Developing English Language and Literacy through Teacher Achievement (Project DELTA)

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Background

- The majority of ELLs are taught by un- or under-prepared teachers (Gándara, Rumberger, Maxwell-Jolly, & Callahan, 2003)

- Few states have guidelines for general education teacher preparation to work with ELLs (changing in response to No Child Left Behind reforms)
  - Florida is an exception with a mandate since 2002
The Florida Context: Demographics

- Florida has the third largest population of speakers of languages other than English in the U.S. (24% of 5-17 year olds are ELL)
- About 8.7% are identified as ESOL/ELL (2006-7)
- Districts report about 239 languages, though Spanish dominates (~77%) (2000-01)
- Geographical differences among groups between north and south Florida
1990 Florida Consent Decree - Professional development requirements for practicing teachers

- Five areas:
  - Applied linguistics
  - Cross-Cultural Communication
  - Language Assessment
  - Methods
  - Curriculum and Material Development

- Number of hours required varies according to assignment:
  - Elementary teachers: 300 hours (equivalent of five (5) 3-credit university courses)
  - Secondary content teachers: 60 hours (equivalent of one (1) 3-credit university course)
The Florida Context: Teacher Preparation Programs

- In 2001, new mandate that all candidates in a teacher preparation program must graduate with an ESOL endorsement.

- Guiding documents: 25 ESOL Performance Standards & (later added) 11 ESOL Competencies.

- Florida Department of Education allows options:
  - Full endorsement - all five courses
  - Endorsement through Infusion
    - Minimum of two ESOL courses
Main “Infused Program” requirements

- Demonstrate where and how ESOL Performance Standards are addressed in an approved teacher preparation program in a matrix (syllabus)
- Qualified ESOL faculty for ESOL courses
- 45 hours Professional Development for faculty teaching “infused” courses
Our Context

- Two-course ESOL Infused elementary teacher preparation program
  - Course I (*TSL 3526: Foundations of Language and Culture in the Elementary Classroom*)
  - Course II (*TSL 5142: Curriculum, Methods and Assessment*)
  - Infusion across the program (ProTeach)
Project Delta

Rationale

- Despite several years of ESOL-Infused program graduates we do not know whether Infusion effectively prepares mainstream teachers to work with ELLs
  - *Studying Teacher Education: The Report of the AERA Panel on Research and Education* (Cawthorne & Cochran Smith, 2005)
Project Delta Goals

- **Goal 1**: understand the relationship between ESOL-infused Elementary ProTeach program participation, i.e., graduates from the ProTeach program working with ELLs in the State of Florida, and the academic achievement of ELLs in their classes.
Project Delta Goals

- **Goal 2**: Understand the variables that influence the implementation of effective teaching practices for ELLs and the achievement of ELLs in elementary education settings in Florida.
Goal 3: Use information obtained in the study to modify and enhance the University of Florida ESOL-infused teacher preparation program and to inform teacher educators, policymakers, and educational administrators working with pre- and in-service teachers of the study findings both within the State of Florida and nationally.
Project Delta Research

- **Education Warehouse Database**
  - Teacher Variables
  - Student Variables
- **Survey** of Elementary Teacher Preparation Program Graduates currently teaching in Florida
- **Case Studies** ($n=12$) of Elementary Teacher Preparation Program Graduates across north Florida
Project Delta
Activities and Accomplishments

- Literature Review (teacher effectiveness, efficacy, instructional practices, and teacher preparation with ELLs)
  - Project Status: ongoing fall 2008

- EDW – Review of state variables / elements and request for access to dataset (RTF)
  - Project Status: Awaiting File
  - Challenges: complex set of data, processes to identify and request data, anticipate analyses and modeling
Project Delta
Activities and Accomplishments

- Case Studies  Fall 2008- Fall 2010
  - Development of observation protocols
  - Development of interview protocols
  - Pilot instruments Fall 2008
Project Delta
Activities and Accomplishments

- Survey
  - Development fall – spring 2007-8
  - Distributed late spring to all graduates contacted (n=1,284; 880 in Florida)
  - September 2008 – 81
  - Challenge: return rate and follow up in progress
Survey Design

Five sections of the survey with 10-12 items each section:

- Social and cultural dimensions of teaching ESOL students
- Content area teaching for ESOL students
- Language and literacy development for ESOL students
- Curriculum and Classroom organization
- Assessment Issues in teaching ESOL students
Survey-Preliminary Findings

- In what instructional areas related to ELLs do teacher education program graduates feel most prepared? Least prepared?
- In what instructional areas related to ELLs do teacher education program graduates feel most effective? Least effective?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ave.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing additional wait time for my ESOL students to respond when I ask them questions in class</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing my classroom so that my ESOL students feel comfortable and ready to learn</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using graphic organizers to make my instruction more comprehensible for my ESOL students</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing activities to allow my ESOL students to demonstrate competence regardless of their English language ability</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting topics and stories that are thematically linked so that my instruction is more coherent for my ESOL students*</td>
<td>3.2</td>
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## Teacher Preparedness Least Prepared

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<tr>
<td>Using my ESOL students’ home languages as a resource in teaching</td>
<td>2.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborating with other educators (e.g., ESOL or reading resource teachers, special educators) to support my ESOL students</td>
<td>2.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Addressing the grammatical (e.g., sentence complexity) demands of content area when I plan instruction for my ESOL students</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using bilingual parent volunteers, teachers, assistants, or other school personnel to support instruction for my ESOL students</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helping my ESOL students with circumstances affecting their lives outside the classroom</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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## Teacher Efficacy

### Most Effective Statements

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizing my classroom so that my ESOL students feel comfortable and ready to learn</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing additional wait time for my ESOL students to respond when I ask them questions in class</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling the use of English while teaching for my ESOL students</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using graphic organizers to make my instruction more comprehensible for my ESOL students</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making my ESOL students feel valued in my classroom</td>
<td>3.4</td>
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## Teacher Efficacy: Least Effective

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<tr>
<td>Using my ESOL students’ home languages as a resource in teaching</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing the grammatical (e.g., sentence complexity) demands of content area when I plan instruction for my ESOL students</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locating bilingual materials (for my ESOL students who are literate in their home language) to supplement grade-level textbooks</td>
<td>2.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning about my ESOL students’ home languages</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting language objectives specifically for my ESOL students when I plan instruction in different content areas</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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Interpretation and Discussion

- Teachers feel most prepared and efficacious in creating a welcoming and affirming (valued) atmosphere in the classroom.
- Teachers feel most prepared and efficacious using graphic organizers.
- Teachers feel least prepared and efficacious in areas related to using students’ first language as a resource for learning (bilingual materials, home resource).
- Implications for the development of bilingualism and learning theory (connecting background to new learning).
Implications for Teacher Preparation

- The ProTeach program places emphasis on cultural diversity and fostering learning in diverse settings.
- However, issues of the use of L1 as a resource for learning and communicating with families has not been fostered (according to these preliminary findings).
- This information can connect with ProTeach and teacher prep programs in FL and nationally.
Next Steps

- Continue to analyze data from surveys coming back
- Survey data will inform our observation and interview protocols for case study projects (spring 2009)
- Will cross these data with student learning data and teacher preparation pathways (EDW)
- Website, literature review