

MODIFICATION-DRIVEN

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR
TEACHING MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS



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Abstract

Data show that teachers' preparation for multilingual learners' (MLs) needs requires improvement due to a lack of teacher input in professional development (PD). This study uses design-based research methods to address the PD needs of teachers working with MLs. Researchers examine the impact of modifications made in a master's program aimed at enhancing teacher knowledge, self-efficacy, and implementation in ML instruction. Modifications were made in response to inhibiting and enhancing factors including an orientation module, spotlights on teachers, and the design and implementation of a JEDI escape room, a digital PD experience. Findings indicate significant growth in teachers' literacy instruction and self-efficacy, but challenges remain in technology integration. The study emphasizes the importance of considering teachers' voices and making ongoing modifications to meet their specific needs in PD for ML instruction.

Keywords: professional development, multilingual learners, design-based research

Perspectives

Sociocognitive- Our research is informed by the social cognitive theory, which reflects interactions of language learning between a person, their behavior, and their environment (Schunk, 2020).

Focus on self-efficacy:

- An important element of social cognitive theory is self-efficacy, or a person's belief about their own capability to learn or perform at various levels (Schunk 2020).
- Self-efficacy is a strong predictor of future behavior and performance (Eun 2019, Schunk 2020).
- Self-efficacy is pertinent to teachers as well as students, with self-efficacy influencing 'teachers' activities, effort, and persistence with students' (Schunk 2020, p. 157).

We discuss the relevant literature from the perspective of the students we are trying to support, MLs, the PD teachers receive regarding these students, and how teacher voice has been considered thus far in PD.

Method

Design-based research (Reinking & Bradley, 2008)

- We included three essential elements of the intervention: (a) Provide teachers of MLs evidence-based practices of instruction in PD, (b) Assess self-efficacy for both ML students and teachers, and (c) Develop resources for ML caregivers based upon evidence-based practice and teacher feedback.
- The evidence-based practices of the PD are gained in the master's program, and we focus on assessing those recommended by Baker et al. (2014) for teaching academic content and literacy to MLs: (a) teaching academic vocabulary, (b) integrating oral and written English language and content-area instruction, (c) providing regular instruction for written language skill development, and (d) using small-group intervention in areas of literacy and English language development.
- We present the modifications and progress made in answer to the following research question: **How were modifications used to respond to teacher need in capacity building for multilingual learners?**
- Data Sources: see Table 1

Results

Three modification themes emerged across the modifications made, including literacy instruction and continuous development, ML resources and perspectives, and technology. See Table 2 on the reverse for findings.

Table 1: Data sources

Data	Point of Collection
Teacher interview	Needs assessment
Teacher survey	Once per semester
Student survey	Pre- and post- each semester except one baseline for the needs assessment semester. Not Collected in summer semester.
Grade tracker	Once per semester
District survey	Once per semester except summer when teachers are not with students.
Teacher Log	Once per semester except summer when teachers are not with students.
Research log	Weekly

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Table 2: Modifications and Progress Toward Goal

Modifications Made	Modification Theme	Progress from needs assessment to second semester	Progress from needs assessment to third semester
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A writing module for the orientation course; 2. A small group writing module 3. An introduction page for the teachers where they shared contact details and professional background inside an orientation module 	Literacy instruction and continuous development	<p>Items with statistically significant average growth at .05 significance level, n=22:</p> <p><u>Knowledge</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing-2/4 items • Small group-1/4 items <p><u>Self-efficacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing-4/4 items • Small group-2/4 items <p><u>Implementation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing-1/4 items • Small group-2/4 items 	<p>Items with statistically significant average growth at .05 significance level, n=23:</p> <p><u>Knowledge</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing-3/4 items • Small group-3/4 items <p><u>Self-efficacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing-4/4 items • Small group-4/4 items <p><u>Implementation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing-3/4 items • Small group-3/4 items
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resource page with district ESOL resources; 2. Required interaction with district ESOL teachers in the M.Ed. practicum course; 3. Spotlight for ESOL instructors in the district; 4. A resource page with ways to reach and involve MLs' caregivers in school life; 5. Creation of JEDI module for participants and inclusion of caregiver communication and perspectives in courses. 	ML resources and perspectives	Increase average confidence from 2.73 to 3.73, statistically significant at .05 level. n=22	Increase average confidence from 2.78 to 3.87, statistically significant at .05 level. n=23
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A module on available digital tools; 2. Spotted teachers who demonstrated exemplary use of technology in the classroom. 	Technology	Teachers decreased in their use of digital tools from 87% to 80%.	Teachers decreased in their use of digital tools from 87% to 74%.