Research

Becoming a Teacher of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students: Elementary Preservice Teachers' ESL Field Experiences Working with English Language Learners

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ABSTRACT

A practice-based approach to teacher education program is fundamental to preparing teachers. While some studies have explored the impact of field experience on preservice teachers' (PSTs) perceptions of diverse students in terms of culture, few have examined PSTs' ESL knowledge and skill development as part of their practicum. To address this gap, this study explored how clinical ESL field experience shaped elementary preservice teachers' dispositions and knowledge of being and becoming linguistically responsive teachers of ELLs. Using the framework of preparing mainstream preservice teachers to work with ELLs (Lucas & Villegas, 2013), the study used survey data to examine what elementary pre-service teachers report they learned about ELLs and teaching ELLs in their ESL field experience. Findings of this study reveal how preservice teachers position themselves as future teachers of ELLs and what it means to become a linguistically responsive teacher.

Introduction

It is estimated that about 4.6 million English Language Learners (ELLs) are currently enrolled in public K-12 schools (Kena et al., 2016). About 80% of ELLs attend elementary schools, many of whom are thought to be placed in mainstream classrooms rather than in specialized English as a second language (ESL) or bilingual classes (Menken & Kleyn, 2010). Unfortunately, many ELLs continue to perform at academically lower levels than their non-ELL peers (Samson, & Collins, 2012). The most recent results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show that in 2017 and in all previous assessment years since 1998, reading scale scores for non-ELL fourth and eighth graders were higher than their ELL peers' scores. In 2017, the achievement gap between non-ELL and ELL students was 37 points at the fourth grade level and 43 points at the 8th-grade level. These continued patterns of underachievement have led to an urgent call to better prepare elementary preservice teachers to work with ELLs (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017). Several scholars have acknowledged this need and have proposed frameworks that describe the necessary ESL knowledge and skills to teach ELLs in mainstream classrooms (e.g., Athanases & de Oliveira, 2011; de Jong & Harper, 2005; Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008).

Despite the recognition of the need for mainstream teacher preparation for ELLs, there continues to be a shortage of well-prepared mainstream teachers. Previous studies indicate that most mainstream teachers do not feel prepared to teach ELLs (O'Neal, Ringler, & Rodriguez, 2008; Reeves, 2006). Moreover, in the absence of strong state policy frameworks, adequate preparation of mainstream teacher preparation through preservice programs continues to be a challenge (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008; Samson & Collins, 2012). Despite these challenges, there is a growing set of studies that examine mainstream teacher preparation and the impact of carefully scaffolded field experiences on teacher attitudes and beliefs and on enhancing preservice teachers' knowledge and skill base (Capella-Santana, 2003; Kayi-Aydar, 2015; Kolano & King, 2015; Markos, 2012).

The purpose of this study is to contribute to this emerging scholarship in the context of a clinical experience in one elementary teacher preparation program. After a review of the literature on the impact of field experiences on ELL teachers, we present the study and its main findings. We conclude by drawing implications for mainstream teacher preparation programs and further directions for research.

Clinical field experience and mainstream teacher preparation for ELLs

The inclusion of field-based experiences in teacher education programs is considered a pillar of effective

teacher preparation (NCATE Blue Ribbon Panel, 2010). School-embedded practica should align closely with coursework, link theory to practice, and allow teacher-candidates to apply practices to experiences with diverse groups of students (NCATE Blue Ribbon Panel, 2010). These experiences offer preservice teachers (PSTs) the opportunity to directly impact student learning and reflect on their practices (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Most studies have explored the relationship between multicultural education in general, field experiences, and working with diverse students (e.g., Bodur, 2012; Markos, 2012). To date, few studies have focused on the role of clinical experiences on mainstream PSTs' ability to work with ELLs (Heineke & Davin, 2014). Studies that have been conducted focus on three dimensions: beliefs/attitudes, knowledge, and skill development.

Studies that have explored the impact on field experiences on PSTs' beliefs or attitudes toward ELLs have found that ESL field experience provides an opportunity for PSTs to uncover their own biases and stereotypes against ELLs. For example, Capella-Santana (2003) investigated PSTs' attitudes and perceptions while working with ELLs in a teacher education program. Based on the two questionnaires and interview data, the changes in teacher candidates' attitudes and perceptions regarding ELLs were found to be statistically significant. The author concludes that before fieldwork, PSTs might have certain negative attitudes and stereotypes towards ELLs. However, fieldwork experience provided PSTs a chance to recognize that cultural deficit was a biased concern and it should be abandoned.

Bodur (2012) and Markos (2012) also found differences between PSTs' beliefs and attitudes toward ELLs after their field experiences. Bodur (2012) states that PSTs who received multicultural preparation with field experience displayed more positive beliefs and attitudes towards CLD (culturally and linguistically diverse) students because they were provided a more in-depth understanding on how to support CLD students. Markos (2012) also describes how many PSTs had deficit views and limited understanding of ELLs in the beginning of the semester; however, this gradually changed over time and PSTs "became aware of how their original understandings of ELLs had developed (p. 51)." Both studies indicate that field experience with ELLs

provided PSTs deeper understanding and more positive attitudes toward diverse student populations.

A few studies have examined how working with ELLs in the context of a teacher preparation program affects PSTs' knowledge about ELLs and second language acquisition (SLA) theories. These studies note that ESL field experience can positively enhance PSTs' SLA knowledge, by exposing them to differences between a first and second language as well as the difference between social and academic language. For instance, Ariza (2003) states that PSTs benefitted from an ESL tutoring project. The author concludes that the ESL tutoring project helped PSTs gain knowledge about SLA and language principles for ELLs.

In the same vein, Kolano and King (2015) argue that ESL coursework and field experience helped PSTs gain more knowledge about ELLs. Specifically, PSTs reported that their case studies through clinical field experiences were highly influential. PSTs also reported that hands-on experiences helped them to better understand the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of ELLs. Worthy and Patterson (2001) also examined 71 PSTs' reflective journals regarding their field experience in a school-based literacy program where PSTs critically reflected on their tutoring experience. The authors state that PSTs developed knowledge about ELLs through one-on-one tutoring and they gained self-confidence in their teaching. These studies illustrate how one-on-one interaction with ELLs in ESL field experiences enhances PSTs' knowledge about English language learning and SLA theories.

In addition to increasing PSTs' knowledge about second language acquisition, studies have also found positive impacts of ELL-specific field placements on ESL practice (e.g., Salerno & Kibler, 2013; Uzum, Petrón & Berg, 2014). Uzum et al. (2014) explored a group of 28 PSTs by using a qualitative case study design. PSTs were involved in a service learning project as part of their ESL methods course where they taught a content area lesson for ELLs. Study findings indicate that PSTs recognized the importance of accommodating their lesson for ELLs, such as incorporating vocabulary instruction and scaffolding strategies as a language supports.

Salerno and Kibler (2013) explored how PSTs describe ELLs and make recommendations for

improving their own teaching through a case study project in a teacher preparation program. Findings revealed PSTs' considered various strategies, such as peer interaction, vocabulary building, culturally relevant texts, and visuals; however, PSTs generally did not consider ELLs' funds of knowledge as an instructional resource. As such, while ESL field experience facilitates PSTs' understanding and self-confidence of ESL instructional practices and accommodation strategies, there are limitations in terms of the strategies PSTs learn in their teacher preparation programs.

Current research that explores mainstream teacher preparations to work with ELLs states the potential impact of clinical experiences on PSTs' beliefs, knowledge, and skills. One challenge that seems to emerge from these studies is to encourage mainstream teachers to pay attention to the *linguistic* dimension of working with ELLs. Previous studies suggest that it is easier for mainstream teachers to embrace ELLs' culture in class while language is often overlooked (de Jong & Harper, 2008). Moreover, studies on mainstream teacher identity and beliefs reveal that most teachers continue to respond negatively to teaching ELLs with minimum English proficiency (Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008), and believe that applying ELL-specific methods and strategies is enough to support ELLs (de Jong & Harper, 2008). Thus, PSTs' attitudes and beliefs toward ELLs and ELL-specific instruction are preventing them from becoming linguistically responsive teachers (Garmon, 2005). Due to these reasons, it is difficult for mainstream teachers to see themselves as language teachers (de Jong & Barko-Alva, 2015; Kayi-Aydar, 2015; Reeves, 2009). The purpose of this study is to examine this challenge more closely in the context of ELL field experience in a teacher preparation program in Florida. We use Lucas and Villegas' (2013) framework for linguistically responsive teaching (LRT) as our lens to better understand what PSTs learned about ELLs and teaching ELLs through their clinical experiences. Specifically, this study explores the following research question: *What contributions do ELL field experiences make in developing PSTs'LRTknowledge and perceptions?*

The Study: **Theoretical Framework**

Grounded in Feiman-Nemser's (2001) conceptual framework of central tasks for preparing PSTs, Lucas and Villegas (2013) suggest tasks for preparing linguistically responsive PSTs. This framework details four major elements with 14 accompanying tasks. The four elements of tasks for learning to teach ELLs include: (a) identifying classroom language demand; (b) scaffolding instruction; (c) learn and develop understanding of second language acquisition (SLA) and ELLs' background; and (d) sociolinguistic consciousness, value of diversity, and inclination to advocacy (see Table 1).

Elements of the expertise of linguistically responsive teachers	Tasks for learning to teach ELLs in pre-service programs
Identifying classroom language demand	Awareness of language as a focus of analysis
	Developing tools to analyze academic language
	Analyzing academic lanuage
	Analyzing language of the classroom
Scaffolding instruction	Familiarize with practices and tools for ELLs' learning
	Apply practices and tools with support and mentor
Learn and develop understanding of SLA and ELLs' background	Develop understanding of variability
	Building repertoire of strategies to learn about ELLs
	Develop understanding of what to know about ELLs
	Examine sociocultural/psycholinguistic process of SLA
Sociolinguistic consciousness, value of diversity, and inclination to advocacy	Reflect and interrogate preconceptions about ELLs.
	Cultivate favorable views of linguistic diversity and home language
	Analyze sociopolitical dimensions of language
	Exploring needs and possibilities of advocacy

Table 1: Tasks for learning to teach English language learners (Lucas & Villegas, 2013)

In the first element, *identifying classroom language demand,* a strong emphasis is on linguistic forms and functions and a teacher's knowledge to identify such language demands in a mainstream classroom. According to Lucas and Villegas (2013), it is imperative for teachers to analyze and determine the linguistic features of discourse in their disciplines that might be challenging to ELLs. The first element focuses on supporting ELLs' learning of the content by preventing language-related issues interfere students' learning (Lucas & Villegas, 2011).

In the second element, *scaffolding instruction,* Lucas and Villegas (2013) emphasizes that it is a teacher's responsibility to make the curriculum accessible to ELLs. Ideally, PSTs will familiarize themselves with practices and tools to scaffold their instruction through an observation of a mentor teacher's model,

and this mentor teacher can also scaffold the PST's effort to learn such instruction. Through the process of familiarization, a linguistically responsive teacher will develop strategies and learn how to scaffold instruction in order to make the curriculum accessible for ELLs (Lucas & Villegas, 2013)

In the third element, *learn and develop understanding of SLA and ELLs' background,* a teacher's understanding of ELLs' diverse linguistic and academic backgrounds is crucial. In other words, a linguistically responsive teacher is cognizant of ELLs' varying levels of literacy and language proficiency instead of perceiving ELLs as a homogenous group of students (Lucas & Villegas, 2011). Considering this, Lucas and Villegas (2011) states that a linguistic responsive teacher can recognize ELLs' rich linguistic and academic resources to successfully incorporate and "(re)present school knowledge" while educating students.

Lastly, in the element of *sociolinguistic consciousness, value of diversity, and inclination to advocacy,* Lucas and Villegas (2013) describe the sociolinguistic power structure of language and the importance of preparing teachers to understand such dynamics. Lucas and Villegas (2013) emphasize a teacher's sensitivity toward language and identity, and how these are interconnected. In addition, a linguistically responsive teacher examines his/her perceptions of advocating for ELLs and explores ELLs' needs (Lucas & Villegas, 2013).

Research Context

The current study was conducted in a large, public university located in the state of Florida. Because Florida has one of the largest ELL populations in the U.S., an agreement was negotiated requiring all teachers of ELLs to complete professional development in terms of second language teaching and learning. The Florida Consent Decree requires all teachers to receive a set of ESL teacher performance standards that are organized in regards to five curricular areas: applied linguistics, cross-cultural communication, ESL methods, ESL curriculum and materials development, and ESL assessment (Coady, Harper, & de Jong, 2016). As such, elementary teachers are required to complete a minimum of 300 hours of professional development in ESL. Secondary content teachers must complete 60 hours of ESL professional development under the state

requirements (Coady et al., 2016).

The teacher preparation program in the current study implemented two ESL practicain order for PSTs to receive their ESL endorsement. The first practicum required PSTs to observe mainstream math and reading classrooms one full day per week in a rural district. By the end of the course, PSTs submitted ELL field reports that presented their field experiences.The second practicum asked PSTs to work with ELLs through individual tutoring and small group discussions for a minimum of 10 hours during the 16-week semester. PSTs posted weekly field experience reflection on an online discussion forum based on targeted questions and submitted a final reflection essay by the end of the semester regarding their field experience teaching ELLs.

The biggest difference between each practicum was the hands-on experience with ELLs.In Practicum 1, students primarily observed ELLs in mainstream classrooms, while in Practicum 2, students both observed and directly worked with ELLs in ESL classrooms. Table 2 presents an ESL-infused model

First ESL Practicum	Second ESL Practicum
Field Experience Expectations	**Field Experience Expectations**
- One full day per week	- 10 hours in one semester
- Rural County Public Schools:	- Placement: elementary or secondary ESL
Rural district, 40,000 people, 8 % self-	classrooms, mainstream elementary
identified as Hispanic or Latino,	classrooms with ELLs schools, adult ESL
approximately 6% speak a language other	program
than English in the home, and approximately	- Work hands-on with ELLs: Individual
3.2% foreign-born	tutoring or small group instruction
- Observe Math and Reading mainstream	- Assignments: Field experience discussion
classes and take notes	(targeted questions) and final essay
- Focus: "Getting to know your ELL" (case	(reflection on experience teaching ELLs)
study)	(Pre-internship)
- Assignment: ELL field report, presentation,	
and class discussion	

with two ESL field practica in an elementary PST preparation program.

Table 2: Field Experiences infused in two ESL courses

Study Participants

PSTs in the current study were undergraduate students (n=160) in their first or second semesters of their senior year, consisting of 80 % of white females.

About 25% of participants indicated that they could speak a language other than English (mostly Spanish). In addition, about 30% of them reported they had extended interactions with people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Data Sources

Data were derived from two groups of PSTs' surveys and reflection papers from both ESL practica. The survey was distributed to two groups of PSTs and course artifacts were collected. The survey consisted of rating scale questions and open-ended questions. The data were collected in Spring 2016 (initial survey and ESL field reflective journals) and in Fall 2016 (modified survey and ESL field reflective journals; see Appendix A).

In the first practicum, PSTs were required to reflect several topics: (a) background information of ELLs, such as L2 (second language) knowledge and literacy;(b) general knowledge of ELLs' home culture;(c) assessment data, using WIDA (World-class Instructional Design and Assessment) and SOLOM (Student Oral Language Observation Matrix); and (d) ELLs' personality trait and habit. Sample prompt questions for their reflection included: (a) how would you assess this student, and what are his/her language ability level?; (b)what are the language strengths and weakness of the ELLs in the classroom?; and (c) how does the classroom teacher accommodate ELLs who have a low oral language proficiency of English?

In the second practicum, reflective journals included the following topics: (a) teaching and working experience with ELLs,(b) the role of language and culture for ELLs, and (c) teaching content materials while incorporating language skills, such as teaching reading, writing, and vocabulary instruction for ELLs. Some guiding questions for the reflective journals included: (a) what makes the classroom an effective second language learning environment?; (b) what surprised you the most about your experience and why was it surprising to you?; (c) how do ELLs participate in class with their peers, with the teacher, or individuallyandwhat does this tell you about the ELL?; and (d) what would be your suggestions to increase the participation of ELLs in the classroom?

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyze data (Riessman, 2008). Following Creswell's (2005)

multi-step design analysis, the researchers first read PSTs' written narratives and convened to discuss general codes for responses encountered in the data. After the initial coding, major categories were identified based on research questions. In order to increase reliability of the current study, the research team conducted peer-debriefing during data analysis. In addition, the research team collected multiple data sources throughout the academic semesters to conduct data triangulation. Through thematic analysis, the current study uses Lucas and Villegas' (2013) framework for preparing linguistically responsive teachers to examine PSTs' conceptualization and preparedness to work with ELLs.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that affect the outcomes. First, the study focuses on one teacher preparation program within a specific geographical and political context. Findings are not necessarily generalizable to other contexts. Second. although the participants' written responses from reflective journals were central to the topic of the study, these reflective journals were prompted by guiding questions that may have not captured PSTs' entire experience with the practica. Third, the limited number of hours in an ESL classroom working directly with ELLs may have affected the results. Lastly, the current study did not consider changes in PSTs' understandings over time and/or within a semester. Other data sources, such as interviews, would be necessary to capture individual PST's trajectories and responses.

Findings

This section presents major findings using the four elements of Lucas and Villegas' (2013) framework. Under these four elements, Lucas and Villegas suggested 14 tasks. Six tasks emerged in our data analysis with two additional tasks: language assessment and the language teacher self. The results are described below in using four major themes: (a) developing knowledge for language, (b) scaffolding instruction, (c) developing understandings of English language learners, and (d) PSTs' attitudes and perceptions for the future.

Developing Knowledge and Awareness of Language

It is crucial for a teacher to understand how the

language used in a particular academic discipline functions differently compared to the language used in everyday communication (Lucas, de Oliveira, & Villegas, 2014). In order to raise such awareness, a teacher needs to be cognizant of detailed descriptions of the school genres and discourse (e.g., the specific linguistic forms, functions, and vocabulary; Lucas, de Oliveira, & Villegas, 2014). A linguistically responsive teacher understands the influence of primary language experiences and prior educational experiences to a student's current learning (Lucas & Villegas, 2011).

The ESL field experiences provided PSTs valuable opportunities to focus on the language used in the classroom. Cummins' distinction between social language and academic language was frequently mentioned in their reflection journals.

When observing Kyle's use of vocabulary, he occasionally uses inappropriate terms and/or must rephrase ideas because of lexical inadequacies. These lapses in fluency and vocabulary occur more frequently during classroom lessons and are not as prevalent during Kyle's social interactions. This indicates that Kyle's BICS are far more advanced than his CALP (Prac1 Reflection C3, pp. 3-4).

As mentioned in this excerpt, PSTs started paying attention to classroom and academic language and began paying attention to certain linguistic forms, such as the ELL's use of vocabulary and lexical items.

A theme that emerged but that was not elaborated on as a task in Lucas and Villegas' (2013) framework was the impact of assessment. Participants reported on their assignment of assessing and describing ELLs' language proficiency using World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) indicators and the Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM) assessment tools. Using the WIDA evaluation scale, PSTs were able to focus on ELLs' language use and describe ELLs' language proficiency levels in linguistic terms: "Ben can speak in phrases or short sentences, but prefers not to mostly. In terms of the second observation, Ben could easily illustrate their information, but taking information from the text and grouping it was much more challenging"(Prac2 Reflection T29, p. 3).

Using the SOLOM helped PSTs pay attention to ELLs' informal oral language use as shown in the following reflection: "In regards to grammar, Kyle occasionally makes grammatical and/or word-order errors which do not obscure meaning. My continual observations and work with Kyle indicate a level four rating of the SOLOM based on the specifications discussed"(Prac1 Reflection C3, p. 4) Opportunities to use language assessment tools such as WIDA and SOLOM allowed PSTs to analyze individual students' language use in terms of specific linguistic features such as sentence structure, coherence, and word-order. PSTs analyzed ELLs' language use and displayed their ability to place ELLs' language proficiency on scales provided in each assessment tool. Also, the use of language assessment tools helped PSTs to see how understanding ELLs' proficiency levels guides instructional planning. As the following reflection journal entry shows, PSTs noted how language assessment can be used to modify instruction.

Ben was called on, a student who (…) has a proficiency WIDA level of 2: Beginning. Rather than focusing on the student to verbally explain his findings, the teacher allowed him to approach the board and work the problem out. (…) he did fully show his work and provide the correct answer. The student was able to show his understanding of the material (…). I found this application very successful for Ben, especially for his proficiency level(Prac2 Reflection T26, pp. 1-2).

Scaffolding Instruction

Scaffolding instruction refers to providing instructional support in the school context for ELLs' learning of content as well as the English language (Lucas, de Oliveira, and Villegas, 2014).This includes: (a) using extra-linguistic supports, (b) supplement and modify written text, (c) supplement and modify oral language, and (d) provide clear and explicit instructions (Lucas & Villegas, 2011). Through observations of a mentor teacher's modeling and scaffolding of instruction, PSTs can develop their own strategies to make content accessible for ELLs.

The PSTs in our study were able to observe how various methods and instructional strategies, including providing bilingual texts, affected student learning, as illustrated in the following reflection: "Based on my observation in class and knowledge about my student's background, it was evident that when he was exposed to culturally relevant literature his self-confidence and motivation sharply increased" (Prac1 Reflection X4, p. 5).In addition, PSTs reported

visual aids as one of the effective practices to support ELLs' learning.

Based on my observations in the classroom and working with an ELL, there are a couple of important lessons that I have learned. (…) visually showing an ELL what you are talking about is valuable. Visuals are helpful for (…) especially ELLs because the academic language is the hardest to pick up in schooling. (…)It is very important that you explain the same piece of information in different ways (Prac1 Reflection C3, p. 7).

Recognizing ELLs' difficulties understanding the teacher's instruction and explanation, this pre-service teacher acknowledged the importance of using visuals to supplement oral instruction. PSTs learned the importance of modifying language in different ways to scaffold ELLs' learning and understanding of classroom instruction.PSTs also noticed how ELLs' first languages (L1) could facilitate learning.

Some of the reading that they did included some words of the (…) students' native language of Spanish (…) The text included a Spanish-English glossary for the Spanish words used to help the students (…) The Spanish speaking students enjoyed hearing their own language being used in the text they were reading and seemed to be more engaged. Using primary language support increased their motivation and engagement while lowering their affective filter (Prac2 Reflection T17, p. 2).

The PSTs realized that using ELLs' L1 could create a more engaging lesson and motivate ELLs' learning. As illustrated by these journal entries, PSTs realized that when they tried to include ELLs' linguistic funds of knowledge, such as their L1, ELLs were more engaged and motivated to participate in the classroom.

Understanding English Language Learners

For PSTs, it is essential to understand ELLs' variation in terms of their linguistic and academic backgrounds (Lucas & Villegas, 2013) as well as their cultural backgrounds. A linguistically responsive teacher acknowledges and responds to a student's linguistic identity and values ELLs' home language as a resource (Lucas & Villegas, 2011; Lucas & Villegas, 2013; Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalaz, 2008).

The PSTs realized the importance of understanding their ELLs' background and how using ELLs' cultural funds of knowledge contribute to their learning. The excerpt below from one PST's reflection emphasizes the importance of culture.

The importance of home culture is also an evident factor in students' lives, and I will use this knowledge of Ariel's culture(…) in my classroom when giving instruction. Getting to know a student's culture is important, so that one can understand students better. I will use this knowledge (…) to make sure that (…) they are all explained and celebrated in my class. Ariel became very excited to explain her culture, and I saw how it influenced her behavior and her personality(Prac1 Reflection C15, p. 8).

PSTs paid attention to how various cultures were represented in the classroom. One PST described how she observed that culture was missing in the classroom.

What I found disheartening (…) was the lack of cultures being represented in the books (…). The student from Guatemala couldn't see himself in the books and the students whose families are from Haiti could not see themselves in the books either. (…) Culture is very important to highlight in the classroom(Prac2 Reflection T3, p. 4).

PSTs recognized the importance of providing multicultural materials in their classroom in order toshow how the ELLs' cultural identity and backgrounds are valued in the school.

PSTs also had the opportunity to learn more about students and their families. Countering the misconception that immigrant parents are not involved in their children's schooling, one PST notes, "Education is valued in Antonio's household. Although he struggles with English, he puts forth his best effort on homework and his mother often helps when possible"(Prac1 Reflection C12, p. 3) The PST begins to realize that parental involvement can take on different forms.

Attitudes and Perceptions for the Future

A linguistically responsive teacher explores his/her perceptions in order to consciously explore ELLs' needs. Instead of making assumptions of ELLs' needs based on the teacher's cultural framework, a linguistically responsive teacher believes ELLs' learning is the teacher's responsibility by actively addressing students' needs (Lucas, de Oliveira, & Villegas, 2014; Lucas & Villegas, 2011; Lucas &

Villegas, 2013). In addition to PSTs' attitudes toward ELLs, our study also identified theiremerging understandings about their future selves as ELL teachers an important theme.

Cultivating Positive Attitudes

In their field experience paper, the PSTs were asked to describe and reflect on what they found out about ELLs' background. PSTs noted that ELLs are high-performing and intelligent.

Some things that stuck out to me were that the ELLs are very intelligent individuals, they just need some help with language sometimes and they should be given the chance to show what they can do (…) When given the support that they need, these students can perform greatly in the academic setting (Prac2 Reflection T6, pp. 2-3).

PSTs often expressed surprise at this reality and acknowledged that ELLs are able to achieve academic success with the appropriate support and help.

Participants also became more aware of the needs of ELLs within a positive learning frame. In the example below, a PST learned that ELLs needed to feel safe in the classroom and how this impacted learning.

The ESOL teacher also provided some insight into the stress and anxiety that some of these students can feel around the issue of deportation. She explained that the students will come into her class and tell her that the police are coming and that they are sleeping at someone else's house for a while (…) I will try to provide a safe environment for students to share what they are going through and be able to feel supported(Prac2 Reflection T25, p.4).

As described in this excerpt, the PST was not aware that an ELL's immigration status could affect their learning and academic achievement. Working more closely with the teacher and the ELLs, they were able to recognize the importance of ensuring ELLs to feel safe in the classroom. Stated by another participant:

I have learned that it is important to make my ELLs feel comfortable in the classroom. It dismayed me when Sabrina knew the answers to problems but chose not to contribute her thoughts because she doubted her English-speaking ability. (…) I would like to provide my ELLs with greater opportunities to verbalize their thoughts (Prac1 Reflection C11, p. 9)

As illustrated in this journal entry, the PST observed

and recognized the importance of providing a comfortable classroom environment for ELLs. Moreover, this PST planned to become more proactive in terms of meeting ELLs' needs in the classroom.

Emerging Future Self as a Teacher of ELLs

PSTs recognized that what they learned about teaching ELLs in their course work did not always align with what they observed in their field placement. This "implementation gap" prompted critical reflections on current realities and future actions. One PST, for instance, expressed concerns about a pull-out ESL intervention and how the program is organized.

There were about 20 computers lined around the room and all the walls were blank, including the chalkboard (…)This mono-linguistic focused program does not even support the English language learners' Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) in the ESL classroom (Prac2 Reflection K12, p. 2).

PSTs noticed a problem and expressed concern about the use of English learning software as they know that an ideal learning environment for ELLs would look different. Concerns that educational technology was misused and did not provide meaningful scaffolding strategies or effective ESL pedagogies to promote ELLs' second language development were noted by other students as well. This discrepancy challengedPSTsto consider implications for their future practices as a teacher of ELLs. In reflecting on their future practices, PSTs mentioned embracing cultural/linguistic diversity and creating welcoming environments. An excerpt from one of the PSTs' reflection journal follows:

In my classroom, I will strive to create a safe, supportive environment where not only ELLs but all students will feel comfortable to take risks with language, social risks, and take on academic challenges. Creating a sense of community (…) will not only help many social aspects of language, (…) will spill over into academic success and building vocabulary(Prac1 Reflection X13, p. 6).

As observed in this excerpt, ESL field experience not only extended PSTs' awareness of ESL pedagogy and strategies but also motivated PSTs to envision how they would use these strategies in the future.

Discussion

This study explored the contributions of ESL field experience to the development of PSTs'knowledge and perceptions as linguistically responsive teachers.Using Lucas & Villegas's (2013) framework for preparing a linguistically responsive teacher, the analysis of survey data and PSTs' reflection and field experience journals point to key findings related to knowledge and skills and identities as teachers of ELLs.

Our findings show, first, that the ELL-specific field experience raised PSTs' awareness of language and helped them see and practice appropriate pedagogies for ELLs as they put second language acquisition theory into practice. A linguistically responsive teacher analyzes and recognizes classroom language demands and develops strategies to make the curriculum accessible for ELLs (Villegas, Saizde LaMora, Martin, & Mills, 2018). Awareness of ELLs' proficiency and how different proficiency levels affect lesson planning was particularly facilitated by PST's use of assessment tools. The WIDA standards and SOLOM drew PSTs' attention to language and assisted in more precise ways of describing what ELLs could and could not yet do in English. As indicated by previous literature, assessments have the potential of transforming instruction, including differentiated instruction for ELLs (Lenski, Ehlers-Zavala, Daniel, & Sun-Irminger, 2006; Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2010).

In terms of practices for ELLs, PSTsreported on the value of comprehensible input and reported the importance of incorporating ELLs' cultural backgrounds in mainstream classroom teaching. They noticed the importance of providing welcoming and safe environments, the use of multicultural materials as well as learning about ELLs' cultural backgrounds for teaching.Thesaliency of culture and comprehensible input for PSTs when approaching teaching ELLs has been noted before (de Jong & Harper, 2008; de Jong, Harper, &Coady 2013). Thus, although the PSTs were more aware of language proficiency and student language use, this awareness did not yet translate into a focus on specific aspects of language development. The actual interactions with ELLs allowed PSTs to move beyondwhat they observed in the teachers. For example, although PSTs did not always observe classroom teachers' modeling of home language support, interaction with ELLs allowed PSTs to understand the value of incorporating

ELLs' home language in their lessons and content materials.

Second,the field experiences personalized ELLs and who they were. PSTs displayed care toward ELLs and began to examine assumptions about them and their families (e.g., parent involvement). They identified knowledge conflicts between what they learned in their course work and actual realities, including the limitations of resources or inappropriate pedagogical approaches. This discrepancy prompted students' reflection on how they would approach the teaching of ELLs in the future and address the dilemmas they observed. Kubanyiova (2007; 2009)argues that teachers often negotiate tensions between an ideal self (based on personal and professional experiences) and feared self (being confronted by policies or practices that counter the ideal self). She argues that it is through this negotiation that a new possible self is constructed. In the case of our PSTs, they drew from their own interactions with ELLs and their course work to build an ideal "ELL teacher" self that included being responsive to ELL's needs through scaffolding and meaningful instruction. In being confronted with the contrary (e.g., the use of software to replace ESL strategies), the PSTs were confronted with, in Kubanyiova's terms, a feared self(i.e., someone they did not wish to be or being asked to engage in practices that don't align with their ideal self). In this instance, the PSTs had to negotiate their ideal and feared selves, and through this process, what Kubanyiova (2009) coined as a possible self could emerge. Working with ELLs and negotiating discrepancies in their field placements have encouraged ownership of ELLs in PSTs' perceptions.

Furthermore, PSTs are developing a mainstream teacher identity that is more inclusive of linguistically and culturally diverse students. As part of their possible language teacher identity, PSTs began to recognize ELLs as students that they are responsible for rather than assuming that ELLs are ESL specialists' responsibility. This emerging teacher identity is important. If PSTs do not position themselves as ELL teachers it is likely that future teachers of ELLs will not meet ELLs' unique learning needs and interests in K-12 classrooms (Kayi-Aydar, 2015; Reeves, 2009).

Finally, it must be noted that the present study did not find evidence of PSTs analyzing the sociopolitical dimension of language learning and no critical

interrogation of PSTs' own preconceptions of ELLs. One factor may have been the absence of explicit and tailored prompts for their ideas and critical analyses (Whipp, 2003).This raises an important question of how such analyses can best be scaffolded in the context of field experiences. Allowing opportunities for PSTs to critically examine their beliefs about linguistic diversity throughout teacher preparation programs is in need and it will strongly relate to ELLs' academic success in the classroom (Villegas, 2018).

Conclusion and Implications

This study confirms the importance of ELL-specific field placements to support mainstream teacher

Research timeline that includes data sources and data analysis

Research Timeline	Data Sources	Data Analysis (Coding Process)	Details
2016 Spring	Electronic Survey – Qualtrics (n=75)	Descriptive statistics Thematic Analysis (using NVIVO)	ESL practicum 1 (n=30) ESL practicum 2 (n=45)
	Field experience journals (n=100)	Thematic analysis (using NVIVO)	ESL practicum 1 (n=40) ESL practicum 2 (n=60)
2016 Fall	Electronic Survey - Qualtrics (n=42)	Descriptive statistics Thematic Analysis (using NVIVO)	ESL practicum 1 (n=30) ESL practicum 2 (n=12)
	Field experience journals (n=98)	Thematic analysis (using NVIVO)	ESL practicum 1 (n=60) ESL practicum 2 (n=38)

preparation. Practica that include direct interactions with ELLs and are carefully scaffolded for PSTs to reflect on their experiences can raise awareness of the role of language and culture in the classroom and build essential teaching skills.Our study also suggests that, with proper guidance, mainstream PSTs can be encouraged to develop a teacher identity that is inclusive of ELLs.Based on this exploratory study, and recognizing its limitations, we would suggest the following for mainstream teacher preparation programs to consider:

· Include ELL-specific placements and practica

· Identify central tasks related to linguistically and culturally diverse students throughout a teacher preparation program (Feiman-Nemser, 2001)

· Nurture a language teacher identity in addition to emphasizing issues of culture

· Provide specific knowledge and skills related to the role of language in schools and opportunities to practice strategies that support specific aspects of linguistic development.

Clearly, more work is needed in this area of mainstream teacher preparation practices in terms of understanding how mainstream teacher candidates can be encouraged to take ownership of ELLs and the implications for teaching and learning.

Appendix

Biographical Statements

Yong-Jik Lee received his PhD from the University of Florida in summer 2018 focusing on ESOL/Bilingual Education. His research interests include pre-service teachers' ESOL teacher education, preservice teachers' self-efficacy beliefs to teach English language learners, and preservice teachers' ESL field experience while working with ELLs.

Hyunjin Jinna Kim received her MA in TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) from the Pennsylvania State University and is pursuing her PhD in Curriculum and Instruction with a specialization in ESOL/Bilingual Education at the University of Florida. Her research interests include teacher education, preparation, and profession development.

Ester J. de Jong, Ph.D., is a Professor in ESOL/bilingual education and Director of the School of Teaching and Learning at the University of Florida. She teaches courses in bilingual and bicultural education and in curriculum, methods, and assessment for English speakers of other languages. Her research interests include two-way bilingual education and teacher preparation for bilingual students.

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