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.
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> 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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