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Bilingual Teacher Beliefs and Practice: Do They Line Up?[1]

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Abstract

A qualitative study used observation and collection of artifacts to examine the pedagogical strategies of six teachers; four taught in a two-way bilingual education school, while the other two were first-year teachers in a school setting with large numbers of English language learners. Informal interviews were conducted throughout the time of the study; semi-structured interviews were conducted at the end of a semester of observation and recording of field notes. Some interviews attempted to uncover the beliefs teachers had about student learning, and in particular, that of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Teachers were asked about the influences and sources of their beliefs. Other interviews explored teacher identities as educators of culturally and linguistically diverse students and how these identities fit in school settings that were or were not welcoming of such students. Transcripts of taped interviews were compared with field notes and collected artifacts in order to determine the degree to which teachers used strategies related to what they said they believed to be important for culturally and linguistically diverse students. It was determined that there were numerous cases where teacher practice confirmed statements made in interviews.

Keywords: pedagogical strategies, bilingual education, teachers´ beliefs

Resumen

Este estudio cualitativo utilizó la observación y recolección de información para examinar las estrategias pedagógicas de seis profesores; cuatro de ellos enseñan en una escuela de educación bilingüe mientras que los otros dos, son docentes de primer año en una escuela que cuenta con un gran número de estudiantes de inglés como segundo idioma. Se realizaron entrevistas informales a los largo de la investigación, entrevistas semiestructuradas al final de un semestre de observación y registro de notas de campo. Algunas entrevistas intentaron identificar las creencias que tenían los docentes sobre el

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aprendizaje del estudiante y, en particular aquellos que pertenecen a diversos contextos culturales y lingüísticos. Igualmente, se les pregunto a los docentes sobre los orígenes y factores que influyen en sus creencias. Oreas entrevistas exploraron las identidades de los profesores como educadores de estudiantes cultural y lingüísticamente diversos y como estas identidades encajan en ambientes escolares en los cuales eran o no bienvenidos estos estudiantes. Las transcripciones de las entrevistas grabadas fueron comparadas con las notas de campo y la información recolectada con el fin de determinar el grado en que los docentes utilizaban estrategias relacionadas con lo que ellos creían que era importante para los estudiantes procedentes de diversos contextos culturales y lingüísticos. La investigación reveló que existen numerosos casos donde la práctica docente confirma las declaraciones de los docentes en las entrevistas.

Palabras claves: estrategias pedagógicas, educación bilingüe, creencias de los docentes

Resumo

Este estudo qualitativo utilizou a observação coletada de informação para examinar as estratégias pedagógicas de seis professores; quatro deles ensinam em uma escola de educação bilíngue enquanto que os outros dois, são docentes de primeiro ano em uma escola que conta com um grande número de estudantes de inglês como segundo idioma. Realizaram-se entrevistas informais ao longo da pesquisa, entrevistas semi-estruturadas no final de um semestre de observação e registro de notas de campo. Algumas entrevistas tentaram identificar as crenças que tinham os docentes sobre a aprendizagem do estudante e, em particular aqueles que pertencem a diversos contextos culturais e linguísticos. Igualmente, se perguntou aos docentes sobre as origens e fatores que influem em suas crenças. Outras entrevistas exploraram as identidades dos professores como educadores de estudantes cultural e linguisticamente diversos e como estas identidades encaixam em ambientes escolares nos quais eram ou não bem-vindos estes estudantes. As transcrições das entrevistas gravadas foram comparadas com as notas de campo e a informação recolhida com o fim de determinar o grau em que os docentes utilizavam estratégias relacionadas com o que eles achavam que era importante para os estudantes procedentes de diversos contextos culturais e linguísticos. A pesquisa revelou que existem numerosos casos onde a prática docente confirma as declarações dos docentes nas entrevistas.

Palavras chaves: estratégias pedagógicas, educação bilíngue, crenças dos docentes

Research on teacher thinking is abundant and thriving. Critics have questioned how its findings can be of use to teachers or teacher education. Researchers suggest that another perspective should be explored to better understand teacher behaviors that focuses on the things and ways that teachers believe (e.g. Clark, 1988; Nespor, 1987). This view is based on the assumption that beliefs are the best indicators of the decisions individuals make throughout their lives (Bandura, 1986; Dewey, 1933; Rokeach, 1968). Few would argue that the beliefs teachers hold influence their perceptions and judgments, which in turn, affect their behavior in the classroom. Nor do they question that understanding the belief structures of teachers is essential to improving their teaching practices (Ashton, 1990). We believe that it is important to explore teachers' beliefs about the nature of teaching knowledge, where teaching knowledge is defined as all knowledge relevant to the practice of teaching. In this investigation, knowledge is viewed as being actively constructed by the individual on the basis of his or her personal experience and reason (e.g., Hoefer, 2000, 2004; Wod and Kardash, 2002). In this paper, beliefs and knowledge will be used interchangeably, taking into consideration Clandinin and Connelly's (1987) suggestion that many of the personal knowledge constructs are simply different words meaning the same thing.

This paper explores how seasoned bilingual teacher and novice bilingual teacher beliefs were reflected in and influenced their pedagogy. Even though various studies have explored teacher beliefs through qualitative methods (Anning, 1988; Irujo, 1998; Flores Busto, 2000) further studies are needed to investigate bilingual education teacher beliefs.

The teachers in the study were committed to working with students who are culturally and linguistically diverse and believed their efforts could change the possibilities and opportunities for their students. Observations sought to discover whether their beliefs matched the practices held in the classroom when working with bilingual/ESL students.

Theoretical Framework

Because of the discussion of the domain specificity of beliefs and the calls to assess beliefs at an appropriate level of specificity (e.g. Buehl, and Alexander, 2006; Pajares, 1992) we proposed to examine teachers' beliefs about the nature of teaching knowledge where teaching knowledge is defined as all knowledge relevant to the practice of teaching. It is important to understand the nature of the relationship

between knowledge and belief on the one hand, and teacher behavior and student outcomes on the other. It is also important to understand the relationship between belief and knowledge themselves. Richardson (1996) points out that attitudes and beliefs are "a subset of a group of constructs that name, define, and describe the structure and content of mental states that are thought to drive a person's actions" (p.102). Taylor (2003) has defined beliefs as "strong personal propositions" (p. 60). Beliefs may be on various levels, including epistemological, motivational, and pedagogical (Archer, 1999), while others such as Roehler, Duffy, Herrmann, Conley, and Johnson (1988) believe that knowledge must take priority over affect, in the form of beliefs, although they understand that beliefs influence thinking. They argue that beliefs are static and represent truths that remain unchanged in the teacher's mind; knowledge is fluid and evolves as new experiences are interpreted and integrated into existing schema.

Philosophical beliefs, too, enter into the mix of influences on what teachers do in classrooms. In fact, "teachers' philosophical beliefs are considered as the cornerstone of their teaching practises and their beliefs concerning teaching and learning" (Charalambous, Philippou, & Kyriakides, 2002, p.1). As difficult as it is to define beliefs precisely, we do know they are important in influencing teacher pedagogy (Donaghue, 2003). It is important that teachers reflectively examine personal beliefs and philosophies in order to make informed decisions relating to their students. Expósito and Favela (2003) believe this reflective process is especially important for teachers of diverse populations. Reflecting about their ideology and how their belief systems impact the interaction with linguistically and diverse students and families is crucial as their impact can make a difference between students' academic success or failure.

Teacher beliefs in general, and some that relate particularly to bilingual education settings or those where English language learners are found, have numerous sources that include: teacher education programs; prior experiences in schools, either as students or teachers; personal or life experiences, including growing up as a member of a parallel culture; and experiences as a bilingual or with bilinguals; world view; and family. Some of these factors interact with each other. There is, however, a lack of consensus on which of these truly affect what teachers do in practice. Although some studies (An, 2000; Cohen & Tellez, 1994; Mueller & Zeidler, 1998; Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991) found a correlation between teachers' stated beliefs and their classroom practice, Richardson (1996) suggests, "the perceived relationship between beliefs and actions is interactive. Beliefs are

thought to drive actions" (p.104). This is, however, more consistent at some times than others.

In order to understand the relationship between teacher beliefs and practice, it is important to consider the factors that may work against teachers' ability to implement methods in which they believe. Fang (1996) relates, "Earlier researchers have noted that the complexities of classroom life can constrain teachers' abilities to attend to their beliefs and provide instruction which aligns with their theoretical beliefs" (p.53). He adds that "administrator and collegial attitudes" (p.54) and the "psychological, social and environmental realities of…schools" (p. 54) may affect the degree to which teachers are able to make instructional decisions that support their beliefs.

Alignment of theory with beliefs is particularly important for teachers of English language learners, as there are several divergent camps related to beliefs on how best to teach a language. These range from drill and memorization approaches to those that emphasize acquisition of language in a more natural way through the highly contextualized teaching of content. Fang (1996) cites Johnson's (1992) study of English as a second language (ESL) teachers as an example of the impact of teacher beliefs about language learners. Fang states:

The majority of…ESL teachers possess clearly defined theoretical beliefs which

consistently reflect one particular methodological approach. Further, the study [Johnson's] showed that ESL teachers who possess clearly defined theoretical beliefs provide literacy instruction which is consistent with their theoretical orientation and that teachers with different dominant theoretical orientations provide strikingly different literacy instruction for non-native speakers of English. (p.52)

When attempting to determine whether bilingual/ESL teachers' beliefs are consistent with their practices, it is important to keep in mind school factors such as support for the theoretical model of language learning used by teachers, as well as other factors that relate to the teaching of culturally and linguistically diverse students that may enter into what happens in classrooms.

Setting

Four of the teachers involved in this study were faculty at a small (76 students) K-2 two-way bilingual charter school in the Northwest. The school's population is a mix of Latino and Anglo Saxon children. Approximately 20% of the students speak Spanish as their first language,

although about 85% of students come from Latino households. The school is located in a mid-size, somewhat rural, culturally diverse city. The other two teachers were hired at schools in the same area; one of these was designated as an English language learner school. Data from the district shows that the designated English language learner school has a total of 256 (K-3) students of which 32% are White, 68% Hispanic, and 49% are English language learners (as cited in school records). The second school, a middle school, has a total of 742 students, of which 46 % are White and 51% Hispanic; 12% are English language learners.

Participants

The six participants were teachers in schools in the Northwest. All had attended a bilingual/ESL teacher education program at a northwestern metropolitan university. The participants consisted of two male and four female teachers. Both males (Gael, Ramiro) and two females (Veronica, Elizabeth) were Latino; two females (Carie, Donna) were European American. Gael and Carie were also co-directors of the two-way bilingual charter school in which a portion of the study took place. Ramiro and Donna were the first-year teachers. Four of the participants grew up speaking Spanish and English at home and continue to do so socially and in their jobs. The European American participants learned Spanish in college and by participating in a six-week program in Mexico.

Data Collection

One researcher spent full school days at the dual language school, one day a week during a school semester. Detailed field notes taken each day included information about classroom layout and resources; observations of teachers and students; teacher talk; notes about lessons and strategies used; student responses; and informal conversations with faculty, staff and students.

Artifacts collected included documents pertaining to curriculum plans and school policies, and samples of student work. A formal, semi-structured interview with mostly open-ended questions was conducted with each of the four teachers. These interviews were audiotaped, and then later transcribed.

The other researcher acted as an observer/mentor for the novice teachers, meeting with them on a weekly basis for a year at their schools and in more relaxed social settings. Discussions were audiotaped and transcribed.

Each data segment presented here was taken verbatim from the data collected. After reflecting on the data, we coded the transcripts and organized them into thematic "chunks" (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). The process involved taking text data, creating common categories, and labeling those categories (e.g., teacher education program, prior teaching experiences, life experiences, being a member of a cultural or linguistic sub-group, student learning and empowerment.) The field notes and artifacts were used to triangulate the data (Coffey & Atkison, 1996). Specifically, the data revealed the influence of specific beliefs and how these impacted the pedagogical decisions made in the classroom. Highlighted below are the themes that emerged from the data with specific examples given by the teachers.

What We Learned

Impact of Teacher Education Programs

Research generally supports the fact that teacher education programs tend to have little impact on how teachers teach because most students come into such programs with a preponderance of life experiences that have already shaped beliefs (O'Loughlin, 1995).

Exceptions may be when experiences in teacher preparation programs affirm the beliefs with which students enter, or when educational experiences totally disconfirm what students believe. Carie stated that the critical theory emphasis of her undergraduate program made her feel "grounded, and [I] knew where I was going" (Personal communication, 8/27/2005). Gael, on the other hand, who also demonstrates security in his position as Spanish-language teacher of kindergarten and first grade, came to this point in spite of the more traditional methods classes that made him feel like he always "collided with the professors." Some of the undergraduate classes for his minor in bilingual education had a critical flavor, but it was not until he reached the graduate level that he found a program built on critical pedagogy that resonated with his teaching beliefs and style. His beginning teaching experiences put him at odds with more traditional teachers and administrators, but he persisted in teaching in a way that he felt was relevant for his diverse students.

Prior Teaching Experiences

Gael felt his beginning experiences as a teacher were rocky, but that they helped him to solidify his own beliefs related to effective teaching. When confronted by a colleague who tried to load him up with a "big stack of…ditto stuff…and synthetic-looking things" on his first day of teaching, Gael's polite but firm response after an hour of accompanying lecture was, "It doesn't apply to the structure of teaching

that I'm conducting in two languages with the kids, and…thank you" (Personal communication, 8/4/2005). He then proceeded to come in to work early every day and make up his own curriculum. He summarized, "I learned on the job." Even today, Gael and his colleagues continue to make up many learning activities for students, believing that in this way they can tailor learning to the specific needs and interests of their students.

Elizabeth mentioned two positive experiences she had while teaching that impacted her greatly. The first was being requested by teachers at her first school to be their instructional assistant. She feels that this show of confidence in her abilities built her own confidence to become a teacher. The second experience, which also moved her closer to becoming a classroom teacher, was a result of a visit made to the charter school by several state education officials. During the visit, Elizabeth had to fill in for Carie in the kindergarten classroom to free her up to talk with the officials. After they left, Gael mentioned to Elizabeth that one man had made a compliment to him about her teaching. "Oh, Mrs. Lara, Mr. So-and-So was so impressed with your teaching. He said 'You have a wonderful kindergarten teacher'" (Personal communication, 9/15/2005). Elizabeth downplayed the comment, but it was obvious that this had had a great impact on her. As a result of her positive experiences, Elizabeth was preparing to take on the new role of kindergarten teacher the next school year.

Life Experiences

Perhaps the strongest influences on teaching beliefs and pedagogy are those of life and family. Elizabeth grew up in a migrant family, dropping out of school early because of the difficulty of juggling work and school. When her high-school age son started asking her to help him with his homework, she began to understand the importance of education, not only for her son, but also for herself. She returned to get her GED, and then continued on to obtain her associate's degree. Elizabeth also stated that she has a greater empathy for children who are struggling with math because of the challenges she, herself, faced with a college math course.

Gael related his experience with a lady at the GED testing center as one of the strongest influences on his teaching.

> I guess for me it has to be one very specific [experience]…and that's when, in the spring of '97, I went to get my GED, and a lady there, Della Wright, she was so passionate about her belief in me. And I was already 27, almost 28 years old, and so that passion that she had, that belief in me, that it didn't matter how old I was, or my lack of English proficiency…(Personal communication, 11/23/2005)

Ramiro also commented that the belief that his grandmother had in him inspired him to continue his education. He shared that he attended a very segregated high school, and many times he was told to drop out, and to get a job because "he would never make it." But he kept on hearing his grandmother's messages of encouragement.

Having someone believe in them and their abilities in spite of educational and linguistic strikes against them have made Gael and Ramiro compassionate teachers who affirm their students. They attempt to infuse the same confidence and belief into their students that Della did into him. Another life influence Gael mentioned was the work ethic instilled in him by his father, who "never walked away from duty, from work, from responsibility." This is seen in his teaching when Gael expects students "to put in their share, put in their part," holding high expectations for them.

An entry from field notes for October 23rd reveals another major influence on Gael's beliefs about education- the fact that he had dropped out of school at the 6th grade to help his family, and then returned to education at 27 years of age. His personal experience taught him to appreciate formal and informal knowledge, thus helping connect with many of the families of his students.

Veronica told me about her childhood, sharing that her family did not have much in the way of physical things, but they did have a closeness that helped build "really awesome memories." Two memories have affected how she treats her students today. She admits that she was a poor reader.

> I wasn't a good reader, and I was in Title One, even though I didn't know that that's
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> what it was. But the love for literature now that I have, that I didn't have then... I'm
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> trying to make up for it now, and so I try to pass that on to the kids, and I think when a teacher is passionate about a thing, whether it's reading or math, it just really reflects on the kids. (Personal communication, 11/3/2005)

The second influence on Veronica's classroom is her view of herself as "a shy little kid" when she was growing up. Today, she endeavors to create a place where "the kids feel safe" and can trust the adults and other children around them. "If they can't trust you and if they don't feel safe with you, then they shouldn't be with you" (Personal communication, 9/15/2005).

Experiences of Cultural or Linguistic "Difference"

Teachers of color know from personal experience what it is like to be a member of a racial/ethnic minority group in the United States. Their experiences as students in the system have shown them schools are not neutral. During an interview Ramiro revealed: "I saw the disparity of Latino/Spanish-speaking teachers and students and wanted to work for a change" (Personal communication, March 4, 2005). He often pointed out that Mexican Americans are silenced, or are asked to be quiet and follow the school (dominant) rules and to "just do their work" in all of the other classes. He understands the importance of letting students have a voice by giving them opportunities. He believes that the relationships developed in school are important to the way students feel about themselves. "I try to allow students to express themselves and get used to the idea that they can be heard through expression of different mediums" (Personal communication, May 4, 2005).

Veronica shared a negative experience related to the discrimination she felt because of her race. "You know the memories that were hurtful, when I was a little bit older in high school, when you get to know what discrimination was like, you hear things, you hear people saying things about 'those Mexicans' or things like that, and that's when you really start to wonder. You know, I really don't remember…I remember it being bad, I remember thinking, how could people treat other people like that? I mean, we're just the same, only different colors" (Personal communication, 11/3/2005). Veronica's experiences have made her determined to affirm the value of all children. She understands that to improve the education of culturally and linguistically diverse students, it is imperative that educators understand the relationship between the students' home culture and school learning (Peralta Nash 2003).

Student Learning

Several of the teachers expressed the opinion that all children learn differently, and that you sometimes have to keep trying different things until you find what works for each child. "A teacher has to adjust her teaching to accommodate that child. We can't expect them all to learn the same way" (Elizabeth, personal communication, May 23, 2005).

Another aspect of effective teaching, as expressed by the participants, was that of using real life experiences to enhance and guide lessons. Carie spoke at length about the importance of using what students brought with them to make classroom experiences more relevant and meaningful. In her view, this did not minimize the importance of having a lesson plan and knowing the content and state standards. However, these often acted as the backbone for a lesson that changed shape at times because of what children brought up in

class or wrote about in their notebooks. “You have to be able to listen and say, ‘How can I turn that into a major, dynamite lesson?’” Carie characterized her teaching as “off the cuff,” although this meant she was flexible and responsive, rather than unprepared.

Another example was shared by Elizabeth:

Yesterday when I was teaching math, I was doing math with the first-graders, and a lady, she brings in 2 bunnies for show and tell for her little girl, you know. I thought, OK, gotta think of something different here. So we stopped math and went to the carpet and did show and tell, but of course I was still going to do math. So I said, “OK, we’re still doing math.” And they were asking the little girl questions, like, “Well, how much does it cost?” you know, and the mom told them $8.00. So I said, “Two rabbits, they each cost $8.00. How much were they altogether?” And so right away, they starting working together and trying to figure it out, and they came up with $16, so… (Personal communication, 10/ 23/2005)

Ramiro decided to discuss the topic of gangs in the middle school setting. He felt that many of his students were acting tough and often defied him but he knew that the “toughness” was only skin deep; they were putting up a front, trying perhaps to cover their lack of understanding of content.

Student Empowerment

It was judged important for students to feel empowered in their education and life experiences. Several factors contributed to a sense of empowerment.

Language

When asked how they specifically validate the students’ language and culture, Gael said that, from the inception of the school, they wanted to send a message to the community about the value of Spanish. The school logo contains its motto in both Spanish and English, with the Spanish located at the top, and English underneath. As Gael pointed out, “Traditionally, English is always on the left, or always on the top, and Spanish is on the bottom.” He and Carie, as co-directors, agreed to “put that emphasis on the Spanish so people see it and go, ‘Oh, this is different!’” (Personal communication, 7/5/2005) Other ways language is valued include: conducting school community meetings in both languages; sending school communications to families in the primary home language; writing school documents in both languages, often with Spanish first; and conducting parent group meetings in two languages,

alternating which language goes first from meeting to meeting. Parents who come to visit the school are addressed in their preferred language in order to make them feel as comfortable as possible. Children are encouraged to shine in the language that is their strongest because of the dual language setup of the school. The model Gael and Carie decided on was weeklong time periods in each language. This gave students a longer period of consistent exposure to both the language they were learning and the one that was their native language, and also gave them more opportunities to "be the expert" in one classroom or another.

Voice

Carie declared: "It's really powerful for kids to know that they count, that what they say matters" (Personal communication, 10/12/05). Veronica's opening activities with her class on my field notes shows this:

> As she called out each child's name, she made a personal comment such as: "So glad you're here, Antonio!" "Great to see your smile today, Marisol!" "You were sick
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> yesterday, and we're glad you're better." She also took that opportunity to thank a student
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> for bringing her tomatoes. "I know that took a lot for you to bring those, because you
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> don't like tomatoes!" Each child smiled broadly or giggled as Veronica addressed him or
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> her. (Field notes, 10/14/ 2004)

Veronica was enthusiastic about community time in her classroom: "And it's their voice. It's their celebrations, it's their concerns, it's their joys, the class's concerns, the class's joys and celebrations, and that is the most valuable piece of the day" (Personal communication, 11/3/2005). She makes it a policy to start at a different point in the circle every day so that all have an opportunity to go first.

Carie believes that giving progress reports and assessments in students' strongest language is another way of making room for student voices. By allowing them to show what they know in a way that is most comfortable for them, she builds on their strengths. Carie also encourages her students to share their writing, not only within her class, but also with the school community. A heavy emphasis on literacy activities in two languages gives students a way to express their thoughts, feelings, and knowledge. Carie reports that all children, not only the more outgoing ones, are encouraged to share their writings. This type of validation encourages children to continue writing and

speaking to make their voices heard.

High Expectations

The participants felt that part of valuing their students highly meant holding them to high standards. This was seen both in expecting mutual respect among students and teachers, and in stretching children to achieve educational standards that are higher than the district requires. Donna implemented Literature Circles in her school to model expectations for all students. She facilitated this by creating discussion groups that included balanced bilingual students, English only and students learning English. Beginning English language learners were encouraged to use either language to share their understanding of the readings, relying at times on the bilingual students. She believes students deserve a curriculum that is culturally responsive and relevant. Thus, she created a "science fair" where students, after researching scientific concepts, share their findings with not only the other students in the school, but also staff , parents and community members. This supports her belief in the value of all her students. Students empowered by a culturally relevant learning experience "have the ability to influence their personal, social, political, and economic worlds" (Banks, 1994).

Discussion

Teacher education programs, prior teaching experiences, life experiences, experiences of cultural or linguistic differences, and student learning not only influenced teacher beliefs but also permeated teachers' pedagogy. Through the study, participants' pedagogical decisions arose from the beliefs or assumptions about culturally and linguistically diverse students and families, classrooms, and materials to be taught. The study of beliefs is critical to education specifically because the study shows that personal knowledge lies at the heart of teaching. It is important to note that four of the six participants worked at a high consensus at a school where there was flexibility in shaping the curriculum. The data shows evidence that spaces were made for student voices to be heard, not only as they shared events of their lives, but also as they faced new learning opportunities, thus mirroring the opportunities that the teachers had to embed their beliefs. In this setting there were no competing beliefs among the faculty, allowing them to grow more certain about their practices. Ramiro and Donna, the first year teachers, felt that their beliefs provided them with the platform to become agents of change within their schools. For example, Donna was determined not to perpetuate the status quo of sorting students by ability levels. She was committed to providing all of her students the

opportunity to learn from each other and to experience literacy in a meaningful way. The results of the study demonstrated that the beliefs teachers held do not operate in isolation, but influence thoughts, actions and motivation.

Conclusion

This study was done on a very small scale, with only six teachers. In light of the dearth of research about teacher beliefs and practice as they relate to teachers in bilingual or ESL programs, and also because of the ever-increasing diversity of school student populations, it is important to conduct more research of a similar nature. A larger sample size, and one that represents a cross-section of areas of the United States, could yield results that would further inform the education community. Longitudinal studies on bilingual teachers could provide insight into how beliefs are shaped across time and experiences. Also, based on responses from teachers that the bilingual classes with a critical theory emphasis they had in their teacher education programs influenced them more heavily than classes with a more traditional focus, it may be important to conduct further research into the types of teacher preparation classes that might potentially lay a better foundation for all teachers who will be working with diverse populations. As long as the trend continues of pre-service teachers belonging mostly to the Anglo Saxon, middle-class category, it will become increasingly important to do everything possible to prepare them to meet the needs of their future students.

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