



The Roles of Bilingual Special Educators in Creating Inclusive Classrooms

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ONE GROUP OF STUDENTS WHOSE UNIQUE NEEDS PRESENT A CHALLENGE TO EDUCATORS SEEKING TO CREATE INCLUSIVE GENERAL EDUCATION CLASSROOMS IS LEARNERS WHO ARE LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE. THE PURPOSE OF THIS ARTICLE IS TWOFOLD: (A) TO DISTILL FROM THE LITERATURE OF BILINGUAL SPECIAL EDUCATION, BILINGUAL EDUCATION, AND SPECIAL EDUCATION A DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES OF BILINGUAL SPECIAL EDUCATORS IN COOPERATIVE TEACHING ENDEAVORS DESIGNED TO EDUCATE SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN GENERAL EDUCATION CLASSROOMS; AND (B) TO OFFER THE OBSERVATIONS OF A BILINGUAL SPECIAL EDUCATOR WHO WORKED AS PART OF A COOPERATIVE TEACHING TEAM.

AS A RESULT OF A VARIETY OF FACTORS, MANY students with disabilities are being educated in general education settings (Salend, 1994; United States Department of Education, 1995). These general education inclusion programs seek to acknowledge, affirm, and address the individual educational needs of students by educating them together in high-quality, age-appropriate learning communities (Giangreco, Baumgart, & Doyle, 1995). Proponents of inclusion note that these programs can offer significant academic and social benefits for all students (Salisbury, Palombaro, & Hollywood, 1993; Stainback & Stainback, 1992).

One group of students whose unique needs present a challenge to educators seeking to create inclusive general education classrooms is learners who are learning English as a second language (ESL; Maldonado-Colon, 1995; Ortiz, 1995). Second language learners often exhibit the usual problems associated with learning a new language, such as comprehension and articulation difficulties, limited vocabulary, and grammatical and syntactical errors, and tend to be over referred to and placed in special education settings (National Coalition of Advocates for Schools, 1991). Because developing proficiency in learning a second language is a long-term process that involves experiencing several stages of second language acquisition, many students with exceptional needs who are second language learners require the services of bilingual special educators who offer instruction in the student's native language. Such instruction provides a cognitive and academic background for learning appropriate content-area instruction and a second language and for

performing academically in English (Cummins, 1984; Cziko, 1992; Freeman & Freeman, 1992). As students develop proficiency in English, bilingual special educators deliver more and more of the content-area instruction in English and prepare students for the transition to the general education classroom and curriculum.

Although general education settings can promote the linguistic, social, and academic development of second language learners of English, many general and special educators have not been trained to address the educational needs of second language learners in such settings (Baca, Bransford, Nelson, & Ortiz, 1994; Diaz-Rico & Smith, 1994; Gersten & Woodward, 1994; Yates & Ortiz, 1991). One model for assisting school personnel in meeting the needs of diverse students educated in general education settings employs cooperative teaching arrangements, whereby educators work collaboratively to teach diverse groups of learners in general education settings (Bauwens & Hourcade, 1995; Phillips, Sapona, & Lubic, 1995). In light of the limited training of general and special education teachers with respect to teaching second language learners in general education classrooms, cooperative teaching arrangements between bilingual special education teachers and general education teachers can be employed to educate second language learners in inclusive classrooms (Fradd, 1993; Harris, 1995; Hudson & Fradd, 1990). Because of their dual expertise in special and bilingual education, bilingual special educators are uniquely qualified to collaborate with other educators in determining the nature of students' learning problems and designing learning environments to address the cultural, linguistic, and special education needs of students who are second language learners.

In cooperative teaching, both groups of educators blend their expertise, training, and perspectives to share responsibility for all activities and decisions related to all students. Although cooperative teaching can be a viable and effective strategy for responding to the needs of diverse students with disabilities, the pairing of bilingual special and general educators has been relatively limited. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to distill from the literature of bilingual special education, bilingual education, and special education a description of the roles of bilingual special educators in cooperative teaching teams designed to educate second language learners in general education classrooms. These roles are based on the research literature and the observations of a bilingual special educator who worked as part of a cooperative teaching team. Following is a list of 10 roles bilingual special educators can assume to create inclusive classrooms. The bilingual special educator's observations are presented at the beginning of the discussion of several of the roles.

HELPING OTHERS UNDERSTAND THE RATIONALE FOR BILINGUAL AND MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Because of their limited training and experiential backgrounds, general and special education teachers, who are predominantly White women from middle class backgrounds, often have not had exposure to the philosophical basis for bilingual and multicultural education. Additionally, as a result of the current media attacks and political initiatives related to bilingual and multicultural education, general and special educators are likely to encounter rhetoric that questions the rationale for and effectiveness of bilingual and multicultural education. The lack of exposure to the rationale for bilingual and multicultural education represents a significant barrier to considering and understanding the needs of students who are bilingual and/or have a cultural background that is significantly different from the dominant culture. This lack of exposure and understanding seriously limits the ability of general and special educators to accommodate these unique linguistic and cultural needs. Therefore, bilingual special educators need to be able to assist their general and

special education peers in understanding the rationale and benefits of bilingual and multicultural education.

On a personal level, bilingual special educators can discuss their experiences as bilingual individuals and second language learners. General and special educators and bilingual special education teachers also can discuss (a) what it would be like to go to school and live in a country where you do not speak the language, (b) how one's skill in one's first language would assist in learning a second language, (c) how instruction in one's native language could help in learning content-area instruction, and (d) how continuing to speak one's first language would be important in maintaining one's culture. Opportunities to hear students talk about their experiences as second language learners can also provide general and special educators with meaningful insights into the need for bilingual and multicultural programs.

On a professional level, bilingual special educators can provide their general and special education peers with resources and information on theoretical frameworks for bilingual and multicultural education (Banks, 1991b; Cummins, 1989). They can also provide educators with access to research demonstrating that

* Schools that do not incorporate the principles of bilingual and multicultural education into their instructional programs have deleterious effects on the self-esteem and school performance of students who attend them (Irvine, 1990; Karna & Larna, 1992; Quintero & Huerta-Macias, 1992);

* When students who are second language learners receive instruction in their native language, they develop an essential cognitive and academic background that facilitates their ability to learn a second language and perform academically in the second language faster than if they had not received support in their first language, which results in a long-term reduction in the costs to educate these students (V. Collier, 1995; Cziko, 1992); and

* Opportunities to receive instruction related to their experiential, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds facilitate student learning and help all students maintain their culture and language, as well as appreciating the cultural backgrounds of others (Banks, 1991a, 1991b).

UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOR FROM A SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Ms. Reynolds, my teaching partner, was concerned about J's inability to pay attention. She noted that J, a second language learner, appears to get tired and lose her concentration after about 10 minutes of instruction. I agreed with Ms. Reynold's observations and tried to explain the reasons for J's behavior. I explained to her that instruction in an individual's second language requires an intensive concentration level which is difficult for a second language learner to sustain for long periods of time. We discussed how J's behavior was not a deficiency but rather an indication that J's "system was shutting down" and that she needed a break. Ms. Reynolds seemed to understand and feel

better.

An appreciation of the rationale for and benefits of bilingual and multicultural education can also be fostered by helping general and special educators understand behavior from a sociocultural perspective. Schools in the United States and the academic, social, and behavioral expectations of U.S. teachers tend to be based on a middle class, Anglo-American perspective. However, because the behaviors of students are related to their cultural perspectives and language backgrounds, cultural conflicts between the behaviors of students and the behavioral expectations and interpretations of teachers may arise, particularly with students who are still adapting to a new culture (Garcia & Malkin, 1993; Hoover & Collier, 1985, 1986; J. Lynch, 1992). These cultural conflicts frequently result in students being judged negatively and viewed as "deficient" and in need of differential and specialized interventions such as special education services (Losey, 1995).

Similarly, many students who are learning a second language may exhibit some behaviors that are characteristic of students with learning and behavioral problems (Garcia & Malkin, 1993; Ortiz & Garcia, 1990). Therefore, bilingual special educators can help general and special education teachers increase their understanding of behavior and language development within a sociocultural context and expand their acceptance of individual differences so that it reflects a cross-cultural perspective (Salend, 1994). In such a perspective, teachers view and understand students' behaviors as being consistent with students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds and seek to change school norms to reflect a multicultural perspective that promotes bicultural rather than monocultural competence (Roberts, Bell, & Salend, 1991).

Cultural factors that may affect behavior and performance in the classroom include time (LaFromboise & Graff-Low, 1989), respect for elders (Nagata, 1989), individual versus group performance (Ramirez, 1989), nonverbal communication (Irvine, 1990), and learning style (Garcia & Ortiz, 1988; Gollnick & Chinn, 1990). For example, Hale-Benson (1986) believes that most schools are structured according to an analytic cognitive style that is rooted in a learning through rules, limited movement, convergent thinking, deductive reasoning, and an emphasis on objects. However, Irvine (1990) has noted that many students from nondominant cultures employ a relational cognitive style that is based on variation, movement, divergent thinking, inductive reasoning, and an emphasis on people. Although this framework for contrasting the differences among students may be useful in understanding certain cognitive styles and associated behaviors, caution should be exercised in generalizing a specific behavior to any cultural group. Rather than viewing these behaviors as characteristic of all members of a group, professionals need to learn to view them as a set of attitudes or behaviors that an individual may consider in learning or interacting with others (Anderson & Fenichel, 1989). Educators also need to be aware of the impact of socioeconomic status, gender, family structure, and acculturation level on student behaviors (Baca & Cervantes, 1989).

Because students may need assistance in learning new culturally based behaviors, the cooperative teaching team can teach students the accepted cultural norms and communication skills that structure social and academic interactions in the general education classrooms (Li, 1992). The team can assist students in identifying and learning these behaviors by (a) acknowledging and understanding students' cultural perspectives; (b) explaining to students the new perspective and the environmental conditions associated with it; (c) using modeling, role playing, prompting, coaching, and scripting to teach new behaviors; and (d) understanding that it may take some time for the students to develop bicultural competence.

OFFERING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE STAGES OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND THEIR IMPACT ON LEARNING AND BEHAVIOR

I was surprised how little the regular ed. teachers knew about second language acquisition. One of the teachers I worked with, a wonderful teacher who has been teaching for over 20 years and is very sensitive to all the children in her class, was often misinterpreting and being frustrated by the different social and academic language abilities of J (a second language learner). She would watch J talk "a lot" (for J) at recess with the other students but be quiet in class during academic instruction. The teacher felt like she was doing something wrong, as if she was intimidating the student. We talked about second language acquisition and how social language develops first and the difficulties in learning the academic language used in the classroom. The teacher was relieved and was better able to target her instruction to J's level.

Diaz, Moll, and Mehan (1986) found that many educators have misunderstandings about second language acquisition and literacy development for second language learners. Bilingual special educators can provide educators with an overview of the stages students go through in acquiring social and academic language. They can offer educators an understanding of how the language skills that guide social interactions are context embedded and cognitively less demanding, and therefore are typically learned by students within 2 years. In contrast, they can explain that the academic language skills that relate to literacy and cognitive development in the classroom are context reduced and cognitively demanding, and take up to 7 years for many students to develop (see Maldonado-Colon, 1995, for an outline of the stages of second language acquisition).

The impact of the stages of second language acquisition on student learning and behavior as well as appropriate instructional techniques for students functioning at these stages also can be explored (Fradd & Weismantel, 1989). For example, cooperative teaching teams can discuss how students who are experiencing a silent period may be misconstrued as being shy or unmotivated, and that appropriate instructional strategies for these students might include songs, fingerplays, drawings, predictable books, and use of Total Physical Response (Asher, 1977), a technique that employs modeling, repeated practice, and movement to promote vocabulary development.

SHARING INFORMATION ABOUT STUDENTS' BACKGROUNDS

It's hard to explain but initially there was a distance between Ms. Reynolds and J. I think it's because she doesn't know that much about J. Because J's prior school records were in Spanish, Ms. Reynolds knows very little about J's past, and has difficulty understanding and

connecting with J.

Though her school records were minimal and dated, I was able to interpret them for Ms. Reynolds and the principal. Her records indicated that she attended school in her native country on a sporadic basis because of several childhood illnesses. Her records also used the term "Educacion Especial," which the teachers and the principal interpreted as J having been identified as having a disability in her native country. I explained to them that special education programs like the ones in the United States don't exist in J's country, and that in most Spanish-speaking countries "Educacion Especial" refers to general educacion. I also clarified the grading system used in J's country and how it differed from the grading system in the United States.

J told me she hadn't read in Spanish in a long time. When I read with her, she was able to decode and comprehend what we read. Because of her disruption in going to school, her reading was a little rusty, but not too bad. Once she starts reading on a regular basis, she'll be flying. I was also able to obtain information about J's past by speaking to her mother in Spanish. It seems that J has not had an easy life. Her mother came to the U.S. 10 years ago and left J as an infant to stay with her grandmother. Ten years later, J was finally reunited with her mother. J joined her mother and a family of strangers as J's mother had remarried and had a second daughter who was now 6 years old. Ms. Reynolds appreciated knowing this information about J. A knowledge of J's past helped her to have insights into the emotional side of J. She was more understanding of J and more willing to reach out to her.

Bilingual special educators can assist educators in meeting the unique needs of second language learners by providing them with information about students' educational, experiential, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds (Garcia & Malkin, 1993). With respect to educational background, bilingual special educators can offer educators information concerning students' linguistic abilities in both languages, academic achievement, and social and behavioral development, as well as the approaches, materials, and instructional modifications that have been effective with students.

In order to plan and implement an appropriate educational program, educators also will need to receive information about students' experiential backgrounds. Important experiential factors that can be shared with general and special educators include length of residence in the United States,

school attendance patterns, school instructional history, hobbies, interests, extracurricular activities in which the student participates, and the student's familiarity with schooling in the United States. Educators should also receive information about the conditions and events associated with the student's migration, the economic pressures facing the student's family, the student's history as a target of racism, violence, and harassment, and ways to involve the student's family in the educational process (C. R. Harris, 1991; Langdon, 1989).

An appropriate educational program for second language learners should address their language needs (Ortiz & Garcia, 1990; Ortiz & Wilkinson, 1989). Bilingual special educators are in a position to provide other educators with current information about students' linguistic abilities, including the students' language proficiency in both languages, language dominance, language preferences, and code switching as well as the languages and dialects spoken at home and in the students' community (Baca & Cervantes, 1989; Cloud & Landurand, n.d.). General and special educators also will need to receive information concerning students' current receptive and expressive language skills with respect to the stages of second language acquisition (Garcia & Malkin, 1993). Bilingual special educators can also offer educators insights into the student's enculturation and acculturation level, cultural background, self-concept, and social identity as well as the diverse perspectives associated with the student's cultural identity (Garcia & Malkin, 1993; Gollnick & Chinn, 1990; Westby & Rouse, 1985). Hudson and Fradd (1990) and Fradd (1993) have developed an excellent format for summarizing and sharing information about students' educational, experiential, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE TRANSITION TO GENERAL EDUCATION SETTINGS

All schools have their norms, expectations, and procedures which we take for granted. However, no matter how simple we think they are, doing something for the first time and in a new situation can be overwhelming, and embarrassing for a child. Since there are so many of these new things, I knew I could not go over every one of them with J in a short time. It would overwhelm and confuse her. I decided to break up the tasks and explain them in order of importance and occurrence. I approached it as if each situation was a new experience for her, not because of her unfamiliarity, but because being in a new place with new people and using a new language make it a new experience for her. For example, when we had the first fire alarm, I could tell by the expression of confusion and the way she looked around when the alarm sounded, that this was a new experience for J. I told her to follow me and the class. I explained to her the reason for and purpose of having fire drills. We also talked about the procedures to follow, which were easy for her to understand since they were being modeled by others. We did a similar thing with going through the

cafeteria line for breakfast, and the pledge of allegiance.

Students moving from bilingual special education classrooms to general education classrooms must learn to adjust to different linguistic and curricular demands, instructional formats, teaching styles, behavioral expectations, and student socialization patterns. Therefore, bilingual special educators, in collaboration with the general educators, will need to help second language learners make successful transitions to the general education setting (Hudson & Fradd, 1990). The goals of the transitional program can be determined by analyzing the critical environmental features and language and cognitive demands of the general education setting (Hudson & Fradd, 1990).

Chamot (1985) has proposed that transitional programs for second language learners include (a) an understanding of the technical terminology related to each content area, (b) an ability to delineate the appropriate language functions that guide academic and social interactions, and (c) a mastery of learning and language skills that help students acquire academic content, such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The transitional program for second language learners also should provide students with instruction in pragmatics. Handscombe (1989) has suggested that bilingual special educators can prepare their students for the transition to general education programs by beginning to align their curriculum and instructional materials with those used in the general education setting, to rely more on English to guide instruction, and to use the student's primary language to check comprehension only when necessary. Bilingual special educators also can employ the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA; Chamot & O'Malley, 1989) to assist second language learners in making the transition to general education settings.

DIVERSIFYING THE CURRICULUM

Ms. Reynolds and I read a bilingual book to the class. Ms. Reynolds read in English and I read in Spanish. I think all the students enjoyed it.

We practiced some of the words in Spanish. After lunch, I took J to do quiet reading in Spanish. Several of J's friends wanted to join us and we formed a small reading group. Everyone got a chance to read out loud in Spanish. I started out translating the story and J translated when she could.

They all seemed to enjoy this time together. J's friends were proud that they were reading in Spanish (for the first time). J was happy to be reading in her own language and was able to help the others through their pronunciation struggles. The three of them would laugh and smile at each other. They wanted to continue reading even though it was time for recess.

It was a very valuable experience for all three. J was doing something she could do and understand well. J's friends were learning about the difficulties and struggles of learning a new

language. Through this experience, I hope they got to understand some of what J goes through each day.

After we finished reading, several other students asked me if they could join the group. At the end of the day, one student even reminded me about quiet reading time tomorrow. They were really excited about reading in Spanish. I suggested to the students that since they were working on creating their own books, that maybe we could try to make a bilingual book. They liked that idea.

Another time, when we were reading in Spanish, J took it upon herself to help the girls when they were struggling to read. She modeled the words for them. I didn't say anything and just let her act like the teacher.

If second language learners are going to be successful in general education settings, the general education curriculum will need to be diversified to make it relevant and meaningful for all students (Ruiz, 1989). Educators can work together to create a diversified, multicultural curriculum that includes and affirms the histories, experiences, and contributions of all groups (Banks, 1991b). In such a curriculum, students can be taught to think critically and examine and explore concepts, issues, problems, and concerns from a variety of cultural perspectives (Banks, 1991a). Educators also can diversify the curriculum by employing parallel lessons, which simultaneously provide students with content from the mainstream culture and other cultures (Gonzalez, 1992). For example, a lesson on plants can be made a multicultural learning experience by focusing on plants in various regions of the United States and in other countries. Because an appropriate multicultural curriculum also should include instructional materials that reflect and validate students' experiences (Dean, Salend, & Taylor, 1993), bilingual special educators can assist educators in evaluating and selecting diverse instructional materials for integration into the curriculum (Garcia & Malkin, 1993).

FACILITATING INSTRUCTION FOR SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS

J is making progress and completing more work in class and at home. I make sure that directions are understood, translating them into Spanish when needed, circling the key words, giving physical cues, and writing the homework directions in Spanish. I also assess her understanding by asking her questions and modeling responses. These approaches appear to be working.

In math we used cooperative learning groups. It was a challenge at times to get them all to agree. I had to explain to them several times what their task was, and that it was not an issue of being right or wrong. I frequently

modeled for them how to interact with each other during discussions and how to take turns. I made sure that J was actively involved by making sure each member of the group contributed an answer and by modeling different types of responses.

In addition to diversifying the curriculum, bilingual special educators can work with teachers to employ strategies to facilitate instruction for second language learners (Maldonado-Colon, 1995; Salend, 1994). Instructional strategies for second language learners should be consistent with the students' background of experiences, cultural perspectives, stage of language development, gender, and age (C. Collier & Kalk, 1989; Franklin, 1992; Freeman & Freeman, 1992; Irvine, 1990). Bilingual special educators will also need to assist educators in employing holistic, reciprocal interaction teaching models, given that traditional teaching models that promote the transmission of content from teachers to students fail to provide a language context for students and may therefore be even less effective with second language learners (Echevarria & McDonough, 1995; Figueroa, Fradd, & Correa, 1989; Ortiz & Wilkinson, 1991; Ortiz & Yates, 1989). Bilingual special educators can also collaborate with other educators to provide second language learners with contextualized learning activities through use of thematic and multisensory instruction and through use of cooperative learning, physical gestures, movements, objects, graphic representations, kinesics, voice variations, and manipulatives (Maldonado-Colon, 1995; Supancheck, 1989). Bilingual special educators also can help other educators learn to use some of the approaches that bilingual and ESL teachers employ to facilitate students' language acquisition, including Total Physical Response and Sheltered English (Echevarria, 1995; Freeman & Freeman, 1992; Tikunoff et al., 1991). In addition to these approaches, bilingual special educators can discuss and demonstrate effective instructional strategies for use with second language learners (Fradd, 1987; Hamayan & Perlman, 1990; Maldonado-Colon, 1995; Supancheck, 1989; Westby, 1992).

DELIVERING INSTRUCTION IN STUDENTS' NATIVE LANGUAGES

During math, I helped J work on vocabulary definitions. Her homework assignment for that day involved understanding of the word congruent. I explained the word and concept to her in Spanish and she understood and was able to complete her homework assignment.

Many second language learners educated in general education settings may require and benefit from instruction in their native language (Garcia & Malkin, 1993). Therefore, bilingual special educators can also be responsible for delivering instruction to second language learners in their native language.

Allington and Shake (1986) have offered two instructional models bilingual special and general educators can employ to use native language instruction to support learning in the general education setting. In the a priori model, the bilingual special educator delivers instruction in the students' native languages that parallels and supports the content being taught in the general education setting. For example, prior to participating in a series of lessons on photosynthesis in English, the second language learners are taught content and vocabulary related to photosynthesis in their native language by the bilingual educator. In the post hoc model, the bilingual special

educator delivers instruction in the students' native language designed to reinforce skills previously taught in English. Thus, rather than introducing new content to the learner, the bilingual educator offers native language instruction designed to review and reteach material and vocabulary previously taught in English.

PROMOTING LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY FOR ALL STUDENTS

I have been trying to help the students learn some Spanish. They like learning Spanish. It helps them to communicate with J, and it gives J something that she is successful with and can teach others. I start the morning by welcoming all the students by saying "Buenas dias." The students enjoy it and now greet each other with "buenas dias" in the morning.

I have been integrating a few words of Spanish into lessons and directions. I'll say, "Open your books to pagina cuarenta." The students like this and my attempts to be teaching Spanish seem to be paying off. Today, Adam, a monolingual student, brought a Spanish-English dictionary to share with the class. J smiles when they attempt to talk to her in Spanish.

Because many students who speak only English may be interested in learning a second language, bilingual special educators can also teach these students a second language. In addition to helping these students become bilingual and biliterate, the teaching and learning of a second language in the general education setting can help establish an equal status relationship between the languages spoken by students in the classroom, promote social interactions among students in the classroom, and provide all students with insights into the challenges of learning a second language.

Teachers also can establish a classroom setting that acknowledges and affirms linguistic diversity and views bilingualism as an asset. Toward this end, teachers can show and model respect for and encourage the maintenance of all languages that students speak by labeling classroom objects, constructing bulletin boards, and having materials in the classroom in several languages. Teachers can promote students use of their native language by encouraging students to speak their native languages when the development of English language proficiency is not the focus of the activity, offering activities that are bilingual and monolingual, incorporating students' native languages into the instructional program, and inviting speakers and storytellers who speak various languages to address the class (Garcia & Malkin, 1993; Freeman & Freeman, 1992). An acceptance of linguistic diversity also can be fostered by teaching students about dialect differences (Adger, Wolfram, & Detwyler, 1993).

EMPLOYING ASSESSMENT ALTERNATIVES

It was important for us to show J's progress. Ms. Reynolds needed to see it, J's parents needed to see it, the principal needed to see it,

and I needed to see it. The best way to see her progress was her portfolio. An examination of her portfolio at different points in time showed significant progress in terms of J's language development and academic skills. It made all of us feel good about our efforts.

I read the test to J and translated anything she did not understand. At first sight of the test, she was reluctant to take it saying that she didn't know that. I told her that it was the material we had covered in class last week and assured her that she had learned it. She completed the test and did well.

We also made test modifications for J that were faded out over time. At the beginning of the school year, I translated the test into Spanish and she dictated or wrote her responses in Spanish, which I wrote in English. As she developed proficiency, she read her tests in English and could still respond orally and in written form in Spanish (which I translated to English). I was also available to help her with vocabulary and sentence structure. We moved to her taking tests in English and asking for assistance if it was needed. To make sure she understood the test questions, we practiced the test questions in advance.

Traditional strategies for assessing students often serve to disempower students by focusing on the difficulties they experience in schools. As a result, the blame for these difficulties is often placed on the student and the student's family and community (Cummins, 1986). Bilingual special educators can help remedy this situation by working with other educators, students, parents, and administrators to develop and implement an ongoing, equitable assessment process that focuses on authentic learning, reflects a critical examination of the curriculum and instruction to improve teaching and learning, involves data from a variety of perspectives and sources, and empowers students in the learning process (Dean et al., 1993; Hamayan & Perlman, 1990; International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English, 1994).

Although effective assessment for all students should make them the center of all assessment activities, the need for student-focused assessment is particularly acute with second language learners (Dean et al., 1993). Student-centered assessment strategies such as portfolio assessment, student entries in journals or learning logs, self-evaluation questionnaires and interviews, and think-alouds actively involve students in reflecting upon the process of learning (e.g., learning styles, strategy use, effort, motivation) and the outcomes that reveal progress in learning (Pike & Salend, 1995). Student-centered assessment strategies are especially important for second language learners because these techniques provide students with some control over their learning, engage students in the use of language, and allow students to evaluate their own progress, which often builds self-esteem.

Teacher-made quizzes and tests are often used to evaluate students in general education settings (Putnam, 1992). Although the assessment of language proficiency may not be the stated objective of these teacher-developed tests, language proficiency can affect students' abilities to understand test directions, respond to test items, expand on knowledge in content areas, and seek assistance from and interact with the test administrator (Wolfram, 1990). Therefore, bilingual special educators can also help other educators employ appropriate alternative testing techniques and adapt both the presentation and response mode formats, readability, linguistic complexity and content of their tests for use with second language learners (Salend, 1994). Bilingual special educators can also enhance the test performance of second language learners by teaching them test-taking skills (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1988).

PROMOTING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

Last night was "Open-House" and the family members who attended left notes in the students' desks. The students were quite excited to find them when they came in this morning. A few of the students approached me and shared their notes with me. J's parents did not come, and I asked J about it. She said her parents didn't know about it.

J's parents' English skills are limited. They work long hours and it is difficult for them to be available for meetings during school hours. When they are available, it is difficult for them and the teachers to communicate. I helped J make a "Home to School" folder so that notices get home. I explained it to J and wrote a brief explanation on how to use the folder in Spanish for J's parents.

An important component of effective schooling for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds is family and community involvement (Cummins, 1986; Harry, 1992). When parents, extended family members, and other community members who are significant in the lives of students are involved in schools in a context of respect and mutuality, schools have empowering results for students and families (Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Roberts et al., 1991; Takata, 1991).

Parents of second language learners are interested in their children's education, but a variety of structural, cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic factors may serve as barriers to their involvement in their children's education (Harry, Allen, & McLaughlin, 1995; Salend & Taylor, 1993). Garcia and Malkin (1993) and Salend and Taylor have discussed how cultural factors such as a family's level of acculturation, prior history with racial discrimination, family structure, childrearing practices, behavioral and developmental expectations, and disciplinary styles influence parental participation. Linguistic and cross-cultural communication style differences and socioeconomic factors also can limit interactions among educators, families, and communities (Cheng, 1987; E. W. Lynch & Stein, 1987). Therefore, it is important that bilingual special educators work with general and special educators to overcome these barriers to parental involvement and empowerment (Fradd & Wilen, 1990; Nicolau & Ramos, 1990; Plata, 1993; Salend & Taylor, 1993).

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF COOPERATIVE TEACHING ARRANGEMENTS

Like other cooperative teaching teams, teams of bilingual special and general educators may encounter several challenges (Bauwens, Hourcade, & Friend, 1989; Hudson & Fradd, 1990; Pugach & Johnson, 1995). Teaching teams have identified several issues that limit the effectiveness of cooperative teaching arrangements, including time for planning, resistance from colleagues, and increased workloads and responsibilities (Bauwens et al., 1989). Educators working in cooperative teaching teams also need to learn to work and teach together (Fager, Andrews, Shepherd, & Quinn, 1993). Frequently, this learning experience takes time. Educators must overcome philosophical, teaching style, and historical differences; territorial issues; and concerns about working with and being observed by another professional (Pugach & Johnson, 1995).

In addition to these potential barriers, cooperative teaching teams of bilingual special educators and general educators may also need to confront challenges related to differences in their own cultural perspectives and experiential backgrounds. Rather than approaching their cultural and experiential differences as negative or divisive factors, cooperative teaching teams need to work toward the development of an equal status relationship that is based on a bicultural understanding and view their diverse perspectives as adding to the richness of a team that contains members who have different viewpoints about schools, classrooms, teaching, and students (Salend, Johansen, Mumper, Chase, Pike, & Dorney, this issue). Therefore, bilingual special educators and general education teachers need to understand the inevitable tensions and conflicts they will encounter in working collaboratively, and employ participatory and interactive communication strategies to negotiate the meanings and methods of their actions and differences within the context of their roles and activities in their classrooms (K. C. Harris, 1995; Roberts et al., 1991). Toward this end, cooperative teaching teams need to work to develop a working relationship that is based on sharing decision-making roles, demonstrating concern and respect for others, encouraging and valuing the input of others, employing self-disclosure, reflective listening and perspective taking, exploring conflicts and differences of opinion, confronting their own resistance to differences, recognizing their commonalities, and searching for and negotiating consensus (K. C. Harris, 1995; Idol, 1990; Johnson & Johnson, 1991; Roberts et al., 1991).

CONCLUSIONS

The roles of the bilingual special educator outlined in this article point to real omissions in the preparation of general and special education teachers. Although the bilingual special educator can be an important resource for other educators, the differences in knowledge and the working out of the day-to-day teaching relationships can be very difficult. For example, the bilingual special educator should not be seen as the one who will singlehandedly "fix" all the problems. Both teachers need to see themselves as partners in a mutual learning and problem-solving relationship.

In addition, it should not be solely the task of the cooperative teaching team to create ways of working together. This kind of collaboration should be supported and developed by school administrators and teacher education programs. For example, administrators can offer the teachers the flexible scheduling and resources necessary for successful cooperative teaching endeavors and teacher educators can offer training in cooperative teaching relationships (Salend et al., this issue).

Cooperative teaching teams composed of a bilingual special educator and a general education teacher offer real promise for the education of all students in general education settings. However,

the challenges the team will encounter need to be addressed, and the team's efforts need the support of the larger education community.

Added material

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