Preparing Linguistically and Culturally Conscious Pre-service Teachers with a Community-based Service-learning Project

Tuba Arabacı Atlamaz
Abdullah Gül University
Türkiye

ABSTRACT: Teacher preparation for culturally and linguistically diverse communities is crucial as classrooms become increasingly diverse. This study reports on the interaction between 20 pre-service teachers (PSTs) and adult emergent bilinguals during a community-based service-learning (CBSL) project. The project was part of a course offered at a state university in the northeastern USA. The qualitative data demonstrated that the PSTs gained sociolinguistic consciousness, learned about language learners' prior experiences and linguistic proficiencies, and identified the linguistic demands of the interaction. The study also revealed that CBSL projects can possibly be an effective means of teacher preparation for emergent bilinguals worldwide.

KEYWORDS: Service-learning, teacher preparation, emergent bilinguals, linguistically responsive teachers

"Implementing these strategies into my future classroom and taking part in my future teacher reflection as well will help me better educate the emergent bilinguals I will undoubtedly have." — Danielle, pre-service teacher

Danielle, one of the pre-service teachers (PSTs) participating in this study, articulated readiness to welcome culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) communities in her classrooms and willingness to take relevant actions to increase these learners' participation, attitudes expected from teachers in this migratory world. With the increase in mobility of people all around the world, it is common to find emergent bilinguals[1] in educational settings. In the USA alone, emergent bilinguals constitute approximately 9% of school-aged children (Fan, 2018; Howlett et al., 2019). However, this trend causes some disruptions in emergent bilinguals' education. Emergent bilinguals face academic

challenges as they try to learn academic language and content at the same time (Cummins, 2000; DiCerbo et al., 2014; O'Hallaron, 2014; Ranney, 2012; Scarcella, 2003; Schleppegrell, 2004).

New trends in mobility have also resulted in pressure for teachers to become informed about emergent bilinguals as classrooms become more diverse. Considering the language as a sole medium of communication, not only teachers of ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) but all teachers (henceforth non-ESOL teachers) should be educated with more robust ways of transmitting language and content (Reeves, 2006). One of the steps to equip teachers with the required skills to teach emergent bilinguals is to prepare pre-service teachers for CLD communities (Lucas & Villegas, 2010). However, there is no common course of action on how to educate non-ESOL teachers to meet the needs of emergent bilinguals. Despite this situation, teacher educators have started to modify their curricula to prepare pre-service teachers to embrace a linguistically and culturally responsive approach (Lucas & Villegas, 2013). They choose different paths, ranging from adding elective or compulsory courses or projects to their curricula (Hutchinson, 2013) to adapting course syllabi to integrate knowledge or skills about emergent bilinguals' instruction (Bravo et al., 2014; Lucas & Grinberg, 2008). In addition to these modifications, some other programs have created opportunities for pre-service teachers in which they can interact with emergent bilinguals in a community-based service-learning (CBSL) project to increase their skills, knowledge, and attunement to the needs for emergent bilinguals (e.g., Figueroa et al., 2015; Lucas & Grinberg, 2008; Palpacuer-Lee & Curtis, 2017; Palpacuer-Lee et al., 2018; Wurr & Perren, 2015). Among these actions, CBSL projects have received considerable attention, as they give PSTs the chance to gain first-hand experience with emergent bilinguals. The CBSL projects require the PSTs to leave their comfort zones and interact with the CLD community members (Grassi & Armon, 2015). Although CBSL projects are often used in teacher education programs, there is a dearth of research investigating the effectiveness of CBSL projects for preparing non-ESOL pre-service teachers for emergent bilinguals (Baker, 2019).

To contribute to research in teacher preparation for emergent bilinguals, this article aims to investigate an application of a CBSL project in one graduate school of education at a state university located in the northeastern US. The research question guiding this article is:

How do interactions with adult emergent bilinguals during a community-based service-learning project help non-ESOL pre-service teachers to improve their skills, knowledge, and dispositions required to help emergent bilinguals and CLD communities and make the pre-service teachers more linguistically and culturally conscious?

Framework for Preparing Linguistically Responsive Teachers

Teacher education programs need to be designed carefully to increase pre-service teachers' awareness of emergent bilinguals and to provide them with the necessary skills

to teach these learners. In 2010, Lucas and Villegas introduced a "framework for preparing linguistically responsive teachers" to help PSTs acquire the necessary skills, knowledge, and orientations to meet emergent bilinguals' social and academic needs. Lucas and Villegas emphasized taking "the notion of language from the periphery into the center of the discussion of teaching, and by extension, teacher preparation" (Lucas & Villegas, 2011, p. 56). Teachers are expected to go beyond cultural awareness and modify their instruction to effectively meet emergent bilinguals' social, academic, and linguistic needs. In this framework, three orientations and four comprehensive sets of pedagogical knowledge and skills are defined to address various effective teaching strategies (Table 1).

Table 1

Framework for Preparing Linguistically Responsive Teachers (Modified from Lucas & Villegas, 2013, pp. 101-103)

---

1. **Sociolinguistic consciousness:** Being aware of emergent bilinguals' diverse and unique identities, cultural beliefs, linguistic repertoires, and their own beliefs about language learners and language education.

2. **Value for linguistic diversity:** Having a welcoming approach to any languages that emergent bilinguals use to communicate, taking advantage of translanguaging approaches and seeing other languages as resources to learn English (Velasco & García, 2014; Wright, 2016).

3. **Inclination to advocate for English language learners:** Taking an active role in ameliorating emergent bilinguals' education in each phase and taking steps to encourage administrators and policy makers to enhance educational opportunities for emergent bilinguals.

4. **Learning about English language learners' language backgrounds, experiences, and proficiencies:** Knowing individual learners' different cultural backgrounds, personal lives, schooling experiences, and language proficiency both in the new language and in their home languages.

5. **Identifying the language demands of classroom discourse and tasks:** Being aware of the linguistic aspects and demands of tasks, instruction, and communication. Rather than oversimplifying the concepts, acquiring skills to recognize possible linguistic challenges and to eliminate them from their instruction.

6. **Knowing and applying key principles of second language learning:** Knowing that learning another language is different than acquiring a mother tongue, and that there are various theories that can be applied to different aspects of the language learning process.

7. **Scaffolding instruction to promote English language learners' learning:** Along with other knowledge and skills, finding the right tools – additional linguistic aids, instructional strategies and tools such as translation, visuals, and realia

---

> (Schall-Leckrone, 2019) – to enhance instruction at the right amount of time and level (Echevarria et al., 2013; Schleppegrell, 2004).

These orientations and pedagogical skills aim to increase teachers' awareness of emergent bilinguals. By implementing them, teachers can improve their interaction with learners and their families (González et al., 2005). Teachers can also tap into learners' background knowledge during instruction (Echevarria et al., 2013). More importantly, teachers will increase their reciprocity with these learners and create mutual trust during their interaction (Lucas & Villegas, 2011).

Additionally, these pedagogical skills require teachers to learn to identify key vocabulary for content and understand syntactic and semantic elements of academic language required to teach that content, as well as to know that there is a difference between academic and conversational language (Cummins, 2000). Teachers are also expected to be cognizant of the way they speak to emergent bilinguals, monitoring their pace of speech and allocating enough time to emergent bilinguals so that they can feel less pressured to find the words during a conversation (Curtis, 2018). Moreover, it is crucial to recognize that emergent bilinguals learn best when they are provided with authentic tasks during which they collaborate with their peers (Swain et al., 2011) and when they are comfortable making mistakes (Krashen, 1987).

With this framework, Lucas and Villegas (2010, 2011, 2013) emphasize the importance of acquiring cultural and linguistic awareness that encompasses social, political, emotional, and instructional pillars of education. The items in this framework are interrelated and can be a guide to creating a more comprehensive teacher education curriculum. This framework also offers insights for examining teacher preparation programs for emergent bilinguals (Tandon et al., 2017). When combined with reflective practices performed by pre-service teachers to improve their instruction, the framework can be used to investigate how a CBSL project can help pre-service teachers to become more linguistically responsive teachers.

Literature Review

Although the need for teacher preparation for culturally and linguistically diverse communities has become more urgent than it was in the past, little research has been conducted to see which methods of preparing teacher candidates for work with these populations are the most effective. The few studies that have been done reveal that creating community-based service-learning opportunities to prepare pre-service teachers is effective because it gives teacher candidates first-hand experience in interacting with emergent bilinguals (Baker, 2019; Hutchinson, 2013). Such opportunities must be carefully designed to include the core components of service learning, such as reciprocity, reflection, and interaction with community members (Acquah & Commins, 2015; Furco, 1996). Reciprocity refers to "a mutuality between the needs and outcomes of the 'provider' and the 'recipient' in a service-learning relationship" (Henry & Breyfogle, 2006, p. 27). Both providers and recipients in a service-learning project are expected to benefit from

the experience. Ongoing reflection by service providers is another key feature of CBSL projects, as it leads to growth in terms of understanding the experience, forming new meanings, and even taking further actions (Crabtree, 2008; Eyler, 2002; Furco, 1996). Another major aim of these projects is to help address community needs (Furco, 1996).

Although research on CBSL projects is abundant, few studies have been conducted to examine how pre-service teachers are prepared for emergent bilinguals through service-learning projects (Howlett et al., 2019; Sox, 2011). In these few studies, types and implementations of CBSL projects showed significant variety, ranging from one-time interaction with emergent bilinguals (Hooks, 2008), to participating in service-learning projects abroad (Regalla, 2013), to interacting with children (Glazier et al., 2014) or adult emergent bilinguals (Figueroa et al., 2015). All of them, however, yielded promising results for teacher education programs, as they all shared the core components of CBSL projects. Carefully designed CBSL projects increased pre-service teachers' skills, knowledge, and dispositions required to help emergent bilinguals and CLD communities.

Their reflections on the experience helped the PSTs to recognize various issues about emergent bilinguals and their lives. Bollin (2007) found that PSTs admitted to having had some stereotypical beliefs about CLD communities. PSTs came to question these dispositions and developed new, welcoming, and positive perceptions of other cultures and of emergent bilinguals (Bollin, 2007; Droppert, 2013; Pappamihiel, 2007; Rodríguez-Arroyo & Vaughns, 2015). After interacting with adult emergent bilinguals for eight weeks during a teacher education course, pre-service teachers reported "a disruption in their expected norms," as they confronted their own beliefs, and then co-constructed their perceptions about emergent bilinguals (Palpacuer-Lee & Curtis, 2017, p.170). The PSTs built reciprocity with them, recognized learners' funds of knowledge, and celebrated emergent bilinguals' achievements (Palpacuer-Lee et al., 2018). PSTs also improved their skills at assessing and meeting emergent bilinguals' needs and came to emphasize the importance of advocating for these learners (Szente, 2008). In Regalla's (2013) community service-learning project with 28 PSTs, the pre-service teachers indicated that they "had to leave their comfort zones," learn to "walk in their students' shoes" (p. 27), and understand the feelings of emergent bilinguals while learning Spanish. Moreover, Regalla (2013) stated that the PSTs were able to retain their understanding a year after their experience. Even though the author did not specify whether ESOL or non-ESOL teachers made these statements, the comments were prevalent among the pre-service teachers no matter what concentration they were pursuing.

Another benefit of these service-learning projects can be the new insights PSTs gain about emergent bilinguals' parents. After attending CBSL projects, pre-service teachers improved their perceptions of multicultural family relationships and issues (Hooks, 2008; Reyes et al., 2016). In these CBSL settings, the PSTs noticed that, although CLD families were interested in education and were willing to support their children as much as possible, they sometimes failed to attend school-related activities due to their family responsibilities (Figueroa et al., 2015; Glazier et al., 2014). The researchers also reported that opportunities to interact with emergent bilinguals helped PSTs enhance their perceptions about CLD communities (Figueroa et al., 2015; Gonzales & Gabel, 2017; Reyes et al., 2016).

In short, despite the lack of research on CBSL projects in educating non-ESOL pre-service teachers for emergent bilinguals, carefully designed CBSL projects have been found to be effective in raising pre-service teachers' awareness and preparing them for CLD communities. To the best of the author's knowledge, no research has been conducted specifically examining a CBSL project within the framework of preparing linguistically responsive teachers (Lucas & Villegas, 2010). Considering this gap, this article aims to contribute to educational research on teacher preparation for CLD communities by analyzing one example of a community-based service-learning project within the framework of preparing linguistically responsive teachers.

Methodology

Qualitative design was used in this study to investigate pre-service teachers' experiences during their interaction with adult emergent bilinguals from CLD communities. The qualitative design is advantageous for understanding participants' attributes and making meaning out of their experiences (Merriam, 2009). It also provides adaptability while collecting data, especially during interviews (Guest et al., 2012). This article is part of a larger study which was conducted to examine one graduate-level course specifically designed to teach non-ESOL teachers of emergent bilinguals at a state university in the northeastern USA in the Spring semester of 2017 (Arabacı Atlamaz, 2018). The course was offered at an off-campus location (a public library) near the university, which operates in one of the most diverse cities in the state, with more than a 50% non-white population (United States Census Bureau, 2015). Prioritizing the importance of building community-university partnerships in its teacher education programs, the university offers this course in the library to increase emergent bilinguals' participation rate, as well as to provide its PSTs with the opportunity to leave the places they know and become familiar with the places that their future students may live.

The Course with the Community-based Service-learning Project

The major aim of the course was to increase non-ESOL pre-service teachers' awareness of emergent bilinguals. The course content included discussions of the funds of knowledge approach, based on the book, *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities, and Classrooms* (González et al., 2005), in addition to an article by Karen Dooley titled, "Intercultural Conversation: Building Understanding Together" (2009), which discusses specific strategies that native speakers of English can use when interacting with emergent bilinguals. While the first hour of each two-hour class period was set aside to discuss these concepts, after week six of the course, the second hour included meetings with adult community members who were emergent bilinguals at different proficiency levels. These meetings were held for eight consecutive weeks (one day a week, for a total of 8 meetings) during the spring semester of 2017. The PSTs formed groups of three, serving as conversation facilitators. Before coming to the session, they prepared a conversation guide (Community-Based Language Learning Program

[CBLL], 2017) for their conversation partners. The facilitators chose a communicative goal, such as talking to a doctor, decided on key verbal expressions to meet that goal, and thought about ways to modify the instruction depending on the language proficiency level of their partner. The PSTs were also expected to be flexible in the topics of conversation, however, as their partners might have a different goal than the one the PSTs picked for them. During each session, the PSTs in their groups scattered around the meeting room. Each group was supposed to include at least one community member/partner during each meeting. As the community members were voluntarily attending the meetings, however, there sometimes was not a community member in each group. At those times, the PSTs would join other groups to observe their conversation and interaction. After each meeting, the PSTs were expected to fill out a self-reflection checklist, debriefing on their interaction in terms of aspects like pace of speech and wait time (Curtis, 2018).

Participants

Twenty pre-service teachers taking this elective course consented to participate in this study. Eighteen of them were preparing to be special education teachers, while two were specializing in science education. Background information was collected about the program they were currently in, their previous experience with language learners and/or CLD communities, their experiences abroad, and the languages they could speak (Table 2). The racial and ethnic background of the participants was not explicitly asked, but the question about their previous language experience revealed whether the participants were monolingual (n=13) or bilingual to some degree (n=7). Six PSTs came from immigrant families and eight had some level of engagement with CLD communities, whereas the other six had no previous interaction with CLD communities. Even if these PSTs had completed their student-teaching experience before (in Fall 2016), interacting with CLD communities in a CBSL project was a novel experience for all of them.

Table 2

PSTs in Service-learning Project, by Conversation Group

Name of Participant	Program	Previous Multicultural Experience	Travel to other Countries	Language Spoken
Melissa	Special Education	Moderate - casual acquaintances	Spain, France, Mexico	English, some Spanish
Shannon*	Special Education	Moderate - tutoring, casual friends, Spanish roommates	None	English, some Spanish
Claire*	Special Education	None	None	English
Rebecca	Special Education	None	None	English

Robin	Special Education	Moderate - student teaching	Mexico, Caribbean and many islands	English
Jessica	Special Education	None	Spain, France, Mexico, etc.	English
Ellen	Special Education	ELL experience - immigrated from Poland	Lived in Poland for 8 years. Tunisia, England, Ireland	Polish, English
Paul	Special Education	Moderate - student-teaching/tutoring. Took bilingual classes	None	Spanish, English
Joey*	Special Education	Moderate - student teaching	Dominican Republic, Mexico	English
Charlotte*	Science Education	ELL experience - Family immigrated from Nigeria	Holland, England, Nigeria, Germany	Nigerian Creole, English
Mira	Special Education	ELL experience - Family immigrated from India	No data	Spanish, English
Lily	Special Education	ELL experience - Family immigrated from China	Taiwan, Japan	Chinese, English
Stella	Special Education	ELL experience - Family immigrated from Italy	Italy	Italian, English
Andrea*	Science Education	Moderate - student teaching/ teacher substitute	Canada	English
Helen	Special Education	Moderate - student teaching/ tutoring	Mexico, Bahamas	English
Danielle	Special Education	Limited - casual acquaintances	None	English
Hannah	Special Education	Limited - went to school with ELLs	Hungary, Italy, Sweden, Bahamas	English, some Italian
Rachel	Special Education	Limited - casual acquaintances	Mexico	English
Sabrina	Special Education	Moderate - student teaching	Study abroad in Spain for 6 months, England, France	English, Spanish (BA degree)
Jerome*	Special Education	ELL experience - family immigrated from Philippines	Lived in Philippines for 3 years	English, some Spanish

* The names with the Asterix (Shannon, Claire, Joey, Charlotte, Andrea, and Jerome) show the participants I interviewed as part of the study.

Although the focus of this article is solely on the pre-service teacher participants, it is important to provide brief information about the adult community members attending these meetings. More than 14 adult community members who were learners of English attended this eight-week service-learning project. While some of the community members came only once or twice, seven of them attended regularly, defined as at least three times.

Their English language proficiency levels ranged from beginner to advanced. They came from various countries, mostly from South America and China, some a long time ago and some very recently.

Data Collection Procedures

Throughout the Spring semester of 2017, I collected data via observations, interviews, and documents to increase the trustworthiness of the study (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009). I observed both seminar sessions and meetings with emergent bilinguals for 13 weeks. Although I did not use a structured observation protocol, I prepared a guiding observation checklist. I modified the checklist prepared by Durgunoglu and Hughes (2010), which included instructional strategies such as "general teaching strategies" and "delivery of the content" (p. 36). I also used the items from the self-reflection checklist prepared by Curtis (2018), which focuses on the interaction between PSTs and emergent bilinguals with items such as "monitoring pace of speech" and "implementing wait-time" (p. 73). I collected documents such as weekly self-debrief checklists and mid- and end-of-semester reflections written for the course requirements. In these documents, the PSTs made connections between their experiences and the course readings, and reflected on their own beliefs about CLD communities. At the end of the semester, I did semi-structured interviews with six of the PSTs, either online or face-to-face, asking about the PSTs' overall experiences, feelings, and challenges during their interaction with adult emergent bilinguals.

The data were triangulated via different data collection methods. However, the majority of the data came from the participants' self-reports written to fulfil the course requirements. Hence, the PSTs may not have shared their true feelings about emergent bilinguals and their interaction with their partners. In future studies, a follow-up survey or interview can be conducted to perhaps better reveal PSTs' skills, knowledge, and dispositions after they start working in an educational setting. Moreover, more attention to reflection on the experience and introduction of more instructional strategies could be part of such a course with a CBSL project; I gathered this kind of data the next time I taught the same course.

Data Analysis

I examined the chronologically organized data through the lens of Lucas and Villegas' (2010) "framework for preparing linguistically responsive teachers." Throughout this process, I used both deductive coding, which enabled me to produce the codes before the analysis, and inductive coding, during which I generated the codes while examining the data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Some of the codes used for this article were the PSTs' reflections on the course's impact on their feelings, beliefs, and attitudes about emergent bilinguals; reflections on learning the emergent bilinguals' background knowledge; and developing conversational strategies. I aimed to ensure the credibility and reliability of the data by implementing various data collection methods in addition to keeping research

journals and writing memos. This variety provided me "rich and thick descriptions" to triangulate the findings (Merriam, 2009).

Findings

This article, which is part of a larger study, focuses on how the CBSL project helped the pre-service teachers enhance their knowledge, skills, and dispositions toward emergent bilinguals and CLD communities. The data yielded some promising results for teacher preparation programs. The CBSL project increased the pre-service teachers' sociolinguistic consciousness and awareness of recognizing language learners' backgrounds. It also helped them to realize the key linguistic demands of the interaction and develop necessary actions.

Increasing Sociolinguistic Consciousness

Lucas and Villegas (2010) emphasized that teachers should value learners' language and culture, and know that their own beliefs about language learning directly affect their teaching. In this service-learning project, the pre-service teachers interacted with adult emergent bilinguals – a student body with which they had not interacted before. The study revealed that the PSTs shared positive feelings about this experience. They were glad to be part of this course. The PSTs also indicated that their conversations were entertaining, informative, and eye-opening. As Rachel expressed, at the end of the semester, she became "more open to different values of life and grew as an individual," and learned "how to be more self-aware and open-minded." Likewise, Jessica shared that these interactions took her out of her shell and made her willing to teach her culture to others. The PSTs also found this opportunity highly valuable because they discovered their own perceptions of emergent bilinguals and their own perceptions of their own lives. The PSTs also recognized the relationships and responsibilities in emergent bilinguals' family structures. They realized that some responsibilities at home, like babysitting, could limit their students' ability to study. It is apparent that this CBSL project helped the PSTs to be more conscious of learners' lives, to be more open to learning about their family relationships, and to welcome parents into their classrooms.

Additionally, the PSTs were able to implement face-saving strategies, which are used by speakers when they do not understand the conversation (Dooley, 2009). The PSTs also wanted to teach their conversation partners to implement face-saving strategies. Referring to these strategies, the PSTs provided their partners with some tips to make them sound more natural during their interactions with native speakers. For instance, Charlotte's team and Andrea's team introduced their partners to the phrases, "Can I ask you a question?" and, "Give me a moment to think about that," respectively. Recounting that interaction, Andrea believed that, "This will help him [the language learner] slow down and process the questions he is being asked so that he can produce an appropriate response, and also maintain his dignity." Considering that language learners need more time to get their ideas together, the PSTs provided the emergent

bilinguals with important and appropriate communication strategies to encourage a healthier conversation, especially during a job interview. In this respect, this CBSL project was effective in increasing the sociolinguistic consciousness of pre-service teachers, as defined in the framework of Lucas and Villegas (2010).

Learning about Language Learners' Background and Experiences

One of the items in the framework of Lucas and Villegas (2010) is to learn about the learners' background knowledge, prior experiences, and linguistic proficiencies. The PSTs in this service-learning project willingly asked their partners to choose topics they were confident in and comfortable with (Dooley, 2009), and designed the conversation guides accordingly. For example, Helen found that, "This mutual trust is a necessity in order to get to know your students and establish which methods of teaching work best." She assured herself that "*Confianza* is something that I will strive my best to create when teaching emergent bilingual students, and all students in general." Similarly, Shannon came to believe that building mutual trust is important so that emergent bilinguals can feel encouraged to participate more. She also set her mind on helping her students feel confident "every time they walk into real life situations outside of the classroom." Similarly, Andrea pointed out her future plans for teaching emergent bilinguals: "Allowing room for the ELL to speak more (which may require more prompting) and making sure to check for mutual understanding are two things that I will definitely take away from this experience and use in the classroom." The PSTs were eager to gain emergent bilinguals' trust so that these learners could join the conversation easily, even outside the class. By doing this, the PSTs reported that they were able to create a friendly and engaging environment, which increased the flow of conversation. The PSTs also indicated that their partners engaged in the conversation without fear of making mistakes. Danielle's reflection on this subject can be a good example of how other PSTs also felt about the importance of creating mutual trust.

> Mutual trust allows for further development of learning and greater conversations. We want to make sure that Jane, just like any other student, feels safe and open to talk to us, engage and ask questions, because it will allow us to better understand each other and how to better help them learn… doing so has further extended our rapport and our ability to help her become a more fluent emergent bilingual.

Danielle recognized that Jane's level of comfort and proficiency skills increased when they built mutual trust throughout their interaction. In summary, letting their partners take the leading role and decide on the topic of discussion increased the partners' engagement and motivation. It is conceivable that the CBSL project helped these pre-service teachers to be more linguistically and culturally responsive by taking into account the partners' background knowledge and prior experiences (Lucas & Villegas, 2010).

Identifying the Language Demands of Classroom Discourse and Tasks

Identifying the language demands of the instruction is also emphasized in the framework for preparing linguistically responsive teachers (Lucas & Villegas, 2010). During their interaction with the language learners, the PSTs were able to recognize how their pace of speech and the time they waited for an answer from the language learners affected the flow of conversation. The PSTs admitted that they had faced some challenges, even if they reported having a friendly and reciprocal interaction. The three main struggles they reported were pace of speech, wait-time, and nervousness about this novel experience. The PSTs also admitted to having missed applying some strategies that could have made their interaction better.

The pre-service teachers accepted that as native speakers they tended to speak faster, which sometimes impeded their conversation. As a result, they forced themselves to speak slower. For the first couple of meetings, the PSTs, such as Mira, mentioned that they should "work on speaking more slowly and a little more clearly" to have a smoother conversation. After the course finished, Charlotte shared that, "I am much more mindful of the way I interact with them and to make them carry the conversation and to make sure that I am not causing any form of misunderstanding by what I say or I do." Not surprisingly, when the semester ended, the PSTs indicated that they had gotten better at monitoring their pace of speech.

Compared to native speakers of a language, language learners need a longer time to understand and decode a question in another language and then to give a proper answer to it (Wright, 2010). During discussions in the seminar session and while writing self-reflections, the PSTs recounted occasions when they struggled to wait for emergent bilinguals' answers or opinions. They accepted that they quickly provided their own opinions without waiting for emergent bilinguals to talk first. For example, Rebecca found that she was "jumping into the conversation with a quick response instead of waiting and processing what is being said." Later, she observed, she was able to control herself and wait for her partners to think more, "which allowed for the conversation to move smoothly." The PSTs realized that wait-time is an important factor affecting comprehension and interaction and, as they progressed, they monitored themselves and began to wait for their partners longer.

Interacting with adult emergent bilinguals in a CBSL project was a first-time experience for the PSTs taking this course. Hence, they struggled with nervousness and anxiety at the beginning of the semester due to the fear of this novel experience. Several of the PSTs indicated their uneasiness during the seminar sessions before they met the community members, as they thought that they might struggle to converse with them. However, just as Mira said, "as quickly as that fear appeared, it also disappeared," once they started conversation with their partners. Interacting with emergent bilinguals in groups was helpful in eliminating nervousness, as Andrea discovered. Both in the reflections and during the interview, Andrea highlighted her discomfort in talking to adults, compared to her comfort in talking to children. Andrea shared that she spoke faster, and thus felt "pretty lost on how to teach someone to speak English." However, by the end of the semester, Andrea was more relaxed, as she got used to interacting with adults, and

had a chance to visit other groups when her own group did not get a partner. In conclusion, although Andrea was often uncomfortable in these meetings, she did not complain, but tried to find ways to handle her nervousness, and eventually she grasped the process by observing her peers. All in all, the PSTs were able to handle this new experience and they became very comfortable interacting with the emergent bilinguals, regardless of their English proficiency level.

While reflecting on their experience, the PSTs commented on the strategies they forgot to use. They indicated that they could have introduced their partners to some pragmatic skills, such as taking turns and making requests, to encourage a more natural conversation. For example, Lily wished that she had taught "them [emergent bilinguals] different phrases that can allow them to act like proficient speakers of a language." Therefore, she aimed to "teach Angel and Clara [adult community members] at the next meeting how to respond if they are unsure or need a repetition of a phrase."

The PSTs also reflected on how they forgot to implement face-saving strategies (an example of pragmatic skills), and how this resulted in misunderstandings. Stella criticized herself for not asking clarification questions of her partner, who was using "Alessa" to talk about Amazon's Alexa. Stella admitted that rather than guessing, she should have avoided confusion by simply asking, "Who is Alessa?" Then, she would have put less pressure on her partner, who was having difficulty expressing her ideas. Similarly, Danielle and Hannah regretted not having asked Jane more questions when they did not understand her. The PSTs realized the value of implementing strategies like comprehension checks to have a smoother conversation. They also believed that, had they done so, the emergent bilinguals would have been encouraged to say more, and would themselves have used the same strategies in future interactions. Apparently, after attending this CBSL project, the PSTs became more cognizant of identifying the linguistic demands of classroom discourse and tasks (Lucas & Villegas, 2010).

Discussion

The aim of this article is to report on how a course with a CBSL project increased non-ESOL pre-service teachers' awareness of emergent bilinguals and prepared them as linguistically responsive teachers. Similar to other findings in the literature (e.g., Bollin, 2007; Droppert, 2013; Szente, 2008), the present study showed that the PSTs highly valued interacting with adult community members, since they were able to recognize the importance of their background knowledge and prior experiences. The PSTs in this course reflected on how they had to leave "their comfort zones" during their interaction with the community members, as have PSTs in previous studies (González et al., 2005; Regalla, 2013). Moreover, the PSTs discussed the fact that creating a safe environment led to more natural conversations. It helped both the community members and the PSTs to cultivate their communicative skills—a result found in other studies, as well (Johnson & Owen, 2013). The PSTs uncovered their own beliefs about CLD communities and altered these views to reflect their appreciation for diverse populations, as Palpacuer-Lee and her colleagues observed in multiple similar studies (Palpacuer-Lee & Curtis, 2017; Palpacuer-Lee et al., 2018). The PSTs expressed the importance of being open to

knowing families and students better, as has been reported in the literature (Bollin, 2007; Figueroa et al., 2015; Glazier et al., 2014; Hooks, 2008; Rodríguez-Arroyo & Vaughns, 2015), and stated their willingness to keep close connection with parents. This study also revealed specific skills, knowledge, and orientations that are not explicitly evident in the prior research. This CBSL project helped the PSTs to think about their way of interaction, especially in terms of monitoring their pace of speech and implementing wait-time.

This course with the CBSL project seems to successfully contribute to an increase in PSTs' skill, knowledge, and dispositions toward emergent bilinguals. The PSTs gained sociolinguistic consciousness about emergent bilinguals by learning about language learners' backgrounds and identifying the language demands of their interactions. This experience guided them to reconstruct their views and encouraged them to improve their teaching strategies. As a result, it is highly possible that non-ESOL pre-service teachers would benefit from teacher preparation courses in which they find chances to have close interactions with emergent bilinguals. Towards this end, courses with CBSL projects should be designed carefully to reflect the features of a good service-learning experience.

Conclusion

The study revealed encouraging results for further implementation of CBSL projects in non-ESOL teacher education programs to prepare them for emergent bilinguals. Considering the increasing number of emergent bilinguals (i.e., language learners) in educational settings, a community-based service-learning project in a specifically designed course to prepare pre-service teachers for culturally and linguistically diverse communities can be integrated into teaching preparation curricula all around the world. Universities and other community stakeholders should interact constantly to organize such opportunities and reach as many community members as possible. Online versions of such projects should also be designed and implemented, since they may prove necessary in extreme situations such as a pandemic. The quality of the course can be enhanced by integrating specific instructional skills for use with emergent bilinguals. All in all, community-based service-learning projects guided by Lucas and Villegas' (2010) "framework for preparing linguistically responsive teachers" appear to be a novel way to prepare pre-service teachers for the demands of diverse educational settings. Further research, conducted in different settings and with modifications in the course design and CBSL project, will be of value.

Notes

1. Over the years various terms have been introduced to describe people learning English as an additional language. Although the term "English Language Learners (ELLs)," as used in the 2011 Lucas and Villegas framework, has been widely accepted, I prefer to use "emergent bilinguals" throughout this article to indicate that these people are in the process of increasing their language repertoire by learning another language.

References

Arabacı Atlamaz, T. (2018). *Preparing pre-service teachers for English language learners with a community-based service-learning project* (Publication No. 13916801). [Doctoral dissertation, The State University of New Jersey, Rutgers]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

Acquah, E. O. & Commins, N. L. (2015). Critical reflection as a key component in promoting pre-service teachers' awareness of cultural diversity. *Reflective Practice, 16*(6), 790-805. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2015.1095729

Baker, L. (2019). Community-based service-learning in language education: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement, 7*(1), Article 2. https://doi.org/10.37333/001c.11480

Bollin, G. G. (2007). Preparing teachers for Hispanic immigrant children: A service learning approach. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, *6*(2), 177-189. https://doi.org/10.1080/15348430701305028

Bravo, M. A., Mosqueda, E., Solís, J. L., & Stoddart, T. (2014). Possibilities and limits of integrating science and diversity education in preservice elementary teacher preparation. *Journal of Science Teacher Education,* 25(5), 601-619. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10972-013-9374-8

Coffey, A., & Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data: Complementary research strategies.* SAGE Publications, Inc.

Community-Based Language Learning Program (CBLL, 2017). Activity planning: Constructing cultural knowledge. Rutgers, Graduate School of Education.

Crabtree, R. D. (2008). Theoretical foundations for international service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 15*(1), 18-36. http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.3239521.0015.102

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications Inc.

Cummins, J. (2000). Putting language proficiency in its place: Responding to critiques of the conversational/academic language distinction. https://esltaggart.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/research-article_-j-cummins.pdf

Curtis, J.H. (2018). *Negotiating identity in a language-focused service-learning project.*, [Doctoral dissertation, Rutgers University]. RUcore: Rutgers University Community Repository. https://doi.org/doi:10.7282/T34J0JJN

DiCerbo, P. A., Anstrom, K. A., Baker, L. L., & Rivera, C. (2014). A review of the literature on teaching academic English to English language learners. *Review of Educational Research, 84(*3), 446-482. https://doi.org/10.3102%2F0034654314532695

Dooley, K. (2009). Intercultural conversation: Building understanding together. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *52*(6), 497-506. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20468392

Droppert, A. J. (2013). The culture of experiential community-based learning: Developing cultural awareness in pre-service teachers. *Bulgarian Comparative Education Society*, 99-104. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED567139.pdf

Durgunoglu, A. Y., & Hughes, T. (2010). How prepared are the US preservice teachers to teach English language learners? *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, *22*(1), 32-41.

Echevarria, J., Vogt, M. E., & Short, D. (2013). *Making content comprehensible for English learners: The SIOP® model* (4th Ed.). Pearson.

Eyler, J. (2002). Reflection: Linking service and learning—Linking students and communities. *Journal of Social Issues, 58*(3), 517-534. https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-4560.00274

Fan, Y. (2018). Content area pre-service candidates learning language teaching with adolescent immigrants in an urban PDS middle school. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 18*(2), 54-73. https://doi.org/10.14434/josotl.v18i2.22438

Figueroa, A. M., Suh, S., & Byrnes, M. (2015). Co-constructing beliefs about parental involvement: Rehearsals and reflections in a family literacy program. *Linguistics and Education*, *31*, 44-58. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2015.05.005

Furco, A. (1996). Service learning: A balanced approach to experiential education. *Expanding boundaries: Service and learning,* 2-6. https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/slceslgen/128

Glazier, J., Able, H., & Charpentier, A. (2014). The impact of service-learning on preservice professionals' dispositions toward diversity. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, *18*(4), 177-198.

Gonzales, S. M., & Gabel, S. L. (2017). Exploring involvement expectations for culturally and linguistically diverse parents: What we need to know in teacher education. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, *19*(2), 61-81.

González, N., Moll, L. C., & Amanti, C. (2005). *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms.* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Grassi, E., & Armon, J. (2015). Re-envisioning teacher preparation: The transformative power of teachers studying 'abroad' in the neighborhood. In A. Wurr and J. Perren (Eds.), *Learning the language of global citizenship: Strengthening service-learning in TESOL* (pp. 420-459). Common Ground Publishing LLC.

Guest, G., Namey, E. E., & Mitchell, M. L. (2013). *Collecting qualitative data: A field manual for applied research.* SAGE Publication Inc.

Henry, S. E., & Breyfogle, M. L. (2006). Toward a new framework of "server" and "served": de (and re) constructing reciprocity in service-learning pedagogy. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 18*(1), 27-35.

Hooks, L. M. (2008). Help! They don't speak English: Partnering preservice teachers with adult English language learners. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, *29*(2), 97-107. https://doi.org/10.1080/10901020802059433

Howlett, K. M., Allred, J., Beck, D., & Mysore, A. R. (2019). An English learner service-learning project: Preparing education majors using technology and the SAMR model. *CALL-EJ, 20(2*), 128-149.

Hutchinson, M. (2013). Bridging the gap: Preservice teachers and their knowledge of working with English language learners. *TESOL Journal*, *4*(1), 25-54. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.51

Johnson, J., & Owen, L. (2013). Reaching a culturally diverse immigrant population of adult English language learners. *Journal of Adult Education*, *42*(1), 23-29.

Krashen, S. D. (1987). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition.* Prentice-Hall International.

Lucas, T. & Grinberg, J. (2008). Responding to the linguistic reality of mainstream classrooms: Preparing all teachers to teach English language learners. In M. Cochran-Smith & Association of Teacher Educators (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions and changing contexts* (pp. 583-605). Routledge.

Lucas, T., & Villegas, A. M. (2010). The missing piece in teacher education: The preparation of linguistically responsive teachers. *Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, *109*(2), 297-318. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F016146811011201402

Lucas, T., & Villegas, A. M. (2011). A framework for preparing linguistically responsive teachers. In T. Lucas (Ed), *Teacher preparation for linguistically diverse classrooms: A resource for teacher educators* (pp. 55-72). Routledge.

Lucas, T., & Villegas, A. M. (2013). Preparing linguistically responsive teachers: Laying the foundation in preservice teacher education. *Theory into Practice*, *52*(2), 98-109. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2013.770327

Merriam, S. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. Jossey-Bass.

O'Hallaron, C. L. (2014). Supporting fifth-grade ELLs' argumentative writing development. *Written Communication,* *31*, 304-331. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0741088314536524

Palpacuer-Lee, C., & Curtis, J. H. (2017). "Into the realm of the politically incorrect": Intercultural encounters in a service-learning program. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, *19*(2), 163-181. https://doi.org/10.18251/ijme.v19i2.1239

Palpacuer-Lee, C., Hutchison Curtis, J., & Curran, M. E. (2018). Stories of engagement: Pre-service language teachers negotiate intercultural citizenship in a community-based English language program. *Language Teaching Research, 22*(5), 590-607. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1362168817718578

Pappamihiel, E. (2007). Helping preservice content-area teachers relate to English language learners: An investigation of attitudes and beliefs. *TESL Canada Journal*, *24*(2), 42-60.

Ranney, S. (2012). Defining and teaching academic language: Developments in K-12 ESL. *Language and Linguistics Compass, 6*(9), 560-574. https://doi.org/ 10.1002/lnc3.354

Reeves, J. R. (2006). Secondary teacher attitudes toward including English-language learners in mainstream classrooms. *The Journal of Educational Research*, *99*(3), 131-142.

Regalla, M. (2013). Bridging the gap: Preparing teachers to meet the needs of ELLs through service-learning. *The Tapestry Journal: An International Multidisciplinary Journal on English Language Learner Education*, *5*(2), 21-29. https://stars.library.ucf.edu/tapestry/vol5/iss2/3

Reyes, I., Da Silva Iddings, A. C., & Feller, N. (2016). Building relationships with diverse students and families: A funds of knowledge perspective. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *16*(1), 8-33. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1468798415584692

Rodríguez-Arroyo, S., & Vaughns, A. B. (2015). Is service-learning the answer? Preparing teacher candidates to work with ELLs through service-learning experiences. *New Waves*, Educational Research & Development, *18*(1), 18- 35.

Scarcella, R. (2003). *Academic English: A conceptual framework.* UC Berkeley: University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute. http://escholarship.org/uc/item/6pd082d4.

Schall-Leckrone, L. (2019). Coursework to classroom: Learning to scaffold instruction for bilingual learners. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 45*(1), 31-56. https://www.jstor.org/stable/90018182

Schleppegrell, M. J. (2004). *The language of schooling.* Lawrence Erlbaum.

Sox, A. K. (2011). *Teacher preparation for instructing middle school ELL students: A North Carolina Piedmont perspective* (Publication No. 3481176) [Doctoral Dissertation, University of Arizona]. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Swain, M., Kinnear, P., & Steinman, L. (2011). *Sociocultural theory in second language education: An introduction through narratives*. Multilingual Matters.

Szente, J. (2008). Preparing preservice teachers to work with culturally and linguistically diverse children: A service learning experience. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, *29*(2), 140-145. https://doi.org/10.1080/10901020802059490

Tandon, M., Viesca, K. M., Hueston, C., & Milbourn, T. (2017). Perceptions of linguistically responsive teaching in teacher candidates/novice teachers. *Bilingual Research Journal,* 40(2), 154-168. https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2017.1304464

United States Census Bureau (2015). "Quick Facts." https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/

Velasco, P., & García, O. (2014). Translanguaging and the writing of bilingual learners. *Bilingual Research Journal, 37*(1), 6-23. https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2014.893270

Wright, W.E. (2010). *Foundations for teaching English language learners: Research, theory, policy, and practice*. Caslon Publishing.

Wright, W. E. (2016). Let them talk! *Educational Leadership*, *73*(5), 24-29.

Wurr, A. J., & Perren, J. M. (2015). *Learning the language of global citizenship: Strengthening service-learning in TESOL*. Common Ground Publishing LLC.

Author Contact

Tuba Arabacı Atlamaz, tuba.arabaci@agu.edu.tr
Department of Foreign Languages
Sümer Kampüs, 38080, Kocasinan, Kayseri