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TEACHING “IN THEIR BEST INTERESTS”: PRESERVICE TEACHERS NARRATIVES REGARDING ENGLISH LEARNERS

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1. Introduction

Preparing teachers to work equitably and effectively with linguistically diverse students is an international concern (Rao, 1996; Leung & Franson, 2001; Tazi & Jordan, 2015; Webster & Valeo, 2001). In the United States, there are increasing numbers of students who are simultaneously learning English and academic content, i.e., English Learners (ELs) (García, Arias, Harris-Murri, & Serna, 2010; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2015). These students are enrolling in schools that historically have not served linguistically diverse students (Capps et al., 2005; García et al., 2010). Simultaneously, policy mandates, e.g., the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), have been detrimental to English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual education programs by reducing the resources available for such programs (Harper, de Jong, & Platt, 2008). This context has increased the likelihood that mainstream classroom teachers, who are neither ESL or bilingual certified, will be responsible for teaching ELs alongside native English speaking students.

Unfortunately, mainstream classroom teachers often feel underprepared to work effectively with ELs (Clair, 1995; Pettit, 2011; Reeves, 2006; Walker, Shafer, & Liams, 2004). While teachers may express a welcoming attitude regarding linguistically diverse students (Reeves, 2006), they may also be concerned about their lack of preparation for and knowledge about how to teach ELs in the mainstream classroom (Gándara, Maxwell, & Driscoll, 2005; Lucas, Villegas, & Martin, 2015; Reeves, 2006; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). Despite these potential misgivings, this is important work given that ELs face significant challenges related to their academic, social, and linguistic participation in the classroom as well as lower levels of achievement outcomes in comparison to their English proficient peers (Hernandez, Denton, & Macartney, 2008; Reardon & Galindo, 2006).

Teacher education scholars, teacher educators, and accrediting organizations have increasingly focused on the need to prepare mainstream classroom teachers to work equitably and effectively with ELs (Commins & Miramontes, 2006; de Jong & Harper, 2005; Fillmore & Snow, 2000; Lucas & Villegas, 2011; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2008). From this work, three areas of preparation have been proposed for teacher education coursework, i.e., language related knowledge, pedagogical skills for teaching ELs, and productive dispositions for working with ELs (de Jong & Harper, 2005; Fillmore & Snow, 2000; Lucas & Villegas, 2011, 2013). However, preparing preservice teachers to work with ELs is proving to be a complicated task for several reasons. Firstly, the teaching force remains predominantly monolingual, native English speakers (Guarino, Santibañez, & Daley, 2006); therefore, many teachers will lack the experience of learning a second language or have minimal to no understanding of second language acquisition. Secondly, the preparation of mainstream classroom teachers to teach ELs is only one component of a busy teacher education

program with notable variability between institutions (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008). Finally, preservice teachers can develop deficit and/or resource-based beliefs toward ELs through their field-based experiences with linguistically diverse students (Garmon, 2005; Hadaway, 1993). This final factor, related to how field-based experiences shape preservice teachers' developing orientations toward ELs, has been underexplored in the literature. In an effort to explore this aspect of preservice teacher learning, we have designed this narrative study to unpack preservice teachers' sense making of experiences involving ELs during their field-based observations in elementary mainstream classrooms. By exploring the means through which preservice teachers' 'story' their experiences (author, 1993) with ELs as well as how they make sense of these 'narrative fragments' (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), we hoped to better understand their developing orientations toward working with ELs in mainstream classrooms.

Specifically, our study addressed the following questions: (1) How do preservice teachers conceptualize English Learners and/or mainstream teachers during recalled events from their field-based observations? (2) What is the nature of the experiences that preservice teachers remember involving English Learners? and (3) How do these experiences shape preservice teachers' developing orientations toward working with English Learners?

2. Literature Review: Shaping Preservice Teachers' Orientations Toward ELs

The field of teaching and teacher education has long documented the potential impact of teachers' beliefs and attitudes on their interactions with students as well as their pedagogical practice (Farrell & Ives, 2015; Molle, 2013; Pajares, 1992; Pettit, 2011; Richardson, 1996). When it comes to the preparation of preservice teachers to teach ELs, scholars agree that preservice teachers must be given opportunities to develop and nurture positive dispositions toward linguistically diverse students (García et al., 2010; McDonald et al., 2011; Lucas & Villegas, 2011, 2013). Where this agreement becomes complicated is on the question of what types of experiences, both life experiences and experiences in teacher preparation programs, are most productive. For example, scholars have noted that previous experience as a language learner, a shared ethnic identity with ELs, and experience living abroad positively contributes to how preservice teachers view ELs (Cody, Harper, & de Jong, 2011; Friedman, 2002; Garrity, Aquino-Sterling, Van Liew, & Day, 2016; Griego Jones, 2002; Kayi-Ayda, 2015). Moreover, contact with speakers of other languages during teacher preparation programs can have a positive impact on preservice teachers' orientations toward ELs (Coady, Harper, & de Jong, 2011; Evans, Arnot-Hopffer, & Jurich, 2005; Griego Jones, 2002; Garrity et al., 2016; Hadaway, 1993).

In discussions about the importance of contact with linguistically diverse students, an ongoing issue has been how this contact should be structured during the teacher preparation sequence. For example, Hadaway (1993) implemented a distance-based program that had preservice teachers become pen pals with ELs. Other scholars have argued for face-to-face contact with linguistically diverse individuals (e.g., Heineke & Davin, 2014; Lund, Bragg, Kaipainen, & Lee, 2014). While some support field placements in linguistically diverse community organizations (Heineke & Davin, 2014; McDonald et al., 2011); others contend that service learning projects with linguistically diverse students are highly beneficial to preservice teachers (Lund et al., 2014; Zeller, Griffith, Zhang, & Klenke, 2010). Still others maintain that field-based placements

should occur in carefully selected school sites where teacher practice aligns with the pedagogical practices that are presented in coursework (Darling-Hammond, 2006; García et al., 2010).

While field experiences in K-12 schools have the potential to positively shape preservice teachers' orientations toward ELs, some scholars have noted that field experiences are often far from ideal and can lead to serious challenges (e.g., Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1983; Zeichner, 2010). Specifically, Feiman-Nemser and Buchman (1983) highlighted potential "pitfalls" of field experiences in K-12 schools. The "two worlds pitfall" (p. 16) arises from the fact that teacher education takes place in two different spheres, e.g., university coursework and K-12 classrooms. Unfortunately, when university coursework and K-12 classroom practice do not align, preservice teachers are left to find a way to connect the two. In other words, the storied knowledge that preservice teachers develop from experiences in their school-based field placements may not align with the vision of teaching presented in teacher preparation coursework. While potential pitfalls with field-based observations have been noted (Marx & Pennington, 2003), there remains a lack of research regarding how divergent field experiences shape preservice teachers' conceptions of and orientations toward ELs.

3. Conceptual Framework: Preparing Preservice Teachers to Work with ELs

Several frameworks have been proposed that outline the necessary skills, knowledge, and dispositions needed among preservice teachers to work with linguistically diverse students. Fillmore and Snow (2000) argue that teachers must have some knowledge about language because of the multiple and complex language-related roles they fulfill in the classroom. Yet, de Jong and Harper (2005) suggest that there exists a pervasive and tacit assumption that the best practices recommended for teachers with native speakers of English are generalized and broadened to include ELs. The framework outlined by de Jong and Harper (2005) describes the *additional* knowledge, skills, and dispositions that preservice teachers need to work effectively with ELs, such as knowledge about the process of L2 learning, skills to provide optimal feedback and input, and a positive attitude toward ELs. By addressing these added domains, preservice teachers may move beyond the mistaken belief that the education of ELs is limited to "just good teaching" practices. Ultimately, this framework afforded teacher education scholars a forward thinking conceptual means by which to discuss the valuable knowledge *and* dispositions that preservice teachers need in order to work effectively with ELs.

Other frameworks expand the scholarly focus on the necessary knowledge and dispositions preservice teachers' need to teach ELs effectively and equitably. Lucas and Grinberg (2008), for example, contend that issues related to the education of linguistically diverse students were often placed under the larger umbrella of culturally responsive education. Specifically, they argued that the "language threads" must be pulled "from the larger cloth of the preparation of culturally and linguistically responsive teachers" in order to challenge "the invisibility of language issues in teacher preparation" (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008, p. 627). From this work, Lucas and colleagues created their own framework that outlines important domains for linguistically responsive teachers, including: (1) orientations, (2) knowledge, (3) and skills (Lucas & Villegas, 2011, 2013; Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008). The last two domains outline specific knowledge and skills that linguistically responsive teachers must be familiar with, such as

learning about ELs' language backgrounds, identifying language demands of classroom tasks, applying second language learning principles to classroom practice, and scaffolding instruction for ELs (Lucas & Villegas, 2011, 2013; Lucas et al., 2008). For the first domain, Lucas and Villegas (2011) outline dispositions that are beneficial for teachers working with ELs. These dispositions include a value for linguistic diversity, an inclination to advocate for ELs and a sociolinguistic consciousness (Lucas & Villegas, 2011, 2013). To clarify, sociolinguistic consciousness reflects a teacher who understands the connections between language, culture, and identity" as well as "the sociopolitical dimensions of language use and language education" (Lucas & Villegas, 2011, p. 57).

In subsequent work, Lucas and Villegas (2013) explored how Feiman-Nemser's (2001) framework for learning to teach could be used to identify teacher preparation tasks that contribute to developing linguistically responsive preservice teachers. Lucas and Villegas (2013) identified four goals that were central for preservice teachers when learning to teach ELs, including: (1) reflecting on and interrogating their preconceptions about language and language learners; (2) cultivating positive views of linguistic diversity; (3) analyzing the sociopolitical dimensions of language and language learning; and (4) exploring the possibility of advocating for ELs. To ground these goals in teacher education practice, Lucas and Villegas suggested specific tasks that could support preservice teachers in their development of linguistically responsive orientations. For example, preservice teachers could engage in reflective writing to explore their preconceptions about ELs. Further, contact with linguistically diverse individuals in school and community-based experiences could help preservice teachers develop positive views of language diversity and language learners. To help preservice teachers develop an awareness of the sociopolitical dimensions of schooling, Lucas and Villegas (2013) suggest organizing a "language shock or language immersion" experience in which the novice teachers are taught through a language that they do not understand. Finally, Lucas and Villegas suggest that community-based learning experiences can contribute to preservice teachers developing an advocacy stand toward ELs.

Ultimately, this work connecting the development of linguistically responsive orientations to teacher preparation tasks is particularly suited to our study because we explore what factors contribute to preservice teachers' developing orientations toward ELs during their field-based experiences. Since much of the prior scholarship has been limited to survey-based research (de Jong, 2013), our study is aimed at adding critical contextualized insight into preservice teachers' orientations. Toward this goal, we utilized narrative inquiry in an effort to explore how these experiences shape their developing orientations toward linguistically diverse students.

4. Methodology

Our study was guided by the following research questions: (1) How do preservice teachers conceptualize English Learners and/or mainstream teachers during recalled events from their field-based observations? (2) What is the nature of the experiences that preservice teachers remember involving English Learners? and (3) How do these experiences shape preservice teachers' developing orientations toward working with English Learners? In this section, we explore narrative inquiry as an analytical lens for understanding preservice teachers' developing orientations regarding ELs. We then provide an overview of the larger study and the participants in this specific study, and indicate our data sources and analytical techniques.

4.1 Narrative Inquiry

The social constructivist paradigm argues that people constantly seek an understanding of their world (Creswell, 2013). In alignment with this meaning-making paradigm, narrative inquiry asserts that people continuously narrate their lives and will revisit these “narrative fragments” in an effort to understand their world (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In teaching and teacher education, scholars have found that narrative methodologies provide an opportunity to understand more fully an individual’s lived experience as well as how individuals reflect and learn from lived experiences (author, 1993, 2005; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative inquiry provides a means of investigating preservice teachers’ interpretations of events, and the subtler ideologies and assumptions that undergird their interpretations and retellings (Ewick & Silbey, 1995; Tannen, 1980). Moreover, it is possible to understand *how* preservice teachers develop their conceptions of teaching, learning, and diverse learners from the perspective of the actual individuals (author, 1993; Clandinin & Connelly, 1992; Craig, 2011).

4.2 Larger Study

This investigation is part of a larger, multi-year study in a teacher preparation program. Narrative inquiry positions story, and the ubiquitous human action of storying, as a particularistic mode of knowledge and knowing (author, 1993). In order to explore the shaping force that this narrated knowledge has on preservice teachers’ learning to teach journey, we have created the Well-Remembered Event (WRE), a narrative-based data collection tool where preservice teachers are asked to write about and reflect on their learning to teach journey (author, 2008, 2009). In essence, a Well-Remembered Event is an event that preservice teachers find themselves revisiting and reflecting on in their effort to explain their developing professional knowledge. We ask preservice teachers to write about and discuss their well-remembered events as part of a classroom assignment. Initially, preservice teachers write about their Well-Remembered Event. Preservice teachers then share their WREs in small group to discuss their current understandings and challenges. This small group discussion is an opportunity for preservice teachers to work with peers and the instructor to unpack the remembered event and discuss how this event aligned with or diverged from the vision of teaching presented in coursework. The combination of a written reflection and small group discussion was designed to support preservice teachers as they navigate the “two worlds” of university coursework and field-based experiences (Feiman-Nemser and Buchman, 1983). The written WREs served as the formal data collection tool for this study.

When we first began working with WREs, preservice teachers focused their narrative reflections on the larger “classroom ecology” (Doyle, 1977), e.g., events related to classroom management or student motivation (author, 2008, 2009). Over time, this work explored preservice teachers’ understandings of issues of social (in)justice and (in)equality in the classroom (author, 2013, 2014, 2015). Specifically, we have asked preservice teachers’ to reflect on events that involve historically marginalized groups, e.g., English Learners, LGBTQ students, and women in mathematics classrooms. For this study, we focused on a subset of these narratives to explore preservice teachers’ experiences with ELs as part of their field-based placements.

4.3 Participants

Participants in this study were enrolled in one of the first courses in their elementary teacher preparation professional sequence. As this course took place at the

beginning of the preparation sequence, preservice teachers were all general education majors and had not declared a possible area of specialization, i.e., elementary, ESL or bilingual education. This course focused on general methods of teaching, including: classroom management, instructional strategies, instructional models for distinct learning goals, and an embedded social justice strand that focused on historically marginalized student populations. Attached to this course was a 45-hour field component in a Title I school. To clarify, Title 1 schools are schools that serve relatively high populations of low-income students and are eligible to receive financial assistance to better meet the needs of these students. Throughout the course, preservice teachers were assigned several narrative-based assignments (Well-Remembered Events) to prompt their reflection on classroom events.

Data was collected during the spring semester from two class sections taught independently by the first two authors. It must be noted that there are inherent power differentials between preservice teacher participants and the teacher educator researchers. However, in an attempt to mitigate this unequal power relationship, preservice teachers were not asked to participate in this study until after final course grades were assigned. In total, 49 preservice teachers participated in the study (see table 1). Of the total, 44 of the participants were women and five were men. Furthermore, 40 of the participants were White, six were Latino/a, one was Native American, and two were Asian. Additionally, two of the preservice teachers were classified as ELs during their elementary school years and received pull out services (for a focused analysis of narratives from preservice teachers who were ELs see author, 2016).

Table 1

Demographic Makeup of Preservice Teacher Participants

	Race/Ethnicity and Language Learner Classification				
	White	Latino/a	Asian	Native American	English Learner
Female	35	6	2	1	2
Male	5	0	0	0	0
English Learner	0	2	0	0	-

4.4 Data Sources

Preservice teachers were assigned three WREs designed to encourage reflection on issues related to teaching, learning, and working with diverse student populations. The first WRE was assigned at the beginning of the term, and was the most open-ended in that preservice teachers could chose to write about any field-based event that they found particularly compelling. This first WRE was designed to familiarize preservice teachers with the WRE writing format and the small group discussions that took place after the writing of the WRE. The second WRE was assigned halfway through the term, and the third WRE was assigned near the end of the term. For the second WRE, preservice teachers were asked to focus on an event involving an EL. For the third WRE, preservice teachers were asked to focus on an event involving a LGBTQ student. For this study, we focused on the second set of WREs involving an event with an EL. Specifically,

preservice teachers were instructed to choose an event that they felt was particularly salient or illuminating when they thought about working with ELs in schools. While there were no length requirements for the written WRE, they typically ranged from five to seven pages long.

In the WREs, preservice teachers provided rich descriptions of the remembered event including pertinent contextual details, e.g., grade level, subject matter, number of people present both active and observing, classroom set up, duration of the event, and a detailed account of the event itself. The recalled events all took place in K-5 classrooms in the Southwestern and Western United States with a range of one to four ELs involved in each narrative. The participants provided an analysis of the event through the lens of course content. Specifically, preservice teachers analyzed the event using a developing shared professional language that focused on issues of classroom management, instruction, pedagogical practice, and social (in)justice in teaching and learning. For example, some preservice teachers chose to focus their analysis on issues of access and equity for ELs, while other preservice teachers focused on teacher-related management and planning challenges of working with ELs in a classroom composed of primarily monolingual English speakers. At the conclusion of their narratives, preservice teachers reflected on the professional implications of observing and analyzing the event. The preservice teachers considered how the event shaped their developing conceptions of ELs as well as discussed what questions or concerns had arisen as a result of reflecting on and analyzing the remembered event.

4.5 Data Analysis

A multi-phase analysis was utilized to examine the collected 49 narratives in an effort to capture the richness and nuances of these particular narratives without losing the larger patterns and structures present in the compilation. Initially, WREs were analyzed in order to identify the basic story structures (characters, setting, sequence) embedded within the texts (Elliot, 2005). From this initial analysis we found that the majority (39 total) of these narratives focused on events drawn from preservice teachers' field-based experiences, and the remaining 10 narratives focused on events drawn from preservice teachers' own K-12 school days. For this particular article, we focus on narratives drawn from preservice teachers' field-based experiences in an effort to explore how these preparatory experiences contributed to their developing orientations toward ELs.

In the initial phase of our analysis, we crafted a description of the character element. Specifically, we analyzed how prominent characters within preservice teachers' narratives, e.g., ELs and practicing classroom teachers, were described across the compendium of narratives. This enabled us to better address our first research question concerning how preservice teachers conceptualized ELs and/or mainstream teachers. Additionally, this first phase of analysis allowed us to gain a deeper understanding of whether or not there were identifiable patterns along story structure lines, e.g., did the preservice teachers primarily pay attention to teachers' actions in response to ELs or did preservice teachers choose to focus more on peer responses to ELs? We learned that a majority of the preservice teachers' narratives (37 total) focused on teacher actions regarding ELs *and* the ELs' reactions to said teacher actions. The remaining two narratives focused on events involving an EL and peers that resulted in potentially deleterious outcomes for the ELs (for an analysis of these and similar narratives see author, 2015).

During the second phase of analysis, we used iterative and thematic qualitative analysis techniques, e.g., constant comparison methods (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003; Lichtman, 2012), to identify emergent patterns present across the compendium of narratives. Narrative methodology recognizes that narratives uniquely organize events and actions into a comprehensive whole (Polkinghorne, 1995). This organization can be arranged temporally, i.e., chronologically, by causality or consequentially, i.e., one event leads to the next event, or episodically, i.e., events are related by theme (Elliot, 2005; Holley & Colyar, 2009; Michaels, 1981; Riessman, 1993; Toolan, 2012). In the case of our collected narratives, causality could not be assumed; therefore, we choose not to include this lens in our analysis. Instead, we initially focused on the temporality of the events to identify plot patterns across the narratives. Specifically, we analyzed the rising action, climax, and falling action across the narratives. By focusing on the temporality of the events, we were able to utilize these larger narrative structures as a tool for accessing preservice teachers' meaning making of the well-remembered events (Wertz et al., 2011). It must be noted that one potential limitation of this type of narrative analysis is that temporality has been cited as a particularistic mode of narrative telling specific to the Western, White world (Michaels, 1981; Riessman, 1993; Toolan, 2012). In other words, it cannot be assumed that all narrative structures are universal across racial and cultural groups (Michaels, 1981). Therefore, this temporal analysis was only one analytical method we utilized to gain a better sense of the whole compendium of narratives before we began open coding the data set.

For the third and final phase of data analysis, we turned to open coding across the narratives for larger plot patterns present in the collected corpus (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). This final analysis addressed our second research question concerning the nature of the salient experiences that preservice teachers remembered involving ELs, and third research question concerning how these experiences shaped preservice teachers' developing orientations toward working with ELs. From our open coding, we discovered that it was necessary to code for: (1) patterns within the events; and (2) patterns present across preservice teachers' sense-making of the events and their developing orientations toward ELs. After formalizing the two sets of code definitions that emerged from our data, we then systematically reviewed all of the narratives and recoded using our finalized set of codes. Finally, we identified prototypical narratives that were representative of the larger pattern to provide an illustrative example of how these patterns transpired in the classroom.

5. Findings

In the following section, we present our analytical findings using literature-based story conventions, including an analysis of the character element, plot patterns, and the conclusion of the narratives. In an attempt to capture these story elements, we drew upon participants' language both to develop thematic coding categories and to "title" plot patterns. Additionally, prototypical examples drawn from preservice teachers' narratives are provided in order to illustrate how these emergent plot patterns unfolded in actual classroom practice. All names used in these narrative retellings are pseudonyms.

5.1 Preservice Teachers' Conceptualization of English Learners and Mainstream Teachers

Through our analysis, we have gained insight into how the dominant characters, both teachers and ELs, were positioned in preservice teacher narratives. Our findings

suggest that the majority (29 total) of preservice teacher narratives positioned teachers and ELs in diametric ways. English Learners were positioned as characters that evoked great sadness and pity on the part of the preservice teacher because of unjust treatment, or as characters that evoked feelings of awe and admiration for their constant pursuit of success despite numerous obstacles. Prototypical statements for each of these characterizations were as follows:

“I was amazed by his [EL’s] ability to comprehend...by just slowing down.”

“He [EL] is the hardest working person I know.”

“I could tell that he [EL] was frustrated and waiting for the lesson to be over.”

“Seeing [EL] become embarrassed and un-motivated made me feel sad for him...I’m sure he had to feel alone, behind, and so much more.”

This diametric characterization of ELs suggested that preservice teachers conceptualized linguistically diverse students in these remembered events as either “hard working” heroes or “underserved” injured parties.

The practicing teachers that interacted with the ELs in these narratives were also portrayed diametrically by preservice teachers as either shining examples of how one teacher can make a significant impact through extra time, effort, and some simple modifications, or, alternately, as inept and/or unprepared educators that failed to serve the needs of ELs in their classrooms. Illustrative statements for each of these characterizations were as follows:

“Mrs. Smith did a simple act..., which ended up arousing her [EL] to take action and jump into the new project with full confidence.”

“I believe that with Mrs. Lawrence’s support, they [ELs] were given the best chance to succeed.”

“I realized that no one from the school wanted to make an effort to work with this student [EL].”

“I was appalled that the teacher was not helping her [EL].”

“It breaks my heart to think of the narrow-minded teachers I may have to deal with in my profession as a teacher.”

For the latter group of teachers, who reportedly did not meet the needs of ELs in their classrooms, there was a lack of agreement regarding teachers’ motivations for their pedagogical actions. Some preservice teachers characterized the practicing teacher as uncaring about ELs’ needs, while others portrayed the practicing teacher as the “victim of a lack of resources and funding.”

5.2 Plot Patterns: Preservice Teachers’ Experiences with English Learners

From our iterative analysis, several plot patterns emerged. We drew upon preservice teachers’ own language to title the plot patterns in classroom narratives concerning ELs. Three plot patterns were identified, including: (1) “honoring her difference”: isolation of English Learners; (2) “living in a fishbowl”: public displays of teacher frustration; and (3) “good as it’s going to get”: English Learner classroom struggles.

5.2.1 “Honoring her difference”: Isolation of English Learners.

Approximately half of the narratives (16 total) focused on ELs who were intentionally or inadvertently isolated from their peers by a teacher in an effort to provide individual or small group instruction. Some preservice teachers (eight total) noted that while this isolation may have been well intended, they considered it to be socially,

emotionally and/or academically injurious for the EL. In one illustrative narrative, a preservice teacher described how the isolation impacted an EL's motivation and socioemotional well-being during her field-based observations:

Juan [EL] would work with Mrs. Stevens instead of a peer. I noticed this affected Juan's confidence as well as his motivation... As if he didn't stand out enough with sounding different and having a different background, I felt the way Mrs. Stevens separated him from his class was not helping him in any way. The preservice teacher also explained that the practicing teacher chose to pull Juan from group work so that she could provide him with more focused instruction; however, her well-intentioned motives did not mitigate the sense of isolation and embarrassment reportedly experienced by the student. Throughout this subset of narratives, preservice teachers expressed feelings of discomfort with the isolation of ELs in various school locations, e.g., the back table in the classroom, special education classrooms, pullout programs, and even a separate lunch table.

Other preservice teachers (eight total) positioned the isolation of ELs as somehow beneficial to the linguistically diverse students, and, in five narratives, monolingual English-speaking students. For example, one preservice teacher, who was observing in a fourth grade classroom, reflected on how her cooperating teacher addressed the arrival of a new student from Poland "who barely spoke any English." The new student, Jewel, was brought into the classroom by the principal as the cooperating teacher was passing out a reading assessment. After all of the students, including Jewel, had received their assessment, the class immediately "settled down and started working." However, Jewel sat and stared at the reading assessment without picking up her pencil. The preservice teacher observed her cooperating teacher approach Jewel who asked the cooperating teacher if they would have "cooking class today." Confused, the cooperating teacher told her the school did not have cooking class and then picked up Jewel's assessment and led her into an adjoining back room. The teacher then settled Jewel at a table and left her in the isolated area with her assessment. Reportedly, Jewel sat alone in the adjacent back room with her untouched assessment on a desk until the lunch bell rang. The preservice teacher who observed this incident reported, "at the time, I thought it was absolutely shocking that Jewel did not take the test with the class and was isolated in another room...but [I think] she [Jewel] found it more comfortable and easier to concentrate in the back room. Therefore, Ms. Graham honored her difference."

Taken collectively, the narratives in this plot pattern related instances that might lead to feelings of isolation on the part of an EL due to school policy or individual teacher choices. Moreover, this collection related conflicted professional musings on the part of the preservice teachers who were attempting to understand the potential impact of the isolation. While some preservice teachers expressed support of these actions because they felt isolation was in the ELs' best interest, others felt that isolation was counterproductive and in fact could have enduring social, emotional, and academic repercussions.

5.2.2 "Living in a fishbowl": Public displays of teacher frustration.

Approximately a fifth of the narratives (seven total) described practicing teachers' frustration with an EL, often during very public encounters in the classroom when there were multiple onlookers. One such event involved an EL, an English-learning parent, and a cooperating teacher. The preservice teacher, who was observing in the fourth grade

classroom, recalled helping her cooperating teacher, Mr. Robin, line the class up for lunch when the parent of an EL entered the classroom to discuss a “homework issue” with the teacher. While the entire class watched, the parent, Mrs. Rosales, attempted to communicate her frustration about a grade on her daughter’s homework assignment. Mia, the English-learning student, attempted to translate for both her mother and teacher but was unable to completely communicate either of the adults’ stances, which led to growing frustration and miscommunication during the interaction. Eventually, Mr. Robin publically showed his frustration not only to the parent and EL but also to the entire class who were intently watching the interaction unfold. The preservice teacher’s summary of the interaction follows:

Clearly frustrated, Mr. Robin tried his best to understand both Mia and Mrs. Rosales... the incident did not end well and Mr. Robin just fell to his desk chair... The class also saw Mr. Robin’s reaction to the incident. Mr. Robin just slouched down into his chair and gave up. He demonstrated to his students that giving up is okay and he personally did not want to help a confused student and parent.

Witnessing these events of teacher frustration and defeat in the “face of language barriers” impacted preservice teachers in a variety of ways. Some expressed feelings of anger or sadness over what they felt were inappropriate teacher responses, while others empathized with the teacher and wondered what they would do in a similar situation.

5.2.3 “Good as it’s going to get”: English Learner classroom struggles.

Approximately a fifth of the narratives (nine total) detailed instances wherein preservice teachers felt their cooperating teachers insufficiently addressed the needs of ELs in their mainstream classrooms. In one illustrative event, a preservice teacher observed her first grade cooperating teacher unsuccessfully engage a group of ELs during a writing lesson about a recent trip to a local farm. While students were completing a sentence frame about their favorite part of the field trip, the preservice teacher found herself focusing on the three ELs in the classroom. The preservice teacher recalled, “Miguel was not writing anything; instead he was coloring a picture of a superhero... Karina had written her name in neat handwriting and was coloring a rainbow, and Alfred was focused on copying the sentences but his words all ran together and were not legible.” The cooperating teacher reportedly did not approach the ELs during writing time to check on their progress even though she circulated throughout the rest of the room for the 45-minute lesson. At the end of the lesson, the cooperating teacher collected the ELs’ incomplete papers without comment. The preservice teacher reflected:

Mrs. Watson did not provide adequate support for the three English Learners in her class. She didn’t require them to complete the assignment or even focus on the directions because she knew they did not understand what to do.

These narratives were replete with instances of ELs attempting to learn in unaccommodating environments. In fact, several preservice teachers noted that as long as the ELs did not cause a “distraction” or “problem” in the classroom, they were largely left alone. Preservice teachers expressed an overwhelming reaction of sadness for the ELs who struggled to access content in their mainstream classrooms but were uncertain about how they could have made the content more accessible to the ELs.

5.3 Preservice Teachers’ Developing Orientations Toward Working with English Learners

Following the writing of their school-based stories, preservice teachers provided reflections about and possible implications from observing, participating in, and ultimately writing about these events for their own classroom teaching. Two patterns emerged from this analysis: (1) simplification strategies to help English Learners succeed without much teacher effort; and (2) feelings of powerlessness or uncertainty when trying to help English Learners.

5.3.1 “Easy to implement without much effort”: Quick keys to success with English Learners.

Approximately a fourth of the preservice teachers (11 total) seemed to find some professional confidence in strategies that they observed their cooperating teachers use when working with ELs in the classroom. These narratives focused on “easy to implement” strategies that would supposedly lead to EL success without engendering overly burdensome modifications or planning. A majority of the strategies involved incorporating visuals into individual EL instruction while the rest of the class completed an assignment. Other strategies included simplifying the assignment requirements to drawing a picture instead of writing, partnering the EL with a bilingual peer, and changing a reading lesson to focus solely on new vocabulary instead of vocabulary and reading comprehension.

During one such field-based event, a preservice teacher observed a nutrition lesson where the second grade teacher used cards with pictures of food to ask questions about students' diet choices. The cooperating teacher initially asked questions of the whole group about students' eating preferences; however, the ELs present looked on and did not offer any contributions. While the rest of the class returned to their desks to write about healthy diet choices, the cooperating teacher used the picture cards with the four ELs to reinforce food vocabulary and verbally drill students on the names of different foods. Ultimately, the four ELs did not engage in the larger writing goals of this lesson because the classroom teacher limited their practice to a verbal drill on food vocabulary. From this experience, the preservice teacher “picked up two simple ways to [support English Learners in] my classroom without much effort.” In her words, “All you have to do is provide some images and ask some questions and you're already on track to help your ELL succeed.”

These pedagogical reflections were rife with examples of strategies that were meant to help ELs succeed while not overburdening the teacher with extra preparation or instructional time. Preservice teacher reported their “relief” and “excitement” at finding such strategies. However, what seemed simple at the time may have actually been an example of an over-simplification of the complex instructional, linguistic, social, and academic considerations engendered by working with students who are simultaneously learning English and academic content.

5.3.2 “I felt powerless and impotent”: First unsteady experiences with English Learners.

Approximately half of the narratives (21 total) related preservice teachers' feelings of being “shocked”, “unsure”, “underprepared” and even “incapable” after what was reportedly their first encounter with an EL during their field-based placements. For these preservice teachers, their initial attempts at working with an EL often left the preservice teacher with unresolved feelings of regret and uncertainty. The following

phrases were taken directly from preservice teachers' narratives, and illustrate the intense emotions that followed their first experiences with ELs:

"I felt powerless and impotent that I could not communicate directly with a student [EL]."

"It was the toughest case I have yet to face."

"She [EL] gave me that same blank stare and I didn't know what to do."

"I had no idea what to do and I felt like I was the reason he [EL] was crying."

In a final prototypical narrative, a preservice teacher approached a group of students while they were working in their sixth grade science classroom on a lab exploring different forms of energy. Initially, the preservice teacher felt that he was able to effectively support the native English-speaking students in the classroom, but this budding confidence changed when he approached a group of three ELs that "appeared not to be working on anything." Upon approaching the group, the preservice teacher reported being "greeted with an enthusiastic response from one [student], a muffled hello from the second, and a blank stare from the third." After attempting to help the group with their lab, which they had not started, the preservice teacher realized that the students were ELs and did not fully comprehend his instructions.

Eventually the preservice teacher "dismissed" himself, and walked away from the group to check on another group of students on the other side of the room. The preservice teacher reported being "shocked" by the experience because he had not "considered the possibility" of working with students who were learning English in the mainstream classroom. The frank emotions expressed in this subset of narratives suggested that as these preservice teachers interacted with ELs especially for the first time, they often felt underprepared and unsure how to proceed in the moment as well as in their future classroom practice.

6. Discussion

In this study, we sought to understand how field-based experiences shaped preservice teachers' developing dispositions toward ELs in the mainstream classroom. Lucas and Villegas' (2011, 2013) framework for linguistically responsive teachers outlines productive orientations that all teachers should develop as part of their practice with ELs. To support the development of preservice teachers, scholars and teacher educators have suggested contact with linguistically diverse individuals as a means of promoting positive orientations toward ELs (Coady, Harper, & de Jong, 2011; Evans, Arnot-Hopffer, & Jurich, 2005; García, et al., 2010; Garrity et al., 2016; Griego Jones, 2002; Hadaway, 1993; Kayi-Ayda, 2015; Lucas & Villegas 2011, 2013). While we agree that there is an opportunity during teacher preparation programs to introduce and/or foster these productive orientations in preservice teachers, we found that for the preservice teachers in this study contact with ELs during field-based placements was more complex. Specifically, preservice teachers were often left with conflicting orientations toward ELs for a number of reasons, including: the model provided by the mainstream teacher, observed events involving ELs and teachers, and personal interactions with ELs.

Across the compendium of narratives, we found that the mainstream classroom teacher became a prominent and consistent character through which preservice teachers' reflected on how they could or even should work with ELs. This, in turn, became a means by which preservice teachers explored their own developing orientations toward ELs. Mainstream classroom teachers were consistently portrayed as either unaware or uncaring

about ELs' needs or as victims of a lack of resources and time. Moreover, ELs were cast as hard working heroes or underserved injured parties, both of whom faced numerous inequities in the mainstream classroom. On the surface, this characterization appears to support positive orientations toward ELs (Lucas & Villegas, 2013) as the preservice teachers were perceptively attuned to the injustices permeating these well-remembered events. However, the power of narratological retelling is that it provides a means of analyzing the subtler assumptions and ideologies that narrators draw upon when describing characters and events (Ewick & Silbey, 1995; Tannen, 1980). We argue that the consistent casting of the ELs as victims of the larger system forefronts the challenges faced by these students while overlooking their strengths. Additionally, the portrayal of mainstream teachers renders a simplified characterization of these teachers' orientations towards linguistically diverse students and the means by which these orientations shaped their practice with ELs. The inclination of preservice teachers to characterize the classroom teacher and ELs in diametric ways should be thoughtfully addressed during the preparation sequence in order to foster a value for linguistic diversity in the mainstream classroom.

We found that preservice teachers witnessed orientations or pedagogical practices that were deleterious for ELs in their interactions with mainstream teachers. For example, preservice teachers noted that ELs were often isolated from their native English-speaking peers or were attempting to learn in mainstream classrooms with inadequate or even absent accommodations. Perhaps the most worrying were the narratives where mainstream classroom teachers publically displayed their frustration with ELs and their families. These recalled events often left preservice teachers feeling uncertain of their ability to teach ELs because they were unsure of what they would do differently in their own classrooms. Similarly, we found that some preservice teachers were left with lingering feelings of uncertainty about their ability to work with ELs based on what was often their first professional encounter with a linguistically diverse student. In the words of one teacher, they felt "powerless and impotent" to work with ELs both in the moment and in their future practice. These experiences illustrate the power of recalled narrative fragments (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) on these preservice teachers' attempts to understand their current and future work with ELs. Ultimately, these experiences left preservice teachers with lingering feelings of uncertainty, which, in turn, may complicate their development of a positive orientation toward ELs.

Conversely, a smaller but significant proportion of the preservice teachers adopted unrealistic expectations for teaching ELs when they witnessed mainstream classroom teachers implementing a few "simple strategies." These novice teachers drew confidence in their own professional abilities to work with ELs and expressed "relief" over these seemingly easy to implement pedagogical practices. One interpretation of this finding could be that preservice teachers' developing confidence about working with ELs could contribute to the development of a positive orientation toward teaching ELs. However, these simplification strategies could reinforce the idea that working with ELs involves "just good teaching" practices (de Jong & Harper, 2005) that overlooks the specialized pedagogical knowledge and skills needed to teach ELs.

In the teacher preparation sequence, contact with ELs often takes place in the larger context of the mainstream classroom where teachers become a model for orientations and practices with ELs. We found that when preservice teachers looked to

practicing teachers as models, they were left with simplistic and/or uncertain views related to how they could or even should teach ELs. Moreover, there was little evidence that preservice teachers had actually adopted an open or implicit value for students' linguistic diversity based on their recalled experiences during their field-based observations. This study adds to the current literature on preparing linguistically responsive teachers because we found that contact with linguistically diverse individuals may not be sufficient for preservice teachers to adopt linguistically responsive teaching orientations.

We argue that our findings engender important considerations for teacher preparation programs. On a programmatic level, we agree with Darling-Hammond (2006) and García and colleagues (2010) that careful attention should be given to the classrooms where preservice teachers are placed for their field-based observations. Particularly, the practicing teachers in these classrooms would ideally use linguistically responsive teaching practices and model linguistically responsive orientations. However, in the reality of teacher preparation, field-based placements can be complicated and may leave preservice teachers with conflicting understandings related to teaching ELs (Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1983; Zeichner, 2010). Based on our findings in this study and in previous narrative work (author, 2013, 2014, 2015), we worry that many preservice teachers may experience less than ideal models of interaction with ELs during their field-based placements, and have far too few opportunities to consider alternate perspectives for practice. Therefore, we argue that preservice teachers should engage in guided reflection on the actual classroom practice that they observe during their field-based placements. Specifically, teacher educators must open time and space for preservice teachers to recall, reflect upon, and unpack their field-based experiences with ELs. We found that having the dual tasks of a written reflection followed by a small group discussion was productive in encouraging preservice teachers to think deeply about how events involving ELs in their field-based placements related to the vision of teaching presented in their teacher preparation program. Additionally, preservice teachers were able to collaborate on challenges that they experienced during the remembered events in order to plan for their future practice with ELs. By unpacking these "narrative fragments" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), preservice teachers can explore what orientations they have toward working with linguistically diverse students, and how they developed these orientations in the related but separate "worlds" of the K-12 classroom and teacher preparation sequence (Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1983; Zeichner, 2010).

7. Conclusion

In order to support preservice teachers' development of linguistically responsive teaching practices, we need to better understand how field-based experiences shape preservice teachers' developing orientations towards ELs. This contextualized grounding of preservice teachers' developing orientations toward ELs in their field-based experiences has been underexplored in the literature. In the future, more research is needed to explore how these recalled experiences during field placements shape preservice teachers' actual practice with ELs, not only during their teacher preparation sequence but also in their first years of practice. While some may argue that teacher preparation programs should focus their time and resources on identifying field-based placements that align with the productive orientations promoted in coursework, we found that identifying and maintaining these placements can be challenging. Therefore, we

believe that teacher preparation coursework should be designed to explicitly address this potential misalignment. From this reflective work, preservice teachers could then develop more sophisticated understandings of linguistically responsive orientations in the mainstream classroom, and, ultimately, positively re-story the educative experiences of the ELs they will work with in the future.

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