher preparation programs focus on preparing students for dealing with challenging situations verses building relationships with parents (Staples & Diliberto, 2010). In a survey conducted by the National Center for Early Development and Learning (Chang, Early & Winton, 2005) researchers found that just under 60% of associate and bachelors level programs in early childhood education offer at least one families course. Outcome recommendations from this study suggest that all teacher preparation programs provide not only course work on this topic, but hands-on learning opportunities as well.

Leaders in the Division for Early Childhood (DEC), a special interest group of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), suggest that practitioners who work in

early intervention settings be prepared to work with families encompassing a variety of cultural, language and ethnic backgrounds (Sewell, 2012). For early childhood educators, working with children and families of differing economic and cultural backgrounds is common within the practice of home visiting. This practice further emphasizes the need for preservice early childhood candidates to learn strategies for successfully working with these families. In light of these needs, identifying meaningful learning experiences for students that provide them with opportunities to interact with families and observe practitioners in action is key (Couse & Chorzempa, 2005). One such strategy that has been found to be effective is service learning (Baker & Murray, 2011).

The Value of Service Learning

Service learning (SL) is a widely utilized strategy in higher education for providing direct real world experiences that relate to course content (Freeman & Knopf, 2007). Research suggests that SL experiences are successful in changing cultural and social bias (Dunn-Kenney, 2010) while helping to reinforce the learning objectives in both general and special education coursework (Baldwin, Buchanan & Rudisill, 2007). As compared to more traditional forms of field experiences, SL is a teaching strategy that integrates course content with relevant community service. Through course assignments and class discussions, students are given a forum to critically reflect on the service in order to deepen their understanding of course content (Brandes & Randall, 2011). Recommendations for utilizing service learning in college coursework includes guided discussion, confrontation of stereotypes facilitated by the instructor, and repeated and varied experiences in service learning sites (Sullivan-Catlin, 2002).

SL is an evidence-based practical response to the Carnegie Report (1998), which calls for improved pedagogy at the university level recommending inquiry-based learning, involvement in research processes, and cultivating a sense of community. SL provides opportunities for community collaboration and enhanced student learning while allowing students to apply knowledge and resources gained through traditional coursework (Briody, 2005). Through SL, a "win-win situation" can occur in that the university student is given real life learning opportunities and the community partner is provided with a service that may not otherwise be accessible given time and financial restraints (Baker & Murray, 2011). Faculty working with preservice early childhood/early childhood special education students may find value in furthering a sense of service among students, while helping them to connect previous knowledge with field experiences.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of SL on ECE/ECSE preservice teachers' perceptions of and skill set for working with families from a variety of community settings and programs. The results of this study will directly

inform the design and implementation of the current course content and syllabus. In an effort to be responsive to the learning needs of students, this study sought to determine if SL is an effective strategy for delivering course content. The goal of this study was to longitudinally determine the potential impact of the SL experiences given a variety of students over a five-year period. This article summarizes the data collected in year one. Specifically, this study focused on answering the following research questions:

> 1. What impact does SL have on the perceptions of preservice early childhood special education students who are working with families from differing social, cultural and economic backgrounds?

> 2. How do these SL experiences impact the preservice teachers' self-efficacy for working with families from backgrounds differing from their own?

> 3. Does the use of SL as a mediated learning strategy help students to apply content learned in class and improve their engagement with families?

Methods

This study utilized qualitative methods to answer the research questions. Data were gathered through weekly journal submissions, small group discussions and a final group project (i.e., research poster). As defined by Brantlinger, Jimenez, Klinger, Pugach, and Richardson (2005), "qualitative research is a systematic approach to understanding qualities, or the essential nature, of a phenomenon within a particular context" (p. 195). Qualitative research can also be used to explore attitudes, describe settings, and explain the impact that one practice has on an individual (Brantlinger et al.).

Participants

The participants for this study included 27 female students who were taking an undergraduate course focused on building partnerships with families in early childhood settings. The majority of students were Early Childhood Education/Early Childhood Special Education majors between the ages of 18 and 25. The majority of students reported having prior experience with volunteering, but only half of those had previously participated in SL.

At the beginning of the semester, a colleague of the course professor came to class to ask students if they would be willing to participate in the study. Students were informed that participation was optional and that their identity would be protected and would not impact their grade. If students chose not to participate, they still completed all SL activities and course assignments, but their work was not analyzed. All student data was de-identified by removing names from assignments. All data was stored in a locked file cabinet and was not analyzed until final grades had been posted for the semester.

Setting and Projects

Students chose between five different sites for their SL experience. Before signing up for a site, representatives from each agency came to class to provide an overview of their project and requirements for participation. At this time, students were also given the chance to ask questions. The five sites included a day shelter and educational program for homeless families and children, a center providing English services for refugee families, a local Head Start, a Muscular Dystrophy support group, and a local learning center for children with learning disabilities. Sites for this class were chosen based on their previous work with the university Service Learning Department and their stated interest in working with undergraduate education students.

Students participated in their SL site for a total of 15 hours during the semester. Hours could be completed on a weekly basis or in concentrated periods of time based on the nature of their project. Each site lead met with the instructor for the course before the start of the semester to identify a basic framework for the agency project. Some projects required more independent work including researching local resources and developing materials. Other sites included more hands-on experiences like attending support groups and planning family events. See Table 1 for details about each site and project.

Data Collection Strategies

Data for this study were collected through small group discussions in class, reflection journals and a final course project. Data collection tools were chosen based on the identified research questions. In an effort to understand how perceptions shifted over the semester, a structured journal assignment (i.e., a list of questions guiding the weekly assignment) was collected and was later analyzed for themes. See Table 2 for the list of journal prompts. Small group discussions that were audio recorded were also used two times per month to further understand changes in perception and students' feelings about their own skill set for working with families.

To better understand SL as a mediated learning strategy, a final group project was assigned that required students to prepare a research poster that summarized their project and identified lessons learned. For the poster students were asked to describe their SL project, specific learning goals for participants, and reflect on what they learned from the experience and how that related to course content. These posters were also included as a third source of data in an effort to triangulate findings.

Data Management and Analysis

A constant comparative method of analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006) was used to identify patterns in student experiences during the course of the semester. This analysis took place in three major phases. During phase one, small group discussion recordings were reviewed and transcribed into text. Transcripts were read and initial themes were identified. Weekly journal reflections were then

read and a list of identified themes across data sources were transformed into a codebook. Last, the student group projects were analyzed to confirm the presence of the themes defined in the codebook. Throughout the analysis the researcher and a graduate research assistant hired to work on the project applied a reiterative process to refine identified themes.

During phase two, the themes identified in the initial analysis were used to

Table 1
Student Placements in Service Learning (SL) Sites

SL Site	Project focus	# of students at site	# of hours required	Type of project
Corpus Christi House and Education Center	Corpus Christi House and Education Center is a day shelter for the homeless where adults and children receive tutoring for GED preparation. Students worked with the education coordinator to develop a weekend play and learn time for parents to learn strategies for interacting with their young child surrounding structured activities.	8	15	face-to-face
English Language Center	The English Language Center provides English language training to refugees and other language learners. Students conducted home visits where they interviewed parents regarding early home literacy practices. This data was then used to develop an early family literacy class.	10	15	face-to-face
Head Start/ Friends of Children & Families, Inc.	Head Start/Friends of Children & Families, Inc. provides early childhood education to children from income-eligible families and to children with physical and developmental challenges. Students helped to develop a set of visuals used to explain to parents the process of early identification and supports provided under IDEA.	6	15	mixed
Muscular Dystrophy Association	The Muscular Dystrophy Association is a voluntary health agency aimed at conquering neuromuscular diseases. Students worked with members of the parent support group to develop a list of local resources for families and children.	3	15	mixed
Lee Pesky Learning Center	The Lee Pesky Learning Center aims to improve the lives of those that learn differently through prevention, evaluation, treatment, and research. Students helped to research apps that promote early literacy and numeracy skills in young children with disabilities.	4	15	research

Note. Face-to-face=hands-on learning opportunities, Research=activities including gathering information and putting together resource materials, Mixed=a mix of both hands-on and research based activities.

code the journal reflections, transcripts from the small groups, and final student projects. Following this initial coding, a tally was taken of each individual code to determine the strength of the theme in the data set. For "weaker" themes (i.e., those with less than ten tallies) the definition was discussed to determine if it needed further clarification or could be collapsed into another major theme. A second coder who was not involved directly in the study was asked to verify the codes using the newly revised codebook.

During phase three, data were further analyzed to identify themes that shifted over time. Connections between early and later journal reflections and small group discussions were identified and agreed upon by the researcher, graduate student and outside coder. In addition, individual groups (i.e., students in the same project sites) were compared to ensure that themes were evident across and within groups. Last, quotes supporting identified themes were organized and non examples were identified.

Establishing Credibility

In an effort to establish credibility, multiple data sources were used for collection including discussion groups, reflective student journals and a review of the final group poster project. When themes were identified during analysis, evidence for that theme was supported by all three sources in an effort to triangulate data (Glesne, 2006). During analysis of the data, peer debriefing occurred with both the graduate research assistant and the department graduate assistant. Weekly debriefing occurred between the researcher and research assistant and bimonthly debriefing occurred with the department graduate assistant.

Table 2
Sample Journal Prompts

Week	Question
3	What are your initial thoughts on participating in a service learning project this semester? What are you looking forward to? What are you worried about? What do you hope to learn? At this point, what project do you plan to sign up for?
6	Reflect on your first experiences in your service learning site. What have you done so far? What has been interesting/exciting? What has been challenging? What questions do you have so far?
8	Describe the types of partnerships you have observed in your service-learning site. Discuss each of the seven principles of partnership and how those relate to these relationships. What have you seen evidence of? What areas do you feel need more attention?
11	Think about your own strengths and weaknesses in the area of communication. How do you think this will impact your work with families in your future job setting? What kinds of strategies have you observed in your service-learning placement?
13	How does has this experience added to our understanding of families, culture, and building collaborative relationships between home and school?
15	How can we as educational professionals play a part in developing more successful school/home partnerships?

Results

Several themes were identified throughout the course of the study. These themes were present across all participant groups (i.e., groups defined by the site projects) and data sources (i.e., journals, small groups and course project). Of the themes identified, each appeared to shift as the course progressed and students became familiar with their agency. For example, at the start of the study, students voiced a desire to help those at their SL placement sites, but they didn't know how. As the study progressed, students learned how to help using the Seven Principles of Partnership (Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, Soodak & Shogren, 2011) discussed in class. This resulted in students having a better understanding of the importance and value of volunteering in their communities. Also, at the beginning of the study, students made assumptions and judgments about the population being served at their SL sites based solely on prior experience. By the end of the study, students' perceptions had changed; they were more understanding and less judgmental of the populations with whom they worked. They also expressed feeling more prepared to work effectively with a variety of families.

I Want to Help!

At the onset of this study, students approached their SL project with excitement, anxiety, and a sense that their experience would be beneficial to their personal and professional lives. In Week 3, several students reported a desire to contribute to their SL placement sites and their community as a whole. A few students also mentioned gratitude for this opportunity and being able to help those in need. One student stated, "I have not had the courage or the free time to do this on my own and I am happy that I am going to get this opportunity."

Some students expressed excitement for hands-on experiences and the opportunity to apply strategies learned in school in real world settings. As one student explained, "I think the service projects will give us valuable hands-on experiences that will help tie the class to real life."

Some students also expressed anxiety, as they were unsure of what to expect in their SL site. Some feared appearing foolish or incompetent in the midst of experienced professionals. Others were concerned about time commitments and being able to balance work with school. For example one student expressed, "To be completely honest, the service learning project for this semester initially makes me a bit stressed because of the time commitment."

Other students expressed a desire to help those at their SL sites, but said they didn't know how to help and despite their good intentions, felt like they were not making a beneficial contribution. As stated by one student, "I felt lost and that I did not have the skills to meet the need. I want to help, but I am not sure what my role will be."

Another student who was helping to find and organize applications for children

with disabilities explained, "I have found this project very challenging in the fact that I don't completely know what I am doing or if I am helping."

Applying What I Learned. As the semester progressed and students spent more time working with the individuals at their SL sites, they learned that in order to help, they needed to collaborate with other people using the Seven Principles of Partnership (Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, Soodak & Shogren, 2011) discussed in class. As stated by one student, "As each week of class passed, I felt more prepared and confident to enact what I was learning." Another student commented, "I feel like I have some tools to use with these families based on the activities and readings from class."

One student expressed the importance of demonstrating respect between professionals and families in order to build a collaborative team saying, "One thing that I learned in class that I use in my site is the importance of respect for those that you may be working with and to listen." Another student spoke of the importance of commitment in working together as a team saying, "I think teamwork is one area that I learned a lot about in class and I definitely use this in my site."

The Value of Volunteering. By the end of the semester, most students perceived their SL experiences to be worthwhile and valuable. These students mentioned a desire to continue volunteering at their placement sites, finding opportunities to make a meaningful impact, and hoped to apply the knowledge they took away from their experiences to their profession. For many of these students, SL became a rewarding experience instead of just a class assignment. One student expressed, "The experiences that I gain from this service learning placement will not only help me in my career as a teacher but in my own personal life as well." Another student said, "After volunteering, I feel confident I have gained more insight to working with diverse families, different techniques, strategies, and tools to incorporate into my work." A student summarized their SL experience saying, "Service learning is a great experience to have. It puts a meaning behind the information you get from class."

Confronting Assumptions

A second major theme that was evident in the data was a shift in perception regarding how the students viewed those populations with whom they were working. At the beginning of the study, students made assumptions about their populations. As stated by one student, "Having never worked with the homeless population, I was under the impression that most of the people, would be sharp in attitude and somewhat rude." Another student remarked about homeless individuals, "I see them on the street and I assume they are on drugs or don't have any family who cares about them." A student commented, "I was also afraid that I would offend them or that they would be mean and not want my help."

A Shift in Perception. As the semester progressed, students reported that they were gaining insight into the lives of others that differed from previously held as-

sumptions. One student who was working at a refugee agency wrote, "Soon after I started volunteering I realized their characteristics were totally the reverse of what I had expected." Another student who worked at a homeless shelter expressed, "I found out that I was completely wrong when I walked in the doors the first Tuesday night I visited."

Students confronted prejudice, stereotypes, and fear. Many found that the reality of their experiences were not as overwhelming as expected. Several reflected on how they felt better prepared to work with diverse groups in the future. For example, one student mentioned, "I learned that the saying 'you can't judge a book by its cover' is definitely true." Another student described, "Somewhere along the way during my service learning experience, I lost the fear of working with families different from my own." One student added, " I was no longer unsure about myself or my abilities to interact with families."

Discussion

Several key findings from this study demonstrate the usefulness of SL as a tool for preparing preservice teachers for working with families. Although students felt anxious about these experiences, they also found meaning through interactions with families and agency providers. Through these experiences, students were able to identify the value of developing collaborative partnerships with families and the importance of volunteerism. Assumptions previously held were also confronted through hands-on learning experiences and were reflected in journal submissions and small group discussions. Findings in relation to the research questions posed at the start of this study are discussed below.

Is Service Learning an Effective Mediated Learning Strategy?

Hands-on learning opportunities for preservice teachers are invaluable. Having the chance to apply materials and ideas learned in class to the real world helps to bridge the gap between theory and practice. When teaching students to work with families, the college classroom should be just one of the settings for learning and applying strategies. Traditionally, case studies, roleplaying and video have been used to provide students with opportunities to practice what they are learning (Staples & Diliberto, 2010). Although these strategies may be sufficient, having "real life" opportunities to practice strategies in the field is more effective. These opportunities assist students in "understanding by doing" by helping them to formulate solutions to real problems, better understand the specific needs of a population, and experience roles they may hold in their future profession. As Kolb (1984) argues, acquiring content does not transform the individual, rather transformation occurs as the student interfaces with content and reflects on what was learned.

As an instructional strategy, SL is intentional and explicit as it helps students link learning objectives to experiences in the field (Freeman & Knopf, 2007). In this

class, a forum was established which allowed students to reflect on their experiences throughout the semester by critically thinking about what they saw in their service learning sites and how that related to course content. Small group discussions during class time further allowed students to hear ideas from classmates, which helped to both confirm and challenge perceptions gained in fieldwork. The final presentation helped students to reflect on their experiences and highlight areas where they were able to contribute, providing a framework for self-exploration and identification of skills attained through the project.

What Impact Does Service Learning Have on Student Self-Efficacy?

When it comes to the field of EC/ECSE, working with families is at the heart of our practice. Students should be given the opportunity to interact with families representing a variety of backgrounds to determine if this is a role they are comfortable with (Baum & Swick, 2008; Sewell, 2012). Based on Dewey's theory of education, in order for students to bring meaning into existence, they must have an opportunity to engage in the world (Couse & Chorzempa, 2005). At the start of the study students expressed apprehension at the thought of working directly with parents. As the study progressed, students were able to start identifying their future roles in working with families and the importance of collaboration. As students gained tools and an expanded view of teaching and working with families, their voices became more confident and focused. Instead of fearing collaboration, they began identifying tools and concepts from the course that they were using or planned to use to more effectively build relationships with families and coworkers.

In particular, the Seven Principles of Partnership (Turnbull, et al., 2011) were referenced by several students. These principles include communication, professional competence, respect, trust, commitment, equality and advocacy. Students referenced the need for implementing these principles when interacting with both families and other professionals. Instead of simply discussing these key principles, students were able to connect the content to actual practice at their sites. The real value of these principles became evident in the way students described the importance of building trust and demonstrating respect. By identifying specific concepts and strategies that they were currently using or planned to use in the future, students demonstrated that their "bag of tricks" was growing.

What Impact Does Service Learning Have on Student Perception?

Working with a variety of families from differing backgrounds is a characteristic of practice in the field of EC/ECSE. Students were upfront at the start of the class as they openly discussed their perceptions of the families who were being served at their site. When probed further, students also explained that these views were based on limited personal experiences. By immersing themselves in the community at their site, many students were able to openly identify how their initial views had changed regarding the families that were being served at the agency.

As the semester progressed, students' comments were based on experiences and facts they learned from their mentors at the site. In addition, course materials and class discussions helped facilitate changes in perception as the weeks progressed. By confronting prejudice, stereotypes and assumptions, students gained an expanded view of their own limitations and the families with which they will work once in the field. As Densmore (2000) describes several benefits for students and teachers participating in and learning about social change including helping to clarify the reality of institutional inequalities, clarifying the relationship between various forms of oppression and highlighting the importance of citizenship and volunteerism. Boyle-Baise and Efiom (2000) further suggest that service learning can foster an increased awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity and motivate prospective teachers to examine their own prejudicial and stereotypical beliefs. Providing opportunities where students can further explore their own beliefs and how they influence their interactions with colleagues and families is especially important in the field of early childhood special education given the diverse nature of families they will encounter.

Limitations

There are several limitations that can be identified in this study. First, this research was conducted in one class in one university program. By conducting research on this project over an extended period of time, the authors hope to identify themes that may be valuable to other teacher preparation professionals dealing with similar issues. Another limitation of this study is the lack of varied data sources. Although triangulation did occur with small group discussions, a final project and journals, sources of data that provide a deeper understanding of the issues are needed. Future plans to include surveys and interviews will address these limitations.

Implications for Practice and Future Research

The lack of preparation for working collaboratively with families at the preservice and inservice level is well documented (Staples & Diliberto, 2010). If adequate training is not occurring at either the preservice or inservice level, it is no surprise that teachers report a lack of skill and confidence in this area. Given the importance of building collaborative relationships with families and its potential impact on programming, efforts to work with teachers at both the preservice and inservice level is essential. Universities and local school districts should work to identify ways in which preparation at the preservice level can be complimented and strengthened at the inservice level. Addressing these needs at both levels provides a more unified approach to improving practice in this area.

Future research in this area should continue to focus on the use of SL as a mediated learning strategy for helping preservice teachers learn to work with families. Researchers should focus on determining the types of service learning experiences that are most beneficial. This would include the types of experiences students have,

their level of participation, the amount of time in the field and the level of support from both the university and agency. In addition, future research should work to identify reliable quantitative tools for measuring student self-efficacy.

The results of this study are aimed at informing teacher educators who are working with preservice EC/ECSE students about the potential benefits of using SL in their coursework. Teacher educators may find SL to be a valuable strategy in helping students to bridge the content learned in class to the field. By considering this gap between theory and practice, teacher educators may identify service learning strategies as a viable option for improving student outcomes.

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Critics and Critical Analysis:
Lessons from 19,000 P-12 Students
in Candidates' Classrooms

By Jacqueline Waggoner, James B. Carroll,
Hillary Merk, & Bruce N. Weitzel

   Ever since the 2000 revision to the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education's (NCATE; 2013b) standards, schools of education have searched for the most productive ways to measure candidates' impact on student learning. This has been no easy task (Hamel & Merz, 2005). Although candidates are often in student teaching experiences for the better part of a year, the ability to measure candidates' impact on student learning is mitigated by the degree to which the cooperating teacher or university supervisor assists the candidates, the length and continuity of instruction that the candidates provide, and the type and number of assessments the candidates may use. These problems are exacerbated by the difficulties in gathering student learning data that are comparable across candidates, programs, and even schools of education.
   NCATE realized these problems but did not remove the expectation for measuring candidates' impact on student learning. It suggested a cluster of candidate activities that might provide the required evidence. A candidate (a) undertakes a diagnosis (a pretest) or P-12 student learning in some area he or she will teach; (b) plans an

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appropriate sequence of instruction to advance P-12 student learning and teaches in ways that engage P-12 students, who bring differing background knowledge and learning needs; (c) conducts some concluding assessment (or posttest) that documents that student learning has occurred, or has not; and (d) reflects on changes in teaching that might have improved the results (NCATE, 2013a, Assessment 5).

The merger of the Teacher Education Accreditation Council with NCATE into the Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation (CAEP) included standards that continue the focus on measuring candidates' impact on student learning (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2013):

> *Impact on P–12 student learning*
> 4.1 The provider documents, using value-added measures where available, other state-supported P-12 impact measures, and any other measures constructed by the provider, that program completers contribute to an expected level of P-12 student growth.

No consistent strategies for gathering student learning data have appeared, even though these accreditation standards have existed for some time. The highly promoted Education Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) focuses on using student summative assessment for the whole class and for three students in candidates' classrooms to understand the impact of instruction (American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education, 2013). Those data can vary in type and richness, reducing the comparability across candidates or programs; nor are these data measures of student learning gains per se.

Value-added measures (VAM) have been added into the accreditation language over recent years. These measures include the analysis of standardized assessments of student learning designed to address differences in classrooms and students to have equitable comparisons of teacher impact. In most cases, VAM would not be possible for candidates to use because of the small amount of time that candidates student-teach by themselves with the curriculum for which the standardized assessment is designed. Louisiana, among other states (Knight et al., 2012), has addressed this problem by applying VAM assessments to the P-12 students of their candidates who have been tracked into their first years of teaching. Regardless of the efficacy of this approach, it does not address the difficulties that schools of education have tracking an individual candidate's impact on student learning while student teaching and tracking the impact of the program on the candidate's progress over the time the candidate is in the unit's program.

After an NCATE review in 2007, we began an effort to have candidates report results on P-12 assessments aligned with units of instruction. After a lengthy development process, for 5 years, we have systematically gathered data on learning gains for each P-12 student in every teacher candidate's classroom. The result is a database of demographic data and learning gain scores for 19,334 P-12 students. These data provide a rich resource for understanding the progress of our candidates and the

impact of our programs. This study examines the impact on program improvement of systematically gathering P-12 student learning data over a 5-year period.

Methods

This study was completed over 5 academic years (2008-2009 to 2012-2013) in a teacher preparation program in northwest Oregon. Data were gathered from two student teaching experiences of teacher candidates during the fall and spring semesters of their practicum experience. The candidates were completing either a 10-month master of arts in teaching (MAT) program or a 4-year, undergraduate licensure program (see Table 1). Practica in these programs occurred in both private and public schools in Oregon and Washington. Oregon divides teacher certification into four levels: early childhood, elementary school, middle school, and high school. Candidates receive authorization at two levels of certification. Placements of candidates in this study represented all four of these levels.

In Oregon, candidates are required to prepare and teach a unit of instruction during each of the student teaching experiences. The design of these units of instruction followed the teacher work sample methodology. Candidates gathered data on the context of the school in which they were teaching, wrote goals for the unit of instruction based on Oregon State curriculum standards, designed and delivered instructional activities for the unit, prepared and administered preassessments and summative assessments of student learning, were video recorded teaching a lesson, and wrote prompted reflections on the process. The work sample was prepared as an artifact of the student teaching experience, and the evaluation of the work sample was a major component of measuring candidate readiness for teaching.

In 1997, the State of Oregon rewrote the administrative rules governing teacher licensure. A description of the specific requirements for the work sample was included in that revision. As part of the assessment requirements, candidates were instructed to gather "data on learning gains resulting from instruction, analyzed for each student, and summarized in relation to students' level of knowledge prior to instruction" (Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, 2013, OAR

Table 1
Candidates by Program and Semester

	2008-2009		2009-2010		2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Undergrad.	36	38	43	42	34	35	20	28	25	30
MAT	36	40	66	61	46	40	29	36	26	34
Total	72	78	109	103	80	75	49	64	51	64

Note. MAT = master of arts in teaching program.

584-017-1030). The candidates in this study were specifically asked to measure levels of student knowledge at the beginning of the unit of instruction with a preassessment and then to use a matched summative assessment when the unit concluded.

At the end of each of the student teaching experiences, candidates filled out a preformatted Excel spreadsheet that included information for each of the students in their classrooms on gender, ethnicity, identified learning needs, the preassessment score, and the summative assessment score. Learning needs were coded following No Child Left Behind guidelines as English language learner, talented and gifted, special education, and those students on 504 Learning Plans. To compare progress that these students were making with the progress of students who did not have identified learning needs, a fifth coding category of no identified need was used for all other students. The Oregon licensure authorization level was identified for each candidate classroom experience. Candidates produced work samples in placements at two levels of authorization within their programs (early childhood, elementary school, middle school, or high school). The fall experience was in their second preference level of authorization, and the spring experience was in their preferred level. Additionally, the content area of the unit of instruction (analysis was limited to the core areas of language arts, social studies, math, and science) was identified. After candidates electronically submitted their spreadsheets to a records clerk, we identified the socioeconomic status (SES) of the school in which the candidate had been working. Oregon rank orders all schools by SES using a computation based on four measures of economic status of families in the school, and quartile rankings were developed from this list. For schools that were not included on this list (private schools and candidate placements in southwest Washington), median family income for the school community was compared to ranked Oregon schools to assign a comparable SES quartile.

The candidate listed on the spreadsheet the maximum possible score for each assessment. Student scores were then translated into percentage correct scores. The summative assessment scores were used as the best indicator of whether students had met unit goals. Learning gains were computed as the difference between the preassessment and the summative assessment scores. Data from each of the submitted Excel spreadsheets were reformatted and transferred to a single worksheet. The final database included data on gender, ethnicity, identified learning needs, content area of instruction, school SES, authorization level, postassessments as percentage correct, learning gains as percentage increase, the program in which the candidate was enrolled, and the semester in which the unit of instruction was completed.

Summative assessment scores and learning gains (differences between pretest and posttest percentage correct scores) were used as dependent variables in analyses of variance of each of the demographic variables ($á=.05$). These analyses were repeated for both fall and spring data. Bonferroni post hoc analysis was used because of the repeated analysis of the same dependent variable data (Castaiieda, Levin, & Dunham, 1993).

Discussion of Effect Size (Cohen's d)

Effect size was determined using pooled standard deviations divided into mean differences of statistically significant ANOVA comparisons—Cohen's *d* (Cohen, 1988). The identification of statistical significance in large samples is problematic. Kish (1959) stated,

> In small samples significant, that is, meaningful, results may fail to appear *statistically significant*. But, if the sample is large enough the most insignificant relationships will appear statistically significant. . . . The word significance should be attached to another question, a substantive question, Is the relationship here worth explaining? (p. 336)

In this study, sample sizes are inordinately large for studies of educational phenomena. We expected the results to demonstrate statistical significance in almost every comparison but wanted to focus on those comparisons that had effect sizes large enough to warrant further examination. Our hope was that evidence would show no statistical differences, indicating candidates were addressing the needs of all P-12 students equitably. This seemed unlikely to happen because of the very large number of P-12 students from whom we had data. We adopted Cohen's (1988) view of effect sizes of *d*=.2 as representing small effect sizes. An effect size greater than .2 potentially represents real differences that could indicate inconsistencies in how candidates impacted student learning.

Disposition of Results for Continuous Program Improvement

Results of the yearly analysis of data were presented to the School of Education Assessment Committee, and recommendations for program improvement based on the data were forwarded to the full faculty of the School of Education for approval and implementation.

Results

Preassessment and summative assessment scores were reported for 19,334 P-12 students over a 5-year period in 720 classrooms led by 360 teacher candidates. Scores were converted to percentage correct to standardize results across candidate experiences. Learning gain scores representing the difference between preassessment and summative assessment percentage correct scores were computed. There were 19,208 useable learning gain scores with a grand mean of 35.17 and a standard deviation of 25.85. The percentage learning gain scores ranged from -66.67 to 100.00. ANOVA analysis of percentage learning gain scores was completed for each of the independent variables: program type, program semester, level of endorsement, school SES, gender, ethnicity, learning needs, and content area.

Five-Year Data Summary

Mean percentage learning gains for P-12 students by gender was 37.64 for girls and 36.59 for boys (see Table 2). Scores were statistically significantly different (p=.005) with a very small effect size of .04.

Mean percentage learning gains by ethnicity (see Table 3) were statistically significantly different for Black and Hispanic students with White (non-Hispanic) students (p<.001) and Asian students (p=.013 when compared with Black and p=.041 when compared with Hispanic). Effect sizes did not exceed .13. The percentage of non-White (including Hispanic) students in this study was 38.2%. The 2010 Portland-area non-White (including Hispanic) population was reported to be 27.8% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014).

Mean percentage learning gains by learning needs (see Table 4) showed that English language learners and students identified in special education had statistically significantly lower learning gain scores than students identified as talented and gifted and students for whom no learning need was identified (p<.001). Effect sizes were .15 for talented and gifted comparisons and .18 for comparisons with students with no identified learning need.

Table 2
Mean Percentage Learning Gain for P-12 Students by Gender

	n	*M*	*SD*
Girls	9,014	37.64	25.40
Boys	8,786	36.59	25.22

Note. p=.005; Cohen's d=.04.

Table 3
Mean Percentage Learning Gain for P-12 Students by Ethnicity

				p (Cohen's *d*)	
	n	*M*	*SD*	Black	Hispanic
Black	1,387	34.69	24.65		
White (non-Hispanic)	10,892	38.02	25.13\	<.001 (.13)	<.001 (.11)
Hispanic	2,293	35.27	25.79		
Asian	1,395	38.02	26.57	.013 (.13)	.041 (.10)
American Indian/ Pacific Islander	261	36.76	27.61		
Mixed	896	35.54	26.26		
Other	494	34.61	23.14		

Candidates pursued licensure at four endorsement levels: early childhood (Grades P-4), elementary school (Grades 3-8), middle school (Grades 5-9), and high school (Grades 9-12). Mean percentage learning gain scores by endorsement level (see Table 5) showed scores increasing progressively from younger-level endorsements to older-level endorsements. All comparisons were statistically significantly different ($p<.001$). Effect sizes ranged from .16 between middle school and high school to .63 between early childhood and high school.

Candidates were enrolled in either a 4-year undergraduate teacher licensure program or a 10-month MAT program. No statistically significant differences appeared in the comparison of mean percentage learning gains for the two groups.

The socioeconomic levels of schools were identified through the median gross income of residents in a school's ZIP code. All schools were then separated into quartile groups based on that statistic. Mean percentage learning gain by school socioeconomic level showed statistically significant comparisons between low-SES middle schools and all others (see Table 6). In addition, low-SES schools had statistically significantly lower mean percentage learning gain scores than high-SES

Table 4
Mean Percentage Learning Gain for P-12 Students by Learning Need

	n	M	SD	ELL	SPED
				p (Cohen's *d*)	
ELL	1,507	33.29	25.51		
TAG	1,332	37.16	27.63	.001 (.15)	.004 (.15)
SPED	1,076	33.35	24.89		
None	13,603	37.77	25.09	<.001 (.18)	<.001 (.18)

Note. ELL=English language learner. SPED=special education. TAG=talented and gifted.

Table 5
Mean Percentage Learning Gain for P-12 Students by Endorsement Level

	n	M	SD	Early Childhood	Elementary	Middle
				p (Cohen's *d*)		
Early childhood	4,061	29.40	23.43			
Elementary	5,960	35.57	24.89	<.001 (.26)		
Middle	4,555	40.67	25.51	<.001 (.46)	<.001 (.20)	
High	3,241	44.60	25.09	<.001 (.63)	<.001 (.36)	<.001 (.16)

middle schools. Effect sizes ranged from .17 (low middle-high middle comparison) to .08 (low-high middle comparison).

The content area of the unit of instruction from which learning gain scores were derived was identified for each P-12 student. Eleven hundred student scores were from units of instruction in a variety of content areas that could not be coded into the majority content areas of language arts, social studies, math, or science. Data from those units were not included in the mean percentage learning gain analysis by content area (see Table 7). Comparison of scores among the four remaining content areas were all statistically significantly different ($p<.001$). Language arts unit learning gain scores were the lowest (28.69), and social studies unit learning gain scores were the highest (45.68). Effect sizes ranged from .09 in the comparison of math and science units to .70 in the comparison of language arts and social studies units of instruction.

Candidates gathered assessment data from units of instruction completed in two semesters. The fall semester placement was the initial student teaching experience and was done at the second level of licensure endorsement in which the candidates

Table 6
Mean Percentage Learning Gain for P-12 Students by School Socioeconomic Level Quartile

	n	M	SD	p (Cohen's d)	
				Low	Low middle
Low	3,514	36.67	26.40		
Low middle	3,978	34.51	23.73	.001 (.09)	
High middle	2,999	38.69	25.93	.011 (.08)	<.001 (.17)
High	6,952	37.79	25.48		<.001 (.13)

Table 7
Mean Percentage Learning Gain for P-12 Students by Content Area of the Unit of Instruction

	n	M	SD	p (Cohen's d)		
				Language arts	Social studies	Math
Language arts	4,566	28.69	23.42			
Social studies	3,469	45.68	25.07	<.001 (.70)		
Math	3,526	38.99	24.50	<.001 (.42)	<.001 (.27)	
Science	4,549	36.66	25.51	<.001 (.32)	<.001 (.36)	<.001 (.09)

were interested. The spring student teaching experience was longer and was completed at the level at which the candidate hoped to work when hired. Table 8 shows that the mean percentage learning gain scores were statistically significantly higher in the spring (second) student teaching experience ($p<.001$). The effect size of the comparison of the two experiences was .28.

Program Changes Resulting From Data Analysis

The faculty members of the School of Education are committed to using data for continuous program improvement. Analyzing comparable data over a 5-year time period provides an opportunity to track candidate progress and programmatic decisions. The data analysis process has the potential to reveal changes over time as faculty members, adjunct instructors, university supervisors, and curricula change. It is a reality, though, that analyzing data from P-12 students is only as good as the assessment procedures used to gather those data—garbage in, garbage out.

To promote higher quality data out of this process, attention was paid to developing candidates' ability to construct assessments. Assessment instructors added instruction in the development of preassessment and summative assessment instruments and designs. Candidates were shown the previous years' learning gain results; they discussed the importance of having a matched preassessment and summative assessment and that assessments needed to be written to measure the standards-based goals in their units of instruction. University supervisors participated in sessions each fall in which there was an emphasis on monitoring candidate assessment designs. As a program, the complete assessment system was examined and redesigned to focus on student learning gains as part of meeting national accreditation standards.

The data also pointed to deficits on the part of the candidates enrolled in our 10-month MAT program in the areas of special education and technology, in addition to their struggles to write good assessments. Experiences were added to the MAT curriculum to address those deficits.

Because of the specificity of the data generated from candidate classrooms, we were able to make the most accurate assessments that we had ever been able to accomplish in the areas of diversity and SES of the classrooms and schools in which our candidates were placed. Consequently, we refocused efforts on placing

Table 8
Mean Percentage Learning Gain for P-12 Students
by Unit of Instruction Semester

	n	*M*	*SD*
Fall	8,786	33.81	24.75
Spring	9,054	40.26	25.45

Note. $p<.001$; Cohen's *d*=.28.

candidates in more ethnically and economically diverse schools. Candidates now list 40% of their P-12 students in non-White (including Hispanic) categories, while the diversity of the Portland area shows approximately 27% non-White (including Hispanic) individuals. Likewise, we monitor the levels of SES of our placement schools each year.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact on program improvement of systematically gathering P-12 student learning data over a 5-year period. To these ends, the most gratifying finding is that candidates can demonstrate a positive impact on student learning that is generally equivalent for P-12 students of all ethnicities and learning needs. Specifically, we identified either no statistically significant learning gain differences among P-12 students or any differences identified showed small effect sizes. These small effect sizes do not warrant major changes in program design. These data were congruent with data from our observational instruments that indicated our candidates could differentiate instruction and meet the needs of all learners.

Some findings suggest deeper investigation and will be a natural extension of this initial work. The differences in percentage learning gain scores are pronounced when compared for each of the four major content areas, showing language arts percentage learning gains that are significantly lower. This appears to be an effect of significantly higher preassessment scores for early childhood and elementary language arts students over those in other content areas. Additionally, mean percentage learning gain scores increased steadily as we examined endorsement levels with early childhood as the lowest and high school as the highest, suggesting a needed examination of assessment instruments and instructional practices. Some of these differences may be due to the forms of assessment used at each grade level. It is more typical for math and science candidates to construct assessments of 50 to 100 items, whereas early childhood candidates may conduct a performance assessment of 10 items using a 4-point rubric. For SES-level investigations, it needs to be explored why learning gains were higher among students of the middle-high socioeconomic level.

From a program point of view, the implementation and use of these assessments has had numerous positive impacts. Not only have they helped candidates learn to differentiate instruction in their classrooms but also they have provided them with substantive data to demonstrate their success in the classroom. It has been helpful that our program has data to demonstrate concrete P-12 student learning gains when our candidates are teaching as our placement director attempts to secure student teaching placements in a highly competitive market of several teacher education programs in the same geographical area. The data from the assessments have been an important part of program redesign and a focus for discussion within the fac-

ulty of program impact. The description of the process of gathering the data and examining the results assisted in supporting our assessment plan for accreditation and contributed to us to receiving Commendations in the Assessment and Diversity Standards.

As we move toward CAEP accreditation, it is important to focus even more intensely on measures of student learning. As the CAEP (2014) commission articulates, "the concept of teacher impact on P-12 student learning measures as a basis for judging preparation occurs throughout the standards, and includes measures at both the pre-service and in-service levels" (p. 22). The work of the last 5 years has produced a stable foundation for us to continue to improve our program to support our candidates and ultimately the P-12 learning that takes place in our graduates' future classrooms.

Oregon has just become an edTPA state. Thus our School of Education will be redesigning curricula and assessments to prepare candidates to pass the edTPA. One of the considerations is what will be the role of our current process of collecting data on P-12 learning gains. Initial indications are that faculty members are committed to continuing this process.

Methodologically, we realize that these measures only compose one data source in the array of multiple assessment tools that we use to understand candidate competency and program impact. But the data gathered refute voices that suggest candidate impact cannot be demonstrated in teacher preparation programs. Another concern is that placing student teachers in classrooms results in lower achievement for many P-12 subgroups. Again, these data point to other interpretations of what is happening in candidate classrooms. Candidates are able to show teachers and principals the learning gains in assessment scores that occur while the candidates are responsible for the instruction.

From a program development point of view, gathering these data has required iterative examination of the processes involved in assessing candidates and a focus on improving the quality of the assessments the candidates design and use. That work will not stop and promises to improve the quality of the data, which will allow us to make more fine-grained data evaluations. Specifically, areas we hope to improve include methods for identifying SES quartiles of schools, procedures for ensuring that candidates use matched pre- and post- measures, and procedures to accurately identify the ethnicities of the P-12 students.

There is no flawless methodology, but analyzing candidate instructional unit pretest and posttest scores provides a robust picture of candidate classrooms, and that picture has been strengthened by the force of a large data set behaving consistently over the 5 years in which we have been gathering data.

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