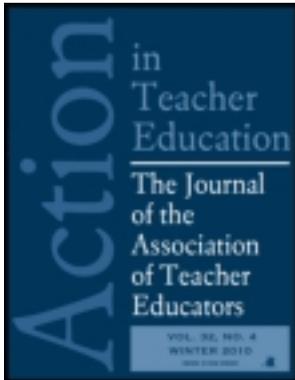


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### Expanding Roles: Teacher Educators' Perspectives on Educating English Learners

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# Expanding Roles: Teacher Educators' Perspectives on Educating English Learners

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Although the underpreparation of teachers to work with English learners is a documented problem in teacher education, little research has addressed teacher educators' perspectives in guiding prospective teachers to educate English learners. This case study of one 13-month elementary certification program highlights teacher educators' efforts and challenges in providing preservice elementary teachers with opportunities to learn about educating students learning English as an additional language. A key finding is that all teacher educators who participated in this study felt responsible for and made efforts to guide teacher candidates to educate linguistically diverse students in elementary classroom settings, but they did not work toward this goal collectively or cohesively. Implications for integrating preparation of teachers to work with English learners in preservice teacher education, such as distributed leadership among faculty, are discussed.

## INTRODUCTION

The population of English learners (ELs) in schools in the United States continues to grow (Pandya, Batalova, & McHugh, 2011). Increasingly, these students are being moved into mainstream classes with native-English speaking peers (de Jong, Harper, & Coady, 2013; Peercy & Martin-Beltrán, 2012; Platt, Harper, & Mendoza, 2003), thus all teachers—and not just language specialists—are rapidly becoming responsible for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. A remaining problem is that most elementary teachers receive little or no preparation to guide them in doing so (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008; Lucas & Villegas, 2013). In fact, less than 20% of preservice programs for elementary and secondary teachers require any coursework on the topic of educating ELs, and fewer than one third require candidates to work with ELs during field placements (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2009).

A largely unanswered question is “why” more teacher education programs have little or no focus on educating ELs, especially when we know that teacher preparation and teacher

quality affect student outcomes (Darling-Hammond, 1999, 2000). Research on preparing elementary teachers to work with ELs is especially urgent given the demographic data, which show that the number of ELs in elementary schools has grown 51% despite only 7% growth in the overall elementary population between 1999 and 2009 (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2011). Furthermore, research has shown that elementary students' academic achievement directly predicts students' academic success and likelihood of graduation in high school (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Hernandez, 2011), which necessitates the preparation of elementary teachers who are highly effective at educating all students, including ELs.

That all teachers must be prepared to educate ELs has been established (Janzen, 2008; Valdés, 2001), but “K-12 teachers cannot be well prepared to teach ELs in their classes if their own teachers (that is, teacher educators) do not possess the knowledge, skills, and commitment for preparing them” (Lucas, 2011, p. 218). Despite expanding scholarship on the need to prepare all teachers to work with ELs, few studies have explored teacher educators' experiences and perceptions of the preparation of mainstream teachers to work with ELs. The purpose of this article is to begin to fill this gap in the research by exploring teacher educators' perspectives on the opportunities and challenges of including information and critical learning experiences about educating ELs in a mainstream master's with certification in elementary education program, (hereafter MCEE). Specifically, we examine the following research questions:

1. What efforts did teacher educators make to guide teacher candidates in educating ELs effectively during the MCEE program?
2. What challenges did teacher educators encounter that impeded their efforts?

We hope that illuminating teacher educators' perspectives on this issue can lead to a better understanding of how to enhance mainstream teacher education on this critical topic.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Melnick and Zeichner (1995) suggested that multicultural teacher education should be the shared responsibility of an institution. To examine how shared responsibility to educate ELs is manifested among teacher educators, we must also examine individual responsibility and intentions. As Nieto (2000) argued, “to make a significant difference on a broad scale, *individual* efforts must be joined by collective and institutional changes” (p. 186, emphasis added).

While undertaking this study, we viewed teacher preparation to educate ELs as an individual and a collective responsibility of teacher educators. We understand teaching and learning as occurring within and across individuals who hold explicit and implicit norms that influence their actions as they interact with tools and in specific contexts (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). We sought to understand how each teacher educator in the MCEE made efforts and faced challenges when attempting to fulfill this responsibility. Additionally, because the presence or absence of coherent views and efforts among teacher educators affect teacher candidates (Athanases & de Oliveira, 2011; Tatto, 1999), we sought to understand how individual teacher educators' efforts came together to achieve this goal of preparing candidates to educate ELs.

## METHOD

The data in this article emerge from an instrumental, qualitative case study (Berg, 2009; Creswell, 2007; Stake, 1994) of a 13-month MCEE program situated in a large, research university in the mid-Atlantic United States. Within the larger case of the program, we conducted embedded cases (Yin, 1994) of eight teacher educators to explore how teacher educators in the program prepared elementary teacher candidates to educate ELs, and the challenges they encountered in their efforts. Data for this article come from a larger study conducted by the first author. Both authors are second-language educators who worked in different programs. Neither researcher had any official capacity within the MCEE.

Teacher educators were purposefully selected (Marshall & Rossman, 2011) based on varying roles, education, age, and areas of expertise. The eight teacher educators who participated in this study included the former chair of the department, the program director, three tenure-track faculty members who were teaching university-based courses, the university-based practicum supervisor, a mentor teacher, and the university-based professional development school (PDS) coordinator for the programs. Table 1 shows each teacher educator's name, role in the MCEE, and prior experience educating ELs in K-12 schools.

In this study we analyze data from interviews with MCEE teacher educators, observations of MCEE courses, and programmatic documents such as course syllabi from courses taught by participants listed in Table 1. Specifically, one 90-minute, semistructured interview was conducted with each of the participants (see the appendix for guiding interview questions). We transcribed the interviews verbatim and these transcriptions were shared with participants for member checking (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Additionally, more than 100 hours of course meetings with detailed field notes were analyzed, including one observation of the summer diversity course, six observations each of the fall diversity course and fall literacy course, two observations of the practicum seminar, and observations of every class meeting in the spring literacy and social studies methods courses. Field notes included observational and reflective notes (Creswell, 2007).

To triangulate the data from teacher educators about efforts and challenges of preparing mainstream elementary teachers to work with ELs, we also analyzed interview, survey, and observational data of participation in MCEE courses and internship experiences from one cohort of 16 MCEE teacher candidates. Data from teacher candidates included two focus group interviews with a total of eight candidates, surveys given at the beginning and end of the program to the whole cohort, and embedded case studies of four candidates. Analysis of the data from teacher candidates, which focused on their preparation to work with ELs, provided additional context and details as we sought to understand the work of teacher educators in the MCEE program.

Data analysis was guided by principles of grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Initially we coded interview, document, and observational data by identifying instances in which teacher educators addressed the teaching of ELs, and the duration, frequency, and content of these occurrences in course content. To identify and prioritize teacher educators' "felt needs" (Fay, 1975), the researchers coded data from interviews with teacher educators into two broad categories of challenges and opportunities for preparing preservice elementary teachers to educate ELs within their courses and within the larger MCEE program.

After identifying data that aligned with these two broad codes (challenges and opportunities), we developed more specific categories of coding within each of these themes as they emerged from the data. For instance, within challenges, we identified challenges as related to (1) policies,

TABLE 1  
Roles and Experiences of the Eight Teacher Educators Interviewed in this Study

<i>Teacher Educators Interviewed</i>		
<i>Interviewee</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Teaching Experience with English Learners (ELs)</i>
Kent <sup>a</sup>	Former department chair	Previously taught secondary English language arts for several years in suburban schools with mostly White students. Little or no experience teaching K-12 ELs.
Susan <sup>a</sup>	Director of graduate teacher certification programs	Previously taught secondary English language arts in urban schools with racially diverse populations. Little to no experience teaching K-12 ELs.
Gina	Coordinator of Professional Development Schools (PDS)	Previously taught for decades in elementary schools in a large, racially diverse city. Little to no experience teaching K-12 ELs.
Kasey	Field supervisor and instructor for practicum seminar (Seminar observed two times)	Previously taught elementary school with racially diverse populations. Little or no experience teaching K-12 ELs.
Melissa	Mentor teacher at the elementary school (Mentor and teacher candidate observed three times)	In her 5th year of teaching elementary school serving a racially diverse student population at the time of study. Little to no experience teaching K-12 ELs.
Tania <sup>a</sup>	Associate professor who taught two literacy courses in the MCEE (Fall literacy course observed six times; spring course observed 14 times)	Former high school counselor who worked with racially and ethnically diverse students. Little to no experience teaching K-12 ELs.
Henry <sup>a</sup>	Assistant professor who taught the second diversity course in the MCEE (Fall diversity course observed six times)	Formerly served as a teaching assistant in elementary schools and led an after-school program. Little to no experience teaching K-12 ELs.
Eve <sup>a</sup>	Assistant professor who taught the methods of mathematics course	Formerly taught in international schools in South Korea and Jakarta and California. Years of experience teaching K-12 ELs.

MCEE = Master's with certification in elementary education program.

All names are pseudonyms.

a. Indicates university-based teacher educators.

(2) programmatic structures, (3) hindrances to collaboration, (4) limited resources, or (5) limited knowledge base and experience. Researchers analyzed the data and when discrepancies occurred, we wrote analysis memos (Creswell, 2007) and referred to other data collected as part of the research that could shed light on the research questions in this inquiry. Through recursive analysis that occurred during and after data collection, we verified our analysis with one another to identify when we needed additional analysis of supplemental data. For instance, when we analyzed interview data, we triangulated our interpretations by referring to data sources such as syllabi, observations, or teacher candidate interviews. Next, as we continued to analyze data, we used the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to seek similarities and differences among teacher educators' efforts and perceptions of preparing candidates to be effective teachers of ELs. By coding the triangulated data we identified emergent themes and continued coding until data saturation occurred.

## FINDINGS

Interview data revealed that all of the teacher educators emphasized their strong belief that guiding mainstream teacher candidates to educate ELs in their future classrooms was an important and immediate need, though observational data and document review revealed that they addressed the teaching of ELs to varying degrees in their courses. A central finding emerged: individually, all teacher educators made efforts to prepare candidates to educate ELs, but the lack of a collective, cohesive, plan within the MCEE program was identified as a key challenge by teacher educators and teacher candidates. Below, we describe the efforts and challenges of teacher educators who taught university-based coursework, served as program administrators, and worked within PDS sites.

### Individual Efforts

The three university-based faculty participants who taught in the MCEE program—Eve, the mathematics methods professor, Tania, the literacy professor, and Henry, the diversity professor—each presented opportunities for candidates to learn more about educating ELs. To help candidates understand ELs' potential experiences learning arithmetic, Eve guided the candidates in discussing larger sociocultural considerations of diversity in education. One class meeting focused specifically on helping teacher candidates to understand ELs' perspectives. She asked teacher candidates to solve arithmetic problems in a base of six, in Arabic, and in Korean to demonstrate that mathematics is not a universal language. According to her syllabus and our interview, this session was the only day in which she focused explicitly on multilingual learners. In the fall literacy course, Tania presented two key opportunities throughout the semester for teachers to consider the learning needs and resources of ELs. For instance, in one class, Tania guided candidates in selecting and evaluating multicultural and multilingual children's books. On another day in fall, she invited a guest speaker to discuss strategies to support ELs. On her course syllabus, only 2 days (the aforementioned) focused on ELs in the fall. In the syllabus for the spring literacy course, none of the planned sessions mentioned ELs, although supporting ELs did enter into conversations peripherally. For instance, on a day in which elementary teachers were invited to be guests to explain their lesson planning processes, Tania asked them how they support ELs, and they suggested visuals, using streamed videos to preview content ideas, and peer tutoring.

In the fall diversity course syllabus, four days included full or partial attention to EL instruction with the following four topics: culturally responsive teaching, reflecting on our assumptions and discussing Funds of Knowledge, learning language, a narrative, autobiography of an immigrant. However, the processes of instruction on these days included less attention to ELs. Henry spent most of the culturally responsive instruction session discussing Carol Lee's work and code-switching with a strong focus on African Americans and only a momentary mention of ELs. On the day devoted to ELs, two groups of candidates led discussion and provided a brief overview of Lucas, Villegas, and Freedson-Gonzales's (2008) piece on linguistically responsive instruction. During this session, candidates talked about how they could incorporate students' first languages into instruction (i.e., they suggested bilingual labels for classroom objects) and the importance of building background knowledge. Then, the discussion leaders showed a long excerpt of the French movie *The Class* and engaged the group in discussing the importance of developing a

caring classroom environment. In the session in which candidates read the story of a migrant, the class spent 45 minutes discussing the story, which started with candidates reporting the setting and characters followed by Henry mentioning that politicians who advocate for English only is paradoxical to our country's history of immigration. After this 45-minute discussion, Henry showed and orally reviewed a general lesson-planning template.

Administrators and field-based teacher educators also made efforts to prepare candidates to work with ELs. Gina, the coordinator of PDS sites commented, "We can't guarantee that they have ELs in their classroom, but we certainly can make sure that they have connections and interactions with the EL teacher." Kasey, the field-based supervisor for the student-teaching internships, said, "Just because an intern doesn't have ELs in their class, it doesn't mean that they're not seeing ELs by being in their school." Two years prior to the data collection for this study, the former chair of the department, Kent, had tried to organize faculty around improving the ways in which the MCEE guided candidates to educate linguistically diverse students. He brought a faculty team together to revise the overall curriculum to infuse attention to ELs within the diversity courses specifically and throughout the program. Susan, the MCEE director, also aimed to incorporate preparation to educate ELs into the program more although she stated to the researchers in her interview that she was unsure of how to do so. Overall, we found that university-based teacher educators, field-based teacher educators, and administrators were conscious of the need to guide prospective elementary teachers to educate ELs effectively, and they worked toward this goal by addressing ELs in course content, exposing candidates to ELs in their practicum settings, and infusing a focus on ELs throughout the program.

## Challenges

Issues that hindered teacher educators' individual efforts to prepare candidates to work with students learning English as an additional language pertained to the realm of collective, organizational limitations. Several key challenges emerged: confusion about leadership roles and onus of responsibility, miscommunication between multiple participants and a still-developing sense of coherence, and structural constraints such as top-down pressures and limited amounts of time. We examine each of these challenges below.

*Leadership and onus of responsibility.* Although Kent, the former chair, had tried to get faculty to work together to integrate attention to ELs into the MCEE curriculum, he was dissatisfied with the lack of progress related to EL education:

I was disappointed that I did not see much actually accomplished with the revision of the diversity courses. While there was much talk about what was needed, and some commitment to make changes, the courses remained largely focused around race issues and there was still not much progress in thinking through how working with English language learners could be enhanced significantly in the program.

Kent identified lack of leadership and specified responsibility as fundamental challenges to the achievement of his goal. "Who was in charge never got totally clarified," he shared, "and so no one had it put on their platter as 'my responsibility'." In his discussion of leadership, Kent mentioned, "I thought I had put that directive" of enhancing attention to ELs in the MCEE "clearly to Susan. And that Susan wanted to facilitate getting that done."

Susan—the director of the MCEE program—had a perspective that differed from Kent’s, in that she hoped for departmental leaders to spearhead this initiative of restructuring the program to attend to ELs. Susan commented, “There isn’t really anybody at the departmental level leading us or urgently pressing us to go in one direction or another.” When I asked Susan about her efforts and the challenges she perceived in preparing candidates to educate ELs in the MCEE program, she explained that she did not have expertise in teaching ELs and thus did not know the best direction to take:

If and when we get to the point where somewhere someone in the program is laying out that framework and I can kind of tap into that and remind my students of that framework, I’m confident I could do that, but could I be the one to engineer what that framework was? No.

Susan and Kent intended to improve the ways in which the MCEE guided candidates to educate ELs, but each expected the other to take the lead on this initiative. No one person or group took the responsibility to lead or plan specific actions to increase candidates’ opportunities to learn about interacting with and teaching ELs, which ultimately meant that little collective action was taken.

*Still-developing expertise.* Several teacher educators—in addition to Susan—identified their lack of experience or expertise in teaching ELs as a challenge. Melissa, the mentor teacher, shared that she and her teacher intern “only briefly talked about [supporting ELs academically],” which she said was partially because, “this is the first year, because of the boundary changes, that our school has had so many ELs, mostly of Latino descent. So this is really our first year for this type of diversity and this is the first time I’ve had to interact with ELs like that.” Gina, the PDS coordinator, noted that many teacher educators shared Melissa’s uncertainty with the newness of educating ELs, and she said that “the knowledge that the instructors are still trying to acquire in regard to what is best practice for all ELs” was a challenge. “Teachers need more information, more knowledge, so they’re not afraid,” Gina continued, because “when it’s new, it’s frightening.”

*Need for increased coherence and communication.* University-based teacher educators in the MCEE program used their individual expertise to prepare teacher candidates, but they did not come together to compare, contrast, or build upon one another’s efforts to guide candidates in educating ELs. Eve referred to this as the faculty’s “lack of—or maybe a nicer way of saying it—is a still-developing sense of coherence in the program. I think we all individually do things. It is really hard work.” When asked in an interview how the MCEE program addressed the teaching of ELs, a teacher candidate corroborated Eve’s comment: “[Learning to educate ELs] has been this hodge-podge of discussions in various coursework.” Tania also identified this lack of coherence as a challenge:

I mean we already say to each other, “Yes, you need to be talking about it,” but how many people really do it? I don’t know. It does need to be a commitment, I think, because otherwise, it’s very easy to crowd that out, and I’ve seen that.

From Tania’s and Eve’s perspectives, coming together to learn about, conceptualize, and discuss the ways they individually provided teacher candidates with opportunities to learn to educate ELs would have enhanced the efforts of the MCEE program to more consistently address how to support ELs academically.

Another example of a need for increased coordination and communication occurred in the practicum sites. Although Gina and Kasey, the PDS coordinator and internship supervisor, respectively reported that all candidates had opportunities to learn to educate ELs at their school sites, interviews with the teacher candidates revealed that most candidates did not experience these learning opportunities, and the teaching of ELs remained peripheral to their learning experiences in the practicum. After 9 months at her teaching site, one teacher candidate, for example, said that she did not know if an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher worked at her internship school. In March of the academic year, another teacher candidate did not know if one of the students in his internship class did or did not receive ESOL services.

Kasey also mentioned that she and Gina encouraged teacher candidates to interact with the ESL teachers at their schools, but miscommunication proved to be a challenge in Kasey and Gina's efforts in guiding candidates to learn about ELs in the internship portion of the program. For instance, they included three professional development days in the practicum during which time candidates were expected to observe teachers other than their assigned mentors, such as the ESL teacher. Miscommunication between Kasey, the mentor teachers, and the teacher candidates hindered candidates' opportunities to leave their mentors' classrooms and visit the ESL teachers. A teacher candidate explained this communication breakdown: "Kasey was the one who said you can do the professional development days, but she didn't communicate that to the mentors. . . . I felt weird asking, 'Can I go out of the classroom?'" Thus, lack of communication proved challenging in affording candidates opportunities to learn to educate ELs at their internship sites.

*Structural constraints.* Thirteen months is a short amount of time to provide teacher candidates rich and varied opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they need to educate children. Time and course space within these 13 months were limited further by the teacher educators' need to follow specific guidelines and fulfill mandates to maintain accreditation as an institution that enabled candidates to obtain certification. As Henry stated, "Let's be clear—it's a very challenging 13-month, intensive program, and the one thing that we all agree upon in educational research and the world of practitioners, is that the notion of having ample time to prepare is key." Time constraints occurred within and across courses. Within her literacy classes, Tania felt pressured because "the reading courses have to look at certain topics" due to state policies for elementary teacher certification, and this pressure prevented her from spending more time talking about the education of ELs in her classes. Tania explained:

I just feel in my course, probably I could do a bit more pushing them to that next level of strategies . . . supports you might have for ELs, for example. We don't go that next step to really focus on them, because as you can see, I have a syllabus. We actually are supposed to cover these topics. So I feel a little more constrained in that sense.

This inability to spend more time discussing how to educate ELs went beyond specific courses and affected the MCEE program as a whole. Eve, who had formerly worked in California, said she was "shocked, shocked, shocked" that the MCEE program had such limited requirements for teacher candidates to learn content and skills regarding educating ELs. Eve recognized, though, that "the stipulations" the state "puts on this program mean that critical need areas are not being fulfilled." The state's requirements that teacher candidates take certain courses and have specific experiences within those courses—along with a lack of state-wide teacher education policies

regarding teacher preparation to educate ELs—limited the teacher educators’ abilities to infuse this topic into the MCEE program. Eve continued, “If we don’t have any space to support the pre-service teachers to learn about [ELs], we have a big problem.” Because much of the thirteen months had to be dedicated to mandated content, finding sufficient time to attend to the education of ELs was a major challenge.

## DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The challenges these teacher educators identified lead to several recommendations for improving the ways teacher education programs prepare teacher candidates to educate ELs:

1. Make the goal of guiding all teachers to learn to educate ELs effectively an explicit priority with a clear implementation plan.
2. Use a framework of distributed leadership, which enables teacher educators to guide one another through sharing expertise.
3. Reorganize programmatic structures to enable teacher educators to improve the ways they prepare all teachers to educate ELs.

### Explicit Goals

Organizations, such as a College of Education or a teacher education program, are more likely to make change when they identify tangible goals with incremental steps toward reaching that goal (Warner & Havens, 1968). Clear and explicit goals—especially when each educator’s values and dispositions align with these (Burch, 2007; Kelchtermans, 2005)—can guide people and organizations to implement change, evaluate their progress, and modify their strategies toward making improvements (Van de Ven & Poole, 1995). In this study, the lack of a clear, specific goal and theory of action among university-based teacher educators and leaders hindered their ability to improve teacher preparation for ELs, which aligns with Fullan’s (1993) assertion that teacher education reforms have failed when vague ideologies guide change instead of “ideas of what should be done and how” (p. 109). The first necessary step toward improving how teacher educators in preservice elementary education programs can guide candidates to educate ELs, then, is to declare this imperative as shared, explicit, and worthy of all faculty members’ efforts. Once teacher educators work within this teleological framing, they can engage in brainstorming and “purposeful social construction” toward a cohesive approach for improvement (Van de Ven & Poole, 1995, p. 520). A “systemic, institutional perspective on change” is necessary for effective transformation of teacher education, especially with urgent issues such as preparing all teachers to educate ELs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005, p. 453).

Inclusion of content about educating ELs is important not only at the programmatic level, but also at the state policy and teacher accreditation level. A significant challenge to achieving this shared vision in the MCEE program, and indeed all teacher education programs, were the state-level and National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) requirements for elementary certification, which did not require significant coverage of methods and knowledge for educating ELs. As Lipman (2002) has argued, “through their definition of public problems and

the solutions they pose, policies organize consciousness around shared understandings of educational issues and of specific groups” (p. 382). Because all certification-based teacher education programs are driven by state requirements, teacher educators, university leaders, and district personnel must work together to engage with state policy makers about the need for greater emphasis on educating ELs within certification requirements.

### Distributed Leadership

Second-language education faculty members accepting and enacting the roles of leaders in redesigning teacher education programs can empower and enable faculty in elementary education to infuse their programs with a strand of educating linguistically diverse children. “Success [in collaborations] depends on having faculty with the expertise and commitment to *take the lead* on developing programs, seeking funding, coordinating the programs, and reaching out to colleagues for their involvement and input” (Sakash & Rodriguez-Brown, 2011, p. 156, emphasis added), yet often the designated leaders do not know how to lead reforms, as we found with Kent and Susan in this study.

Comments from teacher educators in this study beg the question of determining “how” each individual can hold responsibility, share one another’s expertise, and make collective efforts toward improving their preparation of candidates to educate ELs, especially when fragmentation among teacher educators has been shown to be detrimental to educational reform in the past (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). Several faculty members referred to leaders or leadership when describing their challenges and suggestions, but the leaders of the program also sought direction from others. Instead of hierarchical leadership patterns, then, we recommend that shifting toward distributed leadership is one possibility that can help teacher educators to infuse more critical learning experiences about ELs into teacher education programs.

A distributed leadership framework enables organizations such as a College of Education to access each person’s intellectual and social capital (Hargreaves, 2011) through moving away from hierarchical power structures, emphasizing teachers “learning together through constructing meaning and knowledge collectively” (Harris, 2003, p. 314), and envisioning leadership as emerging through rich interactions (Spillane, 2005). We agree with Elmore (2000), who posited that distributed leadership is “instrumental to improvement” and “is the glue of a common goal” (p. 15).

Distributed leadership at the teacher education level requires that administrators explicitly give individual faculty members across ESOL, elementary, and secondary programs authority to acknowledge and tap into one another’s expertise. Three important ways that distributed leadership moves beyond the more vague suggestion of collaboration are that “leadership is assigned more formally to particular individuals” (Timperley, 2005, p. 18); distributed leadership capitalizes upon “the ability to encourage colleagues to change, to do things they wouldn’t ordinarily consider without the influence of a leader” (Wasley, 1991, p. 23); and it gives all educators a “sense of ownership” and participation in working toward the goal (Harris, 2003, p. 316).

### Programmatic Structures

For distributed leadership among faculty across second-language education and elementary education programs to be successful, restructuring of organizational resources and infrastructure

is needed. Currently, ESOL faculty members hold the responsibilities of teaching in ESL certification programs and furthering their research agendas, whereas faculty in elementary education work within their programs and areas of expertise. For such isolated practices to end, “institutional supports” need to be in place (Cochran-Smith, 2003, p. 6; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). ESOL and elementary and secondary faculty may be further isolated from each other when ESOL faculty and teacher preparation are housed in departments of linguistics, English, or world languages, and not in the same department as teacher educators who are in education departments. Creating and maintaining structures that provide opportunities for faculty to interact at work is a key tenet of distributed leadership (Harris, 2008). Asking ESOL faculty to give guest lectures in coursework for preservice elementary teachers can help (e.g., Meskill, 2005), but “ongoing” coaching that is situated in practice can provide richer learning experiences for faculty and teacher candidates (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Stowe, 2010; Teemant, 2010). For extensive collaboration, educators need the time and space to discuss methods, evaluate their practice and possible alternatives, and determine new directions (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995) of preparing candidates to educate ELs.

To promote shared learning, Colleges of Education can consider changes in schedules, personnel and staff, funding, and management. An environment for collaboration can be created through the reconsiderations of schedules and personnel (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). Incentives for enacting additional roles could help faculty members reconcile the time that their new leadership or coaching positions would take away from their other duties (Harris, 2003). Administrators can go beyond delegating roles for faculty based on each person’s potential (e.g., asking second-language education faculty to coach) and consider restructuring, such as providing “substantial classroom release time” and trusting faculty to lead one another (Timperley, 2005, p. 410) toward the goal of attending to ELs. Developing programs of research based in shared inquiry around the preparation of all teachers to educate linguistically diverse students could afford teacher educators the added benefit of studying their practice and disseminating findings based on their progress. Overall, to accomplish our recommendations to (1) identify an explicit goal with clear implementation possibilities and (2) employ distributed leadership as a more specific directive than the vague term of collaboration, we urge scholars and practitioners in teacher education to consider the infrastructure that could make such practices possible.

### Specific and Incremental Recommendations

With a teleological perspective in which people are motivated to make change, developing incremental steps and strategies toward goal achievement can help (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005; Fullan, 1993) to improve the preparation of all preservice teachers to educate ELs. Because we hold a sociocultural perspective of learning, in which we start from learners’ (in this case, teacher educators’) values, concerns, and strengths, our recommendations emerge directly from the constraints teacher educators in this study identified. We believe these suggestions will help to respond not only to these teacher educators but also to inform those who work in similar programs and face similar challenges.

Given the complexities and time required to make large, structural shifts in teacher education programs or opportunities for faculty interaction, capitalizing upon and working with the structures that are already in place is a useful and realistic starting point. In programs such as the

MCEE, teacher educators can revisit diversity courses to move beyond racial and ethnic diversity to include discussions of linguistic and socioeconomic diversity. Although we prefer to see attention to ELs infused throughout teacher education programs instead of keeping the education of culturally and linguistically diverse students as an “add-on” (Hollins & Guzman, 2005), improving the diversity coursework might be an achievable goal while faculty and administrators work toward larger changes. Classes on diversity and multiculturalism in teacher education must broaden their scope from only focusing on issues regarding race and gender to also attend to other forms of diversity, such as linguistic diversity (Gorski & Goodman, 2011).

Second, small changes in required learning experiences can have a large impact on teacher candidates’ conceptualizations of educating ELs effectively. Getting candidates in the habit of developing ways to make English visible (de Jong & Harper, 2005) in their content-area lessons during their preservice preparation can help them to support students to successfully navigate the language demands of classroom content (cf. Bailey, 2006; Bailey & Butler, 2003; Janzen, 2008) in their first years of teaching. Additionally, requiring teacher candidates to observe and talk with ESOL teachers at their internships can help them gain insights into the ways ELs are supported within and beyond their mentors’ classrooms. In the MCEE, the majority of the teacher candidates did not communicate with the ESOL teacher; many did not know if there was a ESOL teacher in their school, nor which of their students received support from the ESOL teacher (Daniel, in press). Asking preservice elementary teachers to interact with the ESOL teachers, observe ELs participating in ESOL classes, and work closely with ELs during their internships can help candidates to refine the ways they support ELs in their instruction (Daniel, 2014).

Finally, collaboration between university-based second-language education and elementary and secondary educators can occur at multiple levels. Teacher educators can enact distributed leadership through professional development for faculty in elementary education (Costa, McPhail, Smith, & Brisk, 2005; Gort, Glenn, & Settlage, 2011), intensive and extensive coaching, or second-language and elementary educators coteaching courses. In addition to coaching among faculty, Kent suggested that doctoral students with second-language expertise coach elementary education faculty. Teacher candidates in ESOL and elementary education can be encouraged or mandated to work together to write lesson plans, adapt plans for ELs, and/or coteach classes (Sakash & Rodriguez-Brown, 2011). Bringing teacher candidates together, perhaps through a shared required course, can help foster collaboration early in their careers, learn about one another’s expertise, and overcome the “professional schism that allows less successful educational practices with ELLs to persist” (Hamann & Reeves, 2013, p. 81).

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article was to report teacher educators’ voices regarding how they approached guiding prospective elementary teachers to educate ELs and to develop specific implications for teacher educators across the United States who currently struggle with similar challenges in achieving this goal. Whereas other researchers have explored perspectives of teacher candidates or teacher educators within one course experience, in this study, we explored multiple teacher educators’ perspectives across one program to identify the dynamic of programmatic relations, efforts, and challenges as well as individual teacher educators’ perspectives. The recommendations we provide emerge directly from teacher educators’ efforts and challenges rather than

from external evaluations or top-down process. Although individual teacher educators can afford teacher candidates opportunities to learn about educating ELs, program cohesiveness around this effort can enable teacher candidates to learn more about educating ELs (Athanases & de Oliveira, 2011) and understand that the education community values and prioritizes this goal.

Identifying an explicit goal, enacting distributed leadership, and restructuring programmatic features can all help to improve teacher preparation for students learning English as an additional language. Over a decade ago, Melnick and Zeichner (1995) suggested, “teacher education for diversity is the responsibility of the total institution” (p. 17). In this study, although we found that teacher educators did feel committed to and responsible for preparing teachers to educate ELs, they did not know how to best achieve this goal within their individual roles, nor how to organize and come together to make a coherent effort toward achieving it. Although we agree with Melnick and Zeichner’s (1995) proposition that the entire program is responsible for preparing elementary teachers to educate ELs, we found that simply “feeling” responsible for guiding teachers to work with students learning English as an additional language did not enable teacher educators to do so effectively or cohesively, thus leaving the education of culturally and linguistically diverse students at the periphery of teacher education yet again (Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Sleeter, 2012). We hope that our recommendations help teacher educators, program administrators, and policy makers develop new ways to guide prospective elementary teachers to educate students learning English as an additional language.

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## APPENDIX: GUIDING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### GENERAL

What roles do you have in the MCEE program? Did you design the course or adopt a syllabus?

### PERSONAL SKILLS/EXPERIENCES

What experiences do you have teaching? What experiences do you have teaching ELs?

What types of professional development have you had regarding teaching ELs?

What needs & capabilities do you think ELs have?

What skills do you think are important when working with ELs?

What questions do you have about teaching ELs?

What do you think candidates need to know or be able to do to teach ELs?

### PREPPING TEACHERS FOR ELS

A lot of people argue ELs' academic progress is primarily the responsibility of ESL teachers.

What do you think?

How important do you think it is for the MCEE to prepare prospective teachers to work with ELs?

When and how are teacher candidates prepared to teach ELs in this program?

What opportunities do you see in preparing candidates to teach ELs?

What challenges do you see in preparing candidates to teach ELs?

Many educators argue that, to teach ELs successfully, all teachers need specialized preparation that enables them to understand the particular needs and characteristics of ELs and strategies for teaching them. What do you think?

### RESOURCES & PROGRAM STRUCTURE

What would help you better prepare candidates to teach ELs?

Who or what can you turn to if you want to learn more about preparing candidates to work with ELs?

What resources or networks would help candidates gain knowledge, skills, and dispositions to teach ELs?

How do you think we could improve how the program prepares candidates to work with ELs?

### POLICIES

How do you think the program meets NCATE standard 3.2?

When and how do you think the program addresses this NCATE standard 3.5?

The MCEE mission statement states, "We seek to prepare teachers for successful careers in public schools with culturally, linguistically, or economically diverse school populations."

How well do you think the program is fulfilling that mission?