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Pre-service Teachers' First Foray into the ESL Classroom: Reflective Practice in a Service Learning Project

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Abstract

This study explores the professionalization of a group of 28 pre-service teachers, using a qualitative case study design and reflective practice as the analytical framework. The pre-service teachers were involved in a service learning project at a local middle school in the U.S. where they designed and taught a content area lesson to English language learners (ELLs). After the lesson, the pre-service teachers analyzed their experience through a reflective essay assignment. Findings indicated that the pre-service teachers recognized the need to adapt their lessons for ELLs in varying degrees primarily in the areas of language and content support. Reflective practice as a component of the process of providing sheltered instruction of English should serve as an instrumental part of preparing teachers to work in diverse educational contexts.

Introduction

Given changing demographics in the age of globalization, U.S. teachers are increasingly faced with the prospect of working with diverse populations. Despite a tremendous growth in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse children in U.S. public schools, diversity among pre-service and in-service teachers has not increased significantly (Ford & Quinn, 2010). The teaching workforce continues to be overwhelmingly White and female (Gollnick & Chinn, 2013). Consequently, most White female pre-service teachers also have been taught by White female teachers in the K-12 setting. Furthermore, it is likely that these pre-service teachers attended K-12 public schools in which diverse populations were limited. Although White students represent slightly more than half of all U.S. public school students, they are most likely to attend a

school where approximately 75% of their classmates are White (Orfield, Kucsera &Siefel-Hawley, 2012). Consequently, for the majority of pre-service teachers, their prior educational experiences do not necessarily align with the cultural and educational background of their students, particularly in the area of English as a second language where three-fourths of English language learners (ELLs) are Latino/Latina (Gollnick & Chinn, 2013). In order to be successful in such educational contexts, pre-service teachers must have field experiences with diverse populations. In the absence of a formal field component focused on ELLs, creative ways like volunteer teaching and tutoring opportunities can be developed to provide a venue for pre-service teachers to connect theory with practice in the field of English as a second language (ESL) education.

This article explores the first phase of an ongoing study with a group of pre-service teachers who are involved in a service learning project in a local middle school in the South Central region of the U.S.A. The aim of service learning is to "connect classroom content, literature, and skills to community needs" (Berger Kaye, 2010, p. 9). In this project, pre-service teachers planned and taught lessons for ELLs at the school. In addition, they reflected on this experience through reflective essay assignments. This was their first practical foray into the teaching of ELLs. Their reflections were analyzed using reflective practice as the analytical framework.

Literature Review

The notion of reflection has been widely adopted for professional development and extensively researched in interdisciplinary contexts. Schön (1993) reconceptualized John Dewey's (1933) understanding of reflection to include the spontaneous decisions made to address unexpected incidents. He referred to this as a reflection-in-action process "by which practitioners deal well with situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflict" (p. 50). The concepts of reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action were further revised to include reflection-for-action, meaning that past experiences could inform future action (Wilson, 2008). This consideration of future plans also found support in the literature on second language learning and research especially in pre-service teacher development (Farrell, 2007, 2012; Gün, 2011; Murphy, 2013).

Reflective language teaching is defined as "a bottom-up approach to teacher professional development that is based on the belief that experienced and novice language teachers can improve their understanding of their own teaching by consciously and systematically reflecting on their teaching experiences" (Farrell, 2007, p. 9). In an effort to improve the quality of instruction in teacher education programs, reflective practices have been adopted in tandem with practicum and other field teaching experiences for pre-service teachers (Demirbulak, 2012; Farrell, 2007). One of the flagship studies in this trajectory of research is that of Farrell (1999). In accordance with the common view in teacher education research that prospective teachers' prior knowledge and schooling play an influential role in their professional development, Farrell (1999) recommended uncovering teachers' prior beliefs through a three stage reflective assignment so that "these prior experiences can be brought to the level of awareness" (p. 4). In his study, the participants went through the reflection-in-on-and-for-action processes through reflective assignments. Participants first wrote about their past experiences in learning

English, then developed a detailed lesson plan on any grammatical structure and taught it to a group of secondary students. Finally, they reflected on their lesson to address the question: "would you change any of your techniques of teaching grammar?" (p. 6). Farrell concluded that reflecting on prior experiences and current practices was a powerful tool for prospective teachers' professional development. In another pre-service teaching context, Burke (2006) adopted a qualitative case study approach to examine the transition of American pre-service teachers from a world language methods course to field experience in secondary school classrooms. Burke analyzed their lesson plans and reflections on their practice teaching and concluded that the professional development "that occurs during the school day, in the classrooms of foreign language teachers when teaching their own students, could create opportunities where teachers learn through experience" (p. 162).

Reflective practice is also considered instrumental for the continuing professionalization of in-service teachers. Watzke (2007) focused on the connections in-service teachers made between theory and practice through reflective thinking. He concluded that teachers' professional development continues over an extended period of time, and that teacher education programs should adopt a developmental model "that includes in-service teaching as a primary component of professional development" (p. 75). Practical experiences often create teachers' understanding of the profession and contribute to their ongoing professionalization. In a recent longitudinal study, Farrell (2014) explored how three experienced ESL teachers understood their profession and theorized their practice. Through a collaborative project initiated by the participants themselves, the three teachers reflected on their experiences via group discussions, teaching observations, and reflective essays. Sharing their stories with a wider community, Farrell emphasized the importance of teachers' voices and reflective practice in creating principles and providing professional development opportunities for in-service teachers.

Parallel to the studies reviewed in this section, the present study also argues for learning through experience and reflecting on these experiences. The goal is for pre-service teachers to develop an understanding of themselves as future teachers and their underlying beliefs and conceptions about teaching ELLs. In improving teacher professional development, reflection-in-on-and-for action is a key element in bringing teachers' thoughts and beliefs to the level of conscious analysis (Farrell, 2007, 2014; Wilson, 2008). In the following section, the three forms of reflection and their applications in second language teaching and learning research are further discussed.

Reflection-on-action

Reflecting on past experiences is the most common understanding of reflection and is widely used in pre-service teacher education programs through classroom discussions and reflective essays. Since there is almost no time pressure when considering prior lessons, teachers are able to think critically about the lessons they taught, the learning objectives, the classroom activities, and thereby, building an awareness of the teaching process (Farrell, 2013b, 2014). For example, a teacher trainer and pre-service teacher can discuss a lesson plan or activities in a lesson, after teaching the lesson. These discussions can focus on what a pre-service teacher thinks about how the class went, if the learning objectives were met, and if the students they taught were able to make

connections between the class content and real life applications (Farrell, 2007, 2013b, 2014).

Reflection-in-action

In contrast to reflection-on-action, there is an immediacy factor involved with respect to reflection-in-action. In order to illustrate this process, Schön (1983) gives examples of baseball players and jazz musicians. Big-league baseball players, talk about *finding the groove*: "Only a few pitchers can control the whole game with pure physical ability. The rest have to learn to adjust once they are out there. If they can't, they are dead ducks" (p. 54). In a parallel example, "when good jazz musicians improvise together, they also manifest a 'feel for' their material and they make on the spot adjustments to the sounds they hear" (p. 55). Therefore, reflection-in-action entails the impromptu decisions that practitioners make to adjust to the situation at hand, using their available resources.

In the field of education, reflecting-in-action is about teachers' spontaneous decisions in response to unexpected classroom events. In other words, teachers need to make instructional decisions on their feet and modify their lesson in accordance with the incident. For example, the original lesson may contain vocabulary that is new for many of the students in the class. Noticing the gap, the teacher devotes extra time in the lesson to define and describe these vocabulary items and create activities for student practice. When reflecting-in-action, teachers rely on previously accumulated pedagogical knowledge or schemata (Schulman, 1986). For novice teachers, this is problematic because they have limited knowledge and experience with the complexities of the job (Farrell, 2007, 2008, 2013c). Therefore, in the education of pre-service teachers, reflecting-in-and-on critical incidents often constitute opportunities for professional growth (Farrell, 2013b, 2013c, 2014).

Reflection-for-action

Reflection-for-action builds on past and present experiences and goes beyond, introducing a proposed action plan for what to do differently in the future (Wilson, 2008). This kind of reflection often involves past and present experiences and their application for future action since "teachers can prepare for the future by using knowledge from what happened during class and what they reflected on after class" (Farrell, 2007, p. 6). Wilson explains this thought process as "when we reflect or speculate about ideas and the way things might be in the future, we are exploring the potential to achieve them and the possible consequences" (p. 179). Reflection-for-action may entail a teacher's making note of the weaknesses in a lesson and proposing action to address these problems in future lessons. For example, a teacher may state, "Students did not know the vocabulary. Next time, I would prepare definitions for key vocabulary and present them in advance. "

It is important to note that these three types of reflection (reflection-in-on-and-for-action) frequently take place in a multi-faceted and overlapping manner; that is, they may occur at the same time. Therefore, the temporality of reflection may yield a better way to categorize them. For example, reflection-on-action is concerned with the *past* events, while reflection-*in*-action with present, and reflection-for-action is concerned with *future* actions. Murphy (2013) suggested a landscape of teachers'

reflections with the following keywords: a) "on action-retrospecting, thinking back, remembering; b) in action- being aware, in the moment, seeing; c) for action- anticipating, thinking ahead, planning" (p. 616). Wilson (2008) also categorized the reflection process as past, present, and future with a caution to researchers:

Although they are neatly circumscribed within boxes, the boundaries, in reality, are less exact and will probably tend to merge with one another. This may particularly be the case where people explore options and work their way backwards and forwards along the time line as they juggle possibilities in order to choose the best way forward (p. 183).

The Study

Method

The study was conducted at a university in South Central U.S., which will be referred to as City University (CU). A qualitative case study methodology (Merriam, 2007) was employed to gain an understanding of how pre-service teachers made sense of their initial experience in an ESL classroom. This article is part of an ongoing study that examines the professionalization of pre-service ESL teachers. We sought to analyze how pre-service teachers reflected on ELLs in their first lesson in an ESL classroom. The data presented here were taken from their reflections over their first lesson. The purpose for focusing on the first lesson and the first reflection was to describe or document the initial connections between theory and practice made by the pre-service teachers.

The case study involved a class of 28 pre-service teachers studying to be elementary or special education teachers in U.S. public schools. In order to understand the participants' reflection on their experiences, it is important to describe the setting, the participants, and the researchers.

Research Context

CU was originally founded as a normal school in the 1800s. The college of education at CU has a long history of making an impact in the region and the community. It is recognized for the quality of its education programs at the state and national level. CU has a strong emphasis on community service, in general, and in the college of education, in particular. Professors may designate their classes as service learning courses in which students engage with the community on projects that address needs that have been identified by community partners.

At CU, all elementary, middle school and special education pre-service teachers are required to seek English as a Second Language (ESL) certification and must take two classes focusing on ELLs, in addition to a course on multicultural education. The first course deals primarily with second language acquisition, although an overview of second language teaching methods is given. The second course, which is basis for this study, focuses on methods of sheltered instruction, more specifically the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2000). This course does not have an official field component; the assumption is that these pre-service teachers will have the opportunity to work with ELLs during their literacy methods and content methods field components. Although ESL faculty recognize the need for an official ESL field component, it has not been a priority in the teacher preparation program. Furthermore, despite high numbers of ELLs in public school classrooms in the state, ESL

certification is an add-on certification that can be completed by passing a state certification exam, no actual coursework or field component is required.

The data for the study were collected during a service learning project as part of the ESL methods course. This project was developed in partnership with a local middle school, referred to here as Central Middle School (CMS). The middle school is located in a low-income school district with limited resources. CMS has a history of poor academic outcomes among the ELL population. The goal of the service learning project was to have pre-service teachers provide much needed support to ELLs at CMS. At the same time, pre-service teachers would benefit from the practical experience working with ELLs. In other words, the service learning project represented an opportunity to add a much-needed field experience to the ESL methods course.

Participants

Twenty-eight pre-service teachers enrolled in an ESL methods course at CU in the spring of 2014 participated in the study. All were female, in their 20s and majoring in elementary education or special education. All were White and native English speakers, except for one. There were no males enrolled in the course. In the U.S.A, the teaching workforce is overwhelmingly female, monolingual English speaking and White (Gollnick & Chinn, 2013). Most of the pre-service teachers in the course had not taught an entire lesson before nor had they worked with ELLs.

Researchers

The researchers are professors of bilingual/ESL education in the college of education at CU. One of the researchers taught the ESL Methods class and oversaw the service learning project. The other two taught the second language acquisition course which preceded the ESL methods course. Unlike the pre-service teachers in the course, all three professors are from minority populations.

Data Collection

The data for this study come from the reflective essays the pre-service teachers wrote about their first ESL teaching experience at CMS. Writing is considered an effective means of facilitating reflection since it allows participants ample time to gather their thoughts and reflect on their experiences privately or to be shared with others (Farrell, 2014). Farrell (2013a) encourages teachers to reflect on their experiences through the medium of writing, drawing from his own experiences: "I find the act of writing necessary for me as I reflect because it slows down my thoughts and allows me to see them when I put them on a page or screen"(p. 154). Writing about teaching experiences also helps teachers be more effective in their job and feel better about their practice. For their teaching assignments, each pre-service teacher was assigned a content objective from a list prepared by in-service teachers in core content areas: language arts, science, social studies, and math. These objectives had been chosen as weak areas for ELLs based on their teachers' observations and state mandated tests. Pre-service teachers submitted a lesson plan prior to their teaching. When they taught the class, there was a mentor teacher and an instructional aide observing and assisting as needed. There were typically 10 to 15 ELL students in each class, but numbers fluctuated because they were sent to the ESL class by the in-service teachers of the mainstream classes as needed. For

example, an ELL might come to the ESL class one hour a day for math or two hours a day for math and science, etc. After teaching the lesson, pre-service teachers submitted a reflective essay in which they addressed a variety of guiding questions (see Appendix A). These questions explicitly asked them to reflect on their lessons, the strengths and weaknesses, and what could be improved next time.

Data Analysis

The data were first sorted into the categories outlined in the analytical framework: reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action, and reflection-for-action (Wilson, 2008). These categories were used as an a priori heuristic in order to divide the reflections into past, present and future actions. The past was represented by references to how the participants made sense of the teaching experience by commenting on what did or should have happened, such as "I should have used more visuals. " The present represented reflections on any impromptu alterations they made to their lessons as they taught as in, "The kids didn't know or understand the definition so I had to explain it in simple terms. " The future involved any statements regarding how the experience would influence participants' future actions, such as, "I know how important it will be for me to know how much English each student knows. "Once the data were divided into the aforementioned categories, each was then examined using qualitative content analysis (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 245) in order to identify themes or patterns that emerged across the data of all participants.

Triangulation is critical to establish the credibility of the study and can be accomplished in a variety of ways, such as having various data sources and collection methods, as well as multiple investigators and theoretical perspectives (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1983). In order to triangulate the data, the pre-service teachers' lesson plans were compared to their reflections in order to check for similarities between how their reflections on the event compared to their planning for the event. Furthermore, at each stage of analysis, the authors coded independently and later compared the coding. For excerpts that were under question, we discussed the coding and reached a final consensus.

Results

The analysis indicated that pre-service teachers were able to make connections between theory and practice in several categories. As is common in pre-service teacher reflections, the overall success or failure of their lesson was referenced frequently (Brinton & Holten, 1989; Liou, 2001). However, two areas specific to ELLs were salient in the data: the need to scaffold language and content.

Language support for ELLs

The most common connection which pre-service teachers made between theory and practice dealt with the need to provide language support for ELLs. This awareness was most often noted as an on-action reflection regarding vocabulary development. One pre-service teacher wrote, "I think maybe some of the vocabulary was too difficult for some of the students… I didn't realize the students would not understand my terminology. " In order to provide language support, most stated that they would add additional visuals to illustrate key vocabulary words if teaching this particular lesson again, as this pre-

service teacher stated, “I feel like I should’ve provided a lot more visual aids. In fact, I think additional visuals may have solidified the key vocabulary for the struggling students and even made the practice problems easier to understand. ” In other words, a majority of the pre-service teachers clearly understood, albeit after the fact, that it was the teacher’s role to mediate gaps in language proficiency.

For some students, this realization that ELLs needed language support was evident when describing the changes they made to the lesson while teaching. These reflections would be categorized as in-action since the pre-service teachers reflected on their own impromptu self-initiated alterations, rather than a change made at the behest of the mentor teacher. One pre-service teacher wrote:

> *I also had to take more time to explain vocabulary than I thought I would. Some students didn’t understand how time in history could be named the Great Depression, because depression is a feeling. I had to get really creative with how I explained.*

In addition to the recognition that vocabulary development was critical, some students made conscious decisions about which vocabulary words to emphasize during the lesson. This pre-service teacher’s in-action reflection demonstrates her attempt to prioritize vocabulary learning with ELLs, “I altered my lesson while I was teaching. I wrote more notes on the board to help further explain and I circled key words that I felt they needed to focus on. ” Unfortunately, providing language support in the way of vocabulary instruction was not based on any sound, pedagogical choice, but rather as a time filler, as this pre-service teacher mentioned: “I finished the lesson quickly so I found online pictures of the definition of the vocabulary words not covered during the activity.”

In addition to providing language support with respect to vocabulary learning, some pre-service teachers recognized that their own language use affected the understanding of ELLs. For example, this pre-service teacher stated, “I would probably slow down my speaking because I was so nervous I tended to talk way to fast which was a hinder to the students cause they could not necessarily keep up with what I was saying [sic]. ” This reflection was on action rather than in action. She knew that she spoke too quickly and that the ELLs did not understand her, but she could not tailor her speech to their proficiency levels while teaching the lesson. Once again, these pre-service teachers were true novices.

A handful of students were able to engage in reflection for-action with respect to providing language support. This implied a level of insight into the critical role language proficiency plays in planning instruction, as this pre-service teacher wrote:

> *It is hard to plan a lesson when you do not know how well the students know the language you are going to teach in. For example, I would plan way differently for someone who is completely fluent in English than for someone who only knows a few words.*

This indicated an understanding that instruction must be differentiated with consideration to individual English proficiency levels.

Failure to understand the importance of the first language as a tool for understanding the second was a problematic element in the data. Although pre-service teachers sought to modify instruction based on language proficiency, they often did not view the first language use as a language support as is evident in the following excerpt:

> *Furthermore, there were a couple of points during my lesson in which the students started chatting among themselves both in Spanish and in English. I felt a bit intimidated not knowing what they were saying, however, this only occurred once or twice.*

Rather than seeing the first language as a tool of understanding, some pre-service teachers viewed it as an exclusionary practice and discipline issue.

The pre-service teachers did not always demonstrate consistency in their understanding of the ELLs' proficiency levels. Even after elaborating on the language supports they should have provided, they made statements that appeared to negate any need for language support as is evident in the following excerpt:

> *I also thought that I would have to translate some words into Spanish for them, but that wasn't the case either. These kids spoke excellent English, and they really were fun to work with. I learned that ELL seventh graders are no different than any other seventh graders; they just know more than one language.*

In the mind of this pre-service teacher, the ELLs were not ELLs. They were like any other seventh grader, except for the fact that they were bilingual.

Content support for ELLs

Supporting ELLs' understanding of content was also present in the reflections. The distinction we made while analyzing the data was a fine one. It is difficult to draw a line between what constitutes helping ELLs understand the language and what aids them in learning the content. However, if a pre-service teacher referred specifically to scaffolding or not scaffolding the content of the lesson with respect to conceptual knowledge, it was coded as content support. For example, a pre-service teacher noted the need to clarify students' understanding of the Spanish Colonial Era, "The students thought it was about English and Texas fighting and in reality it was about the Spain trying to conquer Texas. I had to go into more detail when discussing this era [*sic*]. "

Although the majority of the reflections involve language support, content support was also mentioned primarily as in-actionresponse. This effort to scaffold content learning was generally made via finding and using additional videos online in order to illustrate key concepts. However, in contrast to their descriptions of providing language support, the majority of the pre-service teachers noted using videos as both content support and as time filler:

> *I also added a video about the dust bowl to the lesson to better explain the great depression era and what people had to go through. I did this because some of the students did not know what the dust bowl and it helped take some of the time up at the end [*sic*].*

In most cases, providing additional materials as content support was mentioned first, indicating that filling time was a secondary consideration.

In the scaffolding of content, as they did in providing language support, some pre-service teachers attempted to prioritize the content. When they realized the ELLs were not capturing all that they intended to present in their lessons, they altered their plans in action. One student wrote, "I ended up reading them about half of each slide making sure to still go over the important parts while I used the Promethean Board pen to cross off the information that I didn't want them to worry about. " Again, we do not know if they chose well, but they came to the conclusion that it was necessary to prioritize.

Sometimes their content choices involved turning the class over to the ELLs and making it a review because students had significant prior knowledge of the concepts being presented. Some were able do this in-action, like this pre-service teacher who commented on a lesson she and her partner had intended to give on the food chain,

> *Once the definitions were read and the lesson began, it was evident that these kids were going to answer every possible question thrown at them. . . Therefore, when it came time to teach the students how to make food chains and food webs, we did not show them how to do it, we simply called them up to the board and let them do it themselves.*

Although she did not use the time as an opportunity to introduce new concepts, she did afford ELLs the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge base on the topic and work on oral language proficiency.

There is no evidence of for-action reflection on content support by these pre-service teachers. It would appear that they could not make generalizations beyond the concreteness of the lesson to that of future lessons.

Discussion

In general, pre-service teachers recognized that accommodations had to be made for language gaps. Although it would seem logical that anyone enrolled in an ESL methods class would be attuned to this, it is important to remember that these pre-service teachers were true novices. For some, this was the first lesson they had ever given. Consequently, their ability to both deliver instruction and focus on the particular needs of ELLs was very limited. Furthermore, according to the reflections, some pre-service teachers made a common mistake that teachers with little experience with ELLs make: they assumed a high level of proficiency based on ELLs' ability to engage in conversation (Cummins, 2001). This reflects a misunderstanding of the language demands of academic tasks, as well as failure to understand the amount of time needed to develop the proficiency necessary to perform academically in a second language. Reeves (2006) found that almost 72 % of the teachers she surveyed agreed with the statement that "ESL students should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools" (p. 136).

Fortunately, although pre-service teachers asserted that these ELLs "spoke excellent English," the majority saw the need to provide language support. Their reflections highlighted instruction over particular vocabulary terms that had not been identified as key vocabulary in their lesson plans. ELLs lack or incomplete understanding of vocabulary was frequently mentioned. Recognizing the fact that ELLs' knowledge of vocabulary is often shallow and lacks the multiple meanings present in many words

(August, Carlo, Dressler & Snow, 2005) is an important step in viewing lessons through the eyes of an ELL. Equally important, being able to effectively prioritize vocabulary instruction enables teachers to wade through the academic vocabulary inherent in state content area standards that were developed for native English speakers. Although we do not know if pre-service teachers chose the key words wisely, developing realistic expectations for ELLs is critical for practitioners (Valdés, Capitelli & Álvarez, 2010).

The importance of scaffolding content was also highlighted in their reflections, although to a lesser degree than that of providing language support. This was evident when comparing their reflections to their lesson plans. They did, indeed, add to or deviate from their written lesson plans in order to meet the content needs of ELLs, frequently seeking out additional materials to clarify ELLs' understanding. Unfortunately, they also used videos as time filler. These were novices with little experience in the pacing of lessons and time management. The fact that these pre-service teachers recognized the need to provide additional scaffolding of the content to some students with the extra time is a positive sign that they had some sense of gaps in conceptual understanding with respect to a particular lesson. However, unlike their ability to recognize the importance of language proficiency levels, their affirmation of the critical nature of prior knowledge was lacking. Although they might have had a theoretical understanding of the importance of being aware of existing schema and the need to scaffold the content for ELLs, it still had not registered as being a critical component of all future lessons. They failed to make any general statements about prior knowledge or how to scaffold content. At this point in their limited experience, they could not move beyond the concreteness of a particular lesson.

Sometimes the pre-service teachers' reflections represented actions that we as instructors need to emphasize in our classes. As stated in the description, the majority of the pre-service teachers were monolingual English speakers. They appeared to be distressed when ELLs used their first language. This attitude may have its roots in the English only political climate that has been prominent in the U.S.A. for several decades (Crawford, 2000). Although we do stress the importance of the first language and that ELLs often use their first language to make sense of the lesson, we must double our efforts to include this in the debriefing and reflection process.

Conclusion

Engaging in reflection as a part of providing sheltered instruction enables pre-service teachers to think critically about themselves and their practice. More importantly, it puts emphasis on ELLs from the very first lesson. Instead of being solely focused on their own delivery of the lesson in a general way, these pre-service teachers did recognize that working with ELLs required them to mediate gaps in language proficiency and provide language support. On a more limited basis, some made specific reference to scaffolding the content. In the absence of significant formal field experiences working with ELLs, we hope that by emphasizing reflection as part of sheltered instruction in this service learning project, pre-service teachers will put ELLs at the forefront during their later field experiences. Future research in this area can explore pre-service teachers' responses to critical incidents as they unfold and teachers' reflections-in-and-on these incidents. Additionally, the connections pre-service teachers make between the

conceptual knowledge they learn during the ESL methods class and their field experience can shed light on the development of pedagogical content knowledge. By exploring these questions and others, it will be possible to gain further understanding of how pre-service teachers develop the professional knowledge base needed to work in diverse educational contexts. In order to achieve this, teacher education programs should seek creative ways to find professional development opportunities in diverse communities with a focus on continuing reflection.

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Appendix A

LESSON REFLECTION GUIDELINES

The purpose of this assignment is to reflect on your lesson. You are not being graded on the quality of your teaching, but rather on the quality of your reflection. In fact, even the most experienced master teacher has elements that could have been better in every lesson. It's always good to reflect on what you've done in order to develop and improve as a teacher. The questions that follow will serve to guide you as you reflect on your lesson.

1. Were my objectives met? How do I know students learned what was intended?
2. Were the students engaged in the lesson? How do I know?
3. Did I alter my lesson plan as I taught the lesson? Why?
4. What additional assistance, support, and/or resources would have made this lesson better?
5. If I had the opportunity to teach the lesson again, would I do anything differently? What? Why?
6. What other concerns or issues did I experience?