2 Creating a Shared Sense of Responsibility for Teaching English Learners

One of the first steps toward effectively advocating for ELs' equitable education is recognizing that everyone involved in ELs' education must share the responsibility for ensuring their success. All school stakeholders who impact ELs' lives, including content and general education teachers, music teachers, special education teachers, art teachers, cafeteria workers, guidance counselors, physical education teachers, janitors, and administrators will have an effect on the education ELs receive. However, educators may not fully realize the extent to which they have the opportunity to positively impact an EL's education. All educators must first share a sense of responsibility for providing an equitable education for ELs so that they will be willing to change the ways in which they work with ELs to recognize ELs' unique strengths as well as address ELs' specific linguistic and cultural needs through instruction. In addition, if they feel responsible for teaching ELs, they will also be more likely to go beyond teaching ELs effectively and also advocate for ELs' equitable education.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will begin by presenting a framework from which to establish the need to build shared responsibility for equitably educating ELs to

> What does the term *shared responsibility to educate ELs* mean to you?

prepare educators to begin to advocate on their behalf. It will first focus on the importance of creating a sense of empathy for the EL experience, bearing in mind that ELs are not a monolithic group, and each EL's academic experience is different. This framework will also recognize that ELs' experiences transcend the more visible facet of their U.S. academic experience, extending to ELs' social and community lives in the United States and their country of birth or their parents' countries of birth.[1] It will also ground the need to build a shared sense of responsibility for working with ELs in research and best practice as well as show the necessity for all teachers to seek and gain their ELs' trust.

THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS' CALL FOR SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

In addition to the need for educators to share responsibility rooted in their moral imperative to do so, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) support the need to share the responsibility to include ELs. The CCSS do so by insisting that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language be a shared responsibility within schools by the very nature of the standards' structure and content. For example, the K–5 standards define expectations for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language that are applicable to a range of subjects, not only English Language Arts. Standards in Grades 6–12 are divided into two sections, one for English language arts and the other for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. With this paradigm shift brought forth by the CCSS, every teacher must now simultaneously be a teacher of language, literacy, and content. In order for ELs to be successful in achieving the CCSS, all teachers must first examine what sharing responsibility to foster ELs' academic success looks like in their context. In addition, teachers must collaborate so that ELs can access the Common Core.

Definition of Shared Responsibility

This chapter uses the term *shared responsibility* to describe the mind-set that all educators must see themselves as equal stakeholders who must strive to positively influence the education of ELs in the classroom as well

---

1. The majority of ELs are born in the United States, so it cannot be assumed that all ELs have been born in a country outside the United States. In addition, a student's or parent's country of birth may be different from the country in which the child has received schooling.

as outside of school. Many ESL teachers express that they feel that content area or general education teachers see ELs only as the "ESL teachers' kids." That is, compared to content teachers, ESL teachers sometimes feel that they are expected to make the majority of choices with respect to ELs' education. ESL teachers may also feel more immediately accountable for ELs' academic success (Staehr Fenner & Kuhlman, 2012).

For example, ESL teachers may find themselves determining which accommodations ELs receive on assessments, taking the lead on seeking out resources available in the community for EL families, and serving as ad hoc language interpreters as necessary. It is completely understandable that content teachers and administrators often turn to ESL teachers to assume a lead role in these areas, as ESL teachers have tended to receive more specialized training in working with ELs and their families through preservice teacher education programs.

In addition, many teachers and administrators may depend on ESL teachers to advocate for ELs, because they have not had the experience of learning a language in addition to English and/or traveling to a foreign country, let alone having been immersed in a school in which the culture and language are completely new. For these reasons, many teachers and administrators may not fully understand the EL experience in terms of what ELs' needs are or be familiar with community resources that are available and appropriate for ELs or their families. Yet it is everyone's charge to ensure ELs succeed; the responsibility for ELs' success both in school as well as outside the school walls should extend to all educators who interact with them.

In particular, teachers' desire to share responsibility for ELs and advocate for their equitable education is inextricably intertwined with their expectations for ELs and beliefs about educating them. This desire is also linked to their ability to support their students' success through collaboration with colleagues, administrators, and the community as a whole. However, until now, most content area teachers have not realized that serving as a voice for ELs and their families is a prerequisite for their students to be able to fully engage in instruction and succeed in school and beyond. Only after teachers and administrators realize the great sense of urgency that all educators must share the responsibility for equitably educating ELs can the best available research, methods, strategies, and professional development (PD) for working with ELs be truly beneficial and worthwhile.

Theoretical Framework for Sharing Responsibility

This chapter will begin by examining several factors that impact how educators can move through a process to more actively share the responsibility for providing an equitable education for ELs. These factors influence shared responsibility. Each factor will be described and applications of it will

be provided through activities. Educators should examine each of the factors in the sequence outlined. First they will examine their beliefs and expectations about working with ELs, and then they will reflect on their own culture and its impact on their teaching. Next, educators build empathy for ELs and their families, and finally they collaborate with various stakeholders involved in ELs' education. The process is iterative and requires continually moving through the sequence so that shared responsibility for ELs changes to accommodate new ELs and their families as well as new issues that arise with current ELs. Figure 2.1 is a graphic representation of this process.

Figure 2.1. Factors That Influence Shared Responsibility
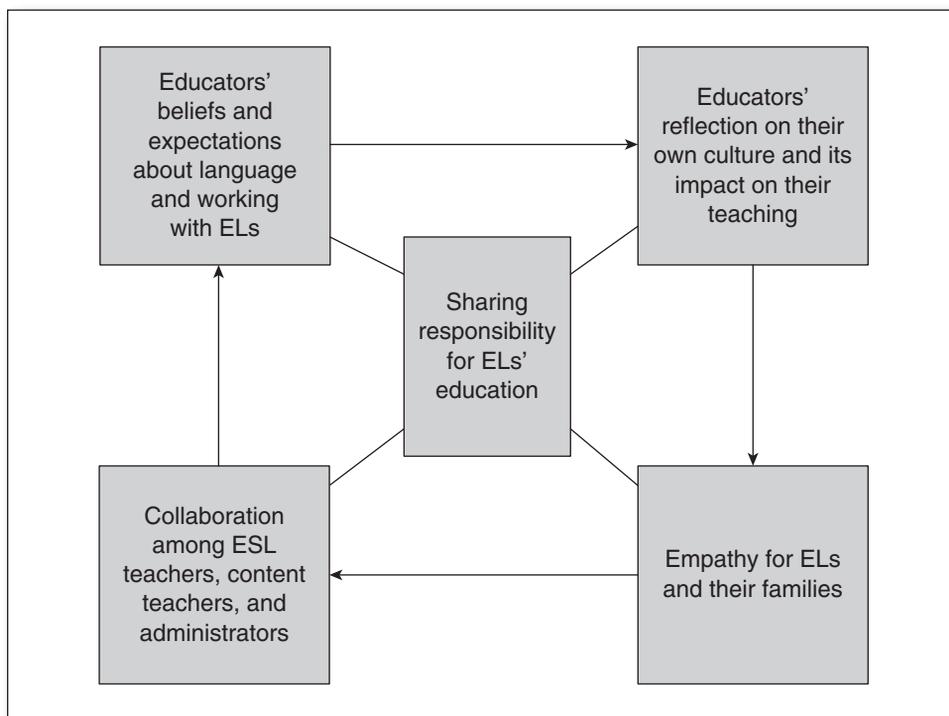
WHAT THE RESEARCH TELLS US

Some researchers (e.g., English; Lewis-Moreno) have recently begun investigating the creation of a sense of shared responsibility for educating ELs as one component of the effective education of these students. For example, through analysis of top-down and bottom-up discourses among various teaching professionals, English (2009) attempts to deconstruct the ideological assumptions about how ELs learn. English believes

that professional development (PD) can help to promote pedagogical change that incorporates shared responsibility into educating EL students. This researcher found general education teachers need support to improve their practice of sharing responsibility for teaching ELs.

Lewis-Moreno (2007) argues that general education classroom teachers are just as responsible for the success of EL students as administrators and EL specialists. She posits that all teachers have a moral responsibility to ensure the success of ELs, and that every teacher, regardless of role or specific job description, must be given the charge to incorporate strategies that develop the language acquisition of ELs. She also believes that school districts may see more success from ELs if everyone is provided the right tools to teach these learners.

Issues of content teacher attitudes and the importance of developing trust between EL students and their teachers are also related to the concept of sharing responsibility to educate ELs. For example, Reeves (2006) investigated teacher attitudes toward teaching EL students and discovered that most teachers had a neutral to positive attitude toward teaching ELs in general education classes. Her quantitative study, however, revealed that many of the teachers are misinformed about how ELs learn and acquire language. Moreover, many of these same teachers were ambivalent about learning how to teach ELs. Her findings point to a disconnect between the teachers' generally positive attitudes toward teaching ELs in their content area classrooms and their reluctance to take action to improve upon their abilities to better educate those same students.

> How would you rate your own attitude toward working with ELs?

Developing trust between ELs and their teachers is one key to ELs' success in school. Wassell, Hawrylak, and LaVan (2010) found that, for many of the EL students they studied, gaining the trust of a teacher was tantamount to being given the opportunity to learn English successfully. If they felt that the teacher respected their culture, the ELs were more apt to take certain risks and make important mistakes that facilitated their learning. Without developing such trust, learning opportunities remained hidden.

Finally, Honigsfeld and Dove (2010) posited that several factors point to the need for collaboration in schools so that ELs can succeed. They point out that sociocultural, socioeconomic, affective, linguistic, and academic factors can impact an EL's success. The authors also report that administrators face several challenges in creating a collaborative environment in their schools to ensure the equitable education of ELs. Among these challenges are ESL program compliance and accountability, creating a positive school culture for ELs, and balancing the needs of all stakeholders.

In sum, research tells us that shared responsibility for teaching ELs contains many layers of complexity. This emerging area of study includes the role of PD in shaping educators' dispositions toward working with ELs, building trust between ELs and their teachers, and fostering collaboration among all stakeholders who work with ELs so that ELs can succeed. Educators should consider how developed all of these factors are in their own practices so that they can contribute to creating an environment that is conducive to ELs' success.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHING ENGLISH LEARNERS

The remainder of the chapter details sample activities educators can use individually or with groups of educators to

- Raise awareness about their beliefs regarding language and teaching ELs
- Examine the cultures that they bring to their experiences as educators
- Explore what it feels like to be an EL at a beginning stage of English proficiency in an academic classroom setting
- Feel what it's like to be the parent or family member[2] of an EL with beginning English proficiency and little knowledge of the U.S. school system
- Increase collaboration among content teachers, administrators, and ESL teachers[3]

Even if educators don't find themselves in that more formal situation, they can still use these tools for their personal PD. Admittedly, these sample PD activities only begin to skim the surface of the EL and EL family member experience in order to increase educators' empathy for this population of students, and the activities are also not meant to be prescriptive in nature. It is also not possible to fully experience the multifaceted world of an EL in just one PD session. The intent of these activities is to

---

2. I use the term *parent* interchangeably with *family member* here, because ELs may have extended family such as older siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and trusted family friends that serve the expected role of parents. In addition, some ELs may arrive in the United States after long periods of separation from their biological parents; in such situations, these parents of ELs may not be as informed of the ELs' prior schooling and life experiences as other family members may be.

3. I use the term *English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher* to encompass any specialist that provides linguistic support to ELs; this would also include bilingual education teachers.

apply some of the current research and best practices to move the needle in the direction of creating a shared sense of responsibility for educating ELs through an experiential approach.

Survey of Teachers' and Administrators' Beliefs on Educating ELs

Teachers should first ascertain their perspectives on language as well as their feelings regarding working with ELs. Use of the two-part survey[4] in Figures 2.2a and 2.2b is one way to begin this dialogue. The survey should be taken anonymously, and it can be taken prior to a PD session so that the PD facilitator can tabulate the scores before beginning of the PD to more effectively tailor the PD to the needs of the group.

The sample survey consists of two interrelated parts: Part One: Perspectives on Language and Part Two: Preparation for Teaching. Part One, Perspectives on Language, examines educators' beliefs and values regarding the political and sociocultural aspects of using English and other languages in the home, school, and society. Part Two, Preparation for Teaching, focuses on respondents' self-reported level of expertise and comfort in designing and implementing instruction for English learners. The first survey will most likely be more politically charged and may very well evoke strong feelings by PD participants. While originally developed for future teachers of ESL, the second survey builds on the first and focuses on the degree to which teachers self-report skills needed by classroom teachers to effectively teach ELs.

After participants have taken each survey, the PD facilitator can lead them through a discussion of their responses to gain a sense of where the educators are coming from individually in their thinking and where the school as a whole falls on the continuum as a vehicle to advocate for ELs. When educators are analyzing the results of survey such as this, they will need to keep in mind that respondents are self-reporting their data. For example, respondents may overestimate their skill level in working with ELs on the survey. In addition, when they are sharing with a group rather than filling out a paper form, they may be less willing to share their true convictions regarding immigration and language policy in the United States for fear of repercussions.

Any discussion of the Language Use survey's results must take place in a climate of trust, and all participants should know that they won't be judged for their responses. Otherwise, a sense of finger pointing could take over and cloud the intent of the exercise. After individuals take the survey, they can compile their scores individually and privately compare

---

4. Part 1: Perspectives on Language, is adapted from: Byrnes & Kiger (1994). Part 2, Preparation for Teaching ELs, is adapted from Lucas, Reznitskaya, & Villegas, (2008).

them to general descriptions of the scores provided below. Depending on previous knowledge of the school climate, the PD facilitator might choose to have the respondents tally up their score and respond to the score in a private journal instead of having a group discussion on the topic.

Figure 2.2a.   Language Use

Part 1. Perspectives on Language Use

Please circle the number that best captures your agreement or disagreement with each statement below.

Note: The term *linguistic minority student* refers to a student who speaks or is exposed to a language other than English in the home; that student may or may not be proficient in English.

1 = strongly agree   6 = strongly disagree

1. To be considered American, a person should speak English fluently.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I would not support the federal, state, and local government spending additional money to provide better programs for linguistic minority students in public schools.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Parents of students who are not proficient in English should be counseled to speak English with their children whenever possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. It is not important that people in the United States learn a language in addition to English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. It is unreasonable to expect a general education classroom teacher to teach a child who does not speak English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. The rapid learning of English should be a priority for students who are not proficient in English even if it means they lose the ability to speak their native language.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Local and state governments should require that all government business (including voting) be conducted only in English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Having a student who is not proficient in English in the classroom is detrimental to the learning of the other students.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. General education classroom teachers should not be required to receive preservice or inservice training to be prepared to meet the needs of linguistic minority students.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Most K–12 students who are not proficient in English are not motivated to learn English.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. At school, the learning of the English language by children who are not proficient in English should take precedence over learning content area subject matter.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. English should be the official language of the United States.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Students who are not proficient in English often use unjustified claims of discrimination as an excuse for not doing well in school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Total score	___ points					

Source: Adapted from Byrnes & Kiger, 1994.

Language Use Survey Score Categories

13–26 points: You feel that being American is equated with speaking English and see the value in English being used for official purposes in the United States. You agree that students need to learn English quickly in order to succeed in school, and you don't think it's as important for those students to maintain their first language. You think that some English learners are not motivated enough to learn English and might be taking advantage of their status as ELs to justify their lack of successful academic performance in school.

27–52 points: You may not feel as strongly that being American is equated with speaking English and may not agree that English should be used for official purposes in the United States. While you believe that ELs need to learn English in order to succeed in school, you may think these students should also maintain their first language and also learn content simultaneously with English. You may think some English learners are motivated to learn English and might believe ELs contribute to the classroom climate.

53–78 points: You believe that it is possible to be an American even if a person does not speak English fluently. You most likely do not believe that only English should be used for official purposes in the United States.

While you believe that ELs need to learn English in order to succeed in school, you also believe these students should also maintain and develop their first language and also learn challenging content simultaneously with English. You think English learners bring strengths to their schools and are motivated to learn English.

Guiding Questions

After taking the survey, either respondents can write a journal passage about their reactions to it, or the facilitator can use these guiding questions to facilitate small group or full group discussions. This examination of beliefs will help individuals and groups of educators get a better sense of where they are coming from in terms of their openness to share the responsibility to teach ELs.

- How did you feel after taking the survey?
- Did certain questions surprise you? Which ones? Why?
- Do you think your final score on the Language Use survey is in line with the description of the category you fall into? Why or why not?
- Which areas of language use did you have the strongest reaction to? Why?

As with the Language Use survey, after respondents take the Preparation for Teaching ELs survey, they can compile their scores individually and compare them to general descriptions of the scores provided below. They can then reflect upon their answers individually or discuss them as a group. The second survey should not be as controversial as the first, and the results of the second survey can be used to guide further PD topics for teachers.

Preparation for Teaching ELs Score Categories

13–26 points: You are aware of the challenges you face when teaching ELs but need a great deal more information on language, culture, prior knowledge, and modification of instruction for ELs. You also don't have an in-depth understanding of the interplay between language, culture, instruction, and learning.

27–52 points: You are aware of the challenges you face when teaching ELs and have a beginning understanding of language, culture, prior knowledge, and modification of instruction for ELs. You have an understanding of the interplay between language, culture, instruction, and learning.

Figure 2.2b. Preparation for Teaching ELs

Part 2. Preparation for Teaching ELs

Note: The term *English learner* refers to a student who is exposed to or speaks a language other than English and is not yet fully proficient in English.

Please circle the number that best captures how well or poorly prepared you feel in each area below.

1 = **Extremely *Poorly* Prepared**   6 = **Extremely *Well* Prepared**

1. Understanding of how people learn a second language.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Understanding of the nature of academic English and the challenges it poses for ELs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Skills and strategies for learning about the cultural backgrounds of ELs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Skills and strategies for teaching academic content to English language.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Understanding of how culture influences learning.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Understanding of how language influences learning.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Understanding of language variation and dialects.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Ability to assess ELs' academic abilities in a classroom setting.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Understanding of the differences between proficiency in oral language and in written language.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Ability to modify classroom instruction for ELs.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Ability to access ELs' prior knowledge and experience as part of instruction.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Ability to link ELs' prior knowledge and experience with new ideas and skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Skills and strategies for reaching out to ELs' parents/guardians/family members.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Source: Adapted from Lucas, Reznitskaya, & Villegas, 2008.

However, you could still use some more information and strategies on how to effectively instruct ELs.

53–78 points: You have an in-depth understanding of language, culture, prior knowledge, and modification of instruction for ELs. You have a deep understanding of the interplay between language, culture, instruction, and learning. There may still be some topics on this survey that you would like to develop further.

Guiding Questions

As with the Language Use survey, after taking the second survey, either respondents can write a journal passage about their reactions to it, or the facilitator can use these guiding questions to facilitate small group or full group discussions.

- How did you feel after taking the survey in terms of your preparation to teach ELs?
- Did your responses to certain questions surprise you? Which ones? Why?
- Do you think your final score on the Preparation to Teach ELs survey is in line with the description of the category you fall into? Why or why not?
- Which areas are the strongest for you?
- Which areas would you like to develop further?

Creating an Awareness of Educators' Own Culture

In addition to teachers examining their own beliefs around language and instruction for ELs, it is also important for them to take a closer look at their own cultures that they bring to their role as teachers and administrators. Many educators may not realize that even if they have lived in the United States all their lives and are monolingual speakers of English, they already possess a culture and worldview that influences who they are as educators.

One suggested activity for educators to become more aware of their own cultures is adapted from PD given by Dr. Paul Gorski, assistant professor at George Mason University and founder of EdChange (www .edchange.org). In this activity, which can be used as an introductory activity during PD, participants are asked to stand up if the statement that the facilitator reads applies to them. This activity is designed to raise teachers' awareness of their own memberships in cultural groups and of how these

memberships have impacted their lives and also their stance on educating all students, including ELs. For example, some topics addressed in this activity are socioeconomics, gender, and linguistic issues. A brief list of sample statements is below. Others may be added as appropriate according to the makeup of the participants. While this exercise works best in a group where others can see who is participating in which way, it can also be a reflective exercise for individuals.

Stand up:

- If you worry about whether you'll be able to pay your bills
- If people routinely mispronounce your name
- If you represent the first generation of your family to attend college
- If you have ever been the only person of your race/ethnicity in a class or place of employment
- If you are often expected to work on your religious holidays
- If you never had a teacher of your racial or ethnic group
- If you have ever been teased because of the clothes you were wearing
- If you have ever been made fun of because of the part of the country or world you come from
- If you have ever felt pressured to change the way you speak, dress, or act in order to fit in
- If there is any dimension of your identity that you have to hide from most people in order to feel accepted or safe
- If there has never been a president of the United States who shared your gender identity
- If English is not your first language

After participants have taken part in the first part of the PD activity, they can debrief with a small group of colleagues and discuss which statements applied to them and which did not. They can discuss how they felt taking part in the activity and which cultural groups were referenced in the exercise. Finally, they can share how they belong to certain cultural groups they may not have realized they had membership in and how they can make connections between their own cultural experiences and those of their EL students. Next, educators can discuss how their raised awareness of their belonging to certain cultural groups would influence their teaching of ELs.

One United States–born monolingual participant who went through this exercise shared that he hadn't realized how his membership in the first-generation college graduates in his family influenced how he viewed

himself. He shared that he had to change how he spoke in order to fit in better at college and often felt unprepared academically or socially because his home culture was different from his college's culture. He was able to draw connections between his own experience not fitting in and how his ELs must have felt when they had to learn a new language in order to fit in at school both academically and socially.

An extension and application of this activity asks educators to put themselves in their ELs' and EL families' shoes to determine which cultural groups their ELs and EL families are likely to belong to. More important, educators take this information and apply it to their own teaching. Educators can work with a partner to envision how all their students, including their ELs and their ELs' families, would respond to the same questions, keeping in mind that all students and their families would have different responses. The educators can discuss how they can use this information—about how their ELs and ELs' families would respond to the same questions—in their teaching. A representative from each small group can then share that group's answers with the large group of participants. A table such as the one found in Table 2.1, which has been pre-populated with sample responses to the first three "stand up" questions, can be used to facilitate this discussion.

EL IMMERSION EXPERIENCE: STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

One potentially powerful tool to help monolingual teachers and administrators experience what it's like to be an English learner, if only on a small scale and for a limited time, is to teach a lesson to them in a language they do not know (Washburn, 2008). Using a "language shock" method, Washburn believes that teachers can be given a simulated experience of what EL students go through that will in turn carry over into their own pedagogy. She believes that only through the experience of being immersed and forced to struggle with another language and culture can teachers truly begin to empathize with EL students. In turn, this sense of empathy will ideally impact an educator's sense of responsibility to teach ELs language and culture simultaneously.

This language shock technique is in my PD toolkit and is an exercise that I find to be particularly powerful with monolingual PD participants. I happen to speak German and Spanish, but since many educators have some knowledge of Spanish, I prefer to teach a sample lesson in German and sketch out the lesson below. While reading through this activity does not have the same effect as experiencing it in person, educators can adapt the exercise to an academic topic in a language other than English.

Table 2.1 Educator Cultural Awareness Activity Sample Application to Teaching

Statement	My Response: Yes or No	My ELs' Anticipated Response	My EL Parents' Anticipated Response	Comments/Application for Teaching ELs
If you worry about whether you'll be able to pay your bills	No	Yes (depending on their age)	Yes	Increased awareness that some high school age ELs can't take part in afterschool activities because they have to work and/or that other ELs may have to care for younger siblings and family members so their parents can work; knowledge that some ELs' parents work two jobs or more and may not see their children often and consequences of this lack of child–parent interaction and supervision
If people routinely mispronounce your name	Yes	Yes	Yes	ELs appreciate it when teachers take the time to learn how to pronounce their names; they begin to build more trust in their teachers when teachers make this gesture that may seem insignificant on the surface
If you represent the first generation of your family to attend or who will attend college	No	Yes	No (haven't attended college)	Many parents of ELs have not attended college; even if they have attended college in their home countries, they are likely not aware of the college admissions process as well as the courses, afterschool activities, and level of college admissions test preparation U.S. students must have to present a strong college application; teachers must present this information to students and parents in a form they will understand in different modes (e.g., in person, by phone, in writing)

EL Empathy PD Activity Step 1

The facilitator lectures by reading the following aloud:

Wir werden heute einen Würfel, einen Quader, einen Kegel, einen Zylinder, eine Pyramide und eine Kugel beschreiben und erklären.

Ein Würfel *ist einer der fünf platonischen Körper, genauer ein dreidimensionales Polyeder mit sechs kongruenten Quadraten als Begrenzungsflächen, zwölf gleichlangen Kanten und acht Ecken, in denen jeweils drei Begrenzungsflächen zusammentreffen.*

Ein Kegel *ist ein geometrischer Körper, der entsteht, wenn man alle Punkte eines in einer Ebene liegenden, begrenzten runden Flächenstücks geradlinig mit einem Punkt (Spitze beziehungsweise Apex) außerhalb der Ebene verbindet. Das Flächenstück nennt man Grundfläche, deren Begrenzungslinie die Leitkurve und den Punkt die Spitze oder den Scheitel des Kegels bildet.*

Ein Zylinder *wird laut der allgemeinen Definition von zwei parallelen, ebenen Flächenund einer Mantel- bzw. Zylinderfläche, die von parallelen Geraden gebildet wird, begrenzt. Das heißt, er entsteht durch Verschiebung einer ebenen Fläche oder Kurve entlang einer Geraden, die nicht an dieser Ebene liegt.*

Eine Pyramide *ist ein dreidimensionaler Körper in der Geometrie. Dieses Polyeder besteht aus mehreren nahtlos aneinanderliegenden ebenen Flächen, von denen eine ein Polygon und alle anderen Dreiecke sind. Die Dreiecke bilden die Mantelfläche.*

Eine Kugel *hat keine Kanten und keine Ecken.*

The facilitator asks these questions of participants aloud:

Wer kann diese Fragen beantworten? Zeigt bitte auf!!

- *Was ist ein Würfel?*
- *Wie nennt man das Flächenstück eines Kegels?*
- *Wer kann eienen Zylinder beschreiben?*
- *Wieviele Dimensionen hat eine Pyramide?*
- *Wieviele Kanten und Ecken hat eine Kugel?*

When none of the participants answers the questions (unless there happens to be someone with knowledge of German), the facilitator begins to start speaking louder and more slowly. The facilitator begins showing frustration with the students' lack of answers and changes the tone of voice and body language to show students that they are not meeting expectations. If someone attempts to answer in English, the facilitator does not allow that answer. When I am facilitating, I also don't allow participants to talk to each other.

Guiding Questions

I continue this way for about 5 to 10 agonizing minutes and then allow the teachers a chance to debrief (in English) in small groups about their experience, providing them guiding questions such as these:

1. How did it feel to be a German as a Second Language student?

2. What kind of extra help did you need to understand the lesson?

3. What did you do to try to understand the content?

4. How did the facilitator adapt instruction to meet your linguistic needs?

5. Do you have or have you had any students who might have been in a situation similar to the one you were just in?

Once they have debriefed about Step 1 in small groups, several groups share their experiences with the large group.

## EL Empathy Professional Development Activity Step 2

The facilitator then adds the additional scaffold of visual and written information to help slightly lighten the linguistic load for the participants to allow them to demonstrate, in a language that is unfamiliar to them, the academic content they presumably already know. Participants are also allowed to work together and use English to solve the problems. Some samples of the visuals and written information provided for this German lesson are the following:

Du findest hier einen Würfel, einen Quader, einen Kegel, einen Zylinder, eine Pyramide, und eine Kugel. Schreibe den richtigen Namen unter die entsprechende Darstellung!

Versuche anschließend zu entscheiden, ob die angeführten Aussagen wahr (w) oder falsch (f) sind. Kreuze Entsprechendes an!
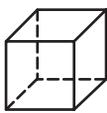

1 Wie heißen diese körper?
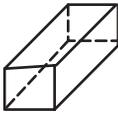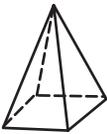
Aussage	w	f
Der Würfel hat 10 Ecken		
Die Kugel hat keine Kanten und keine Ecken.		

Guiding Questions

The participants then debrief with a partner or in a small group, using the following sample guiding questions:

1. How did it feel to be a German as a Second Language student in Step 2 as compared to Step 1?

2. What were you being asked to do in this exercise? How do you know?

3. What skills do you possess that allowed you to understand some of the content?

4. What kind of extra help did you receive to meet your linguistic needs in order to understand the lesson?

5. What kind of help would you still need to understand the lesson and take part in the informal assessment?

At this point, participants tend to feel slightly more at ease due to the facilitator's use of some preliminary language supports. They will also have previous knowledge of the content, they will recognize some German/English cognates such as *Pyramide/pyramid*, and they will know how to respond to fill-in-the-blank and true/false questions. Because of this background knowledge, most of the educators would ascertain that they were being asked to match the name of the geometric figure to the visual. They should be able to point out that the written and verbal information provided helped them to at least figure out what they were supposed to do, even if they weren't exactly sure of the language of the tasks and could not fully access the meaning of the content. Some participants will also express that they were relieved that they could work with a partner and/or discuss the problem in English.

EL Empathy Professional Development Activity Step 3

Finally, the facilitator provides the participants the additional scaffold of a written bilingual glossary to help them complete the task given in Step 2. They can still work in pairs or small groups and use English to figure out the answers together.

GLOSSARY

Würfel–cube   Darstellung–figure
Quader–cuboid   wahr–true
Kegel–cone   falsch–false
Zylinder–cylinder   Ecken–corners
Pyramide–pyramid   Keine–no
Kugel–sphere   Kanten–edges

They are then given the correct answers below.

1 Wie heißen diese körper?

| Quader | Pyramide | Kugel | Zylinder | Kegel | Wurfel |

Aussage	w	f
Der Würfel hat 10 Ecken		✓
Die Kugel hat keine Kanten und keine Ecken.	✓	

Guiding Questions

At the end of this activity, participants debrief about the overall experience in small groups using guiding questions:

1. How did your feelings about taking part in the lesson change as we progressed from Step 1 to Step 3?

2. Which modifications to the lesson helped you? Why?

3. What happened to your level of anxiety as the lesson progressed? Why?

4. Do you think these modifications would work for all ELs? Why or why not?

5. What did the facilitator do that helped or hindered your learning?

6. What has changed about your knowledge of working with ELs?

7. What can you apply from this experience to your own teaching of ELs?

At the conclusion of this activity, participants come away with an increased sense of what it is like to be an EL. They also realize this short experience is just a small window into an EL's world. ELs at low levels of English proficiency encounter situations like these all day, every day in school as they acquire English proficiency. Through Step 1 of this activity, the facilitator modeled what not to do in teaching ELs challenging content. The teacher in Step 1 did not feel it was his or her responsibility to teach language and content simultaneously; instead, the teacher focused only on content.

The participants also become aware that they are already at a large advantage over some ELs, since they most likely already have learned the geometry content in their dominant language, English, and they can transfer this knowledge of the content to the lesson in German. They also already know how to participate in a classroom environment and understand the facilitator's questioning format, knowing that they are expected to raise their hands to answer. The bilingual glossary is beneficial to them because they are already literate in English and also know the geometry content in English.

EL FAMILY EMPATHY BUILDING EXPERIENCE

Building a sense of shared responsibility to educate ELs also extends to the need for all educators to be inclusive of ELs' families and to be willing to serve as their advocates. I am a United States–born, native English-speaking parent of school-age children, and I have classroom teaching and administrative experience in the same public school district in which my children are in school. Even so, I sometimes find myself unsure about my children's classroom and school and about district policies and expectations. I subsequently contact my children's teachers or administrators via phone or by e-mail with questions. I can advocate for my own children's education in a Spanish immersion public school program due to my knowledge of the following factors:

1. How the public school system "works" from my experience as a teacher and administrator in the district

2. My understanding of my expected place in the district's school system as a parent

3. My understanding of the teachers' and school's expectations for how I should interact and communicate with teachers and administrators

4. My ability to communicate fluently in English—and occasionally drop an education jargon term—within the expectations for K–12 school discourse

I often try to put myself in the shoes of ELs' families as best I can as they try to comprehend the expectations and policies of their children's classrooms, schools, districts, and states, not to mention federal requirements of EL education and accountability that do not apply to me or my own children. EL families will likely not have the same four strengths to draw upon as I do. They may not know of the opportunities that are available to them or their children that could potentially be hugely beneficial to them in the immediate future and for the duration of their academic careers (such as afterschool tutoring, extracurricular activities, or SAT preparation for college). Educators must share the responsibility to support ELs' families so that they can learn to navigate the policies, expectations, and opportunities for their children in their school. In order to help EL families in this way, educators must first get a taste of what it's like to be an EL parent to begin to get a sense of which areas require their support.

EL Parent Empathy Professional Development Suggestion

One way to help educators construct a more comprehensive view of what it's like to be an EL family member is through having them fill out forms in a language that they do not speak or read. A form that seems innocuous for the majority of United States–born parents may present a more nuanced, complex situation for families of ELs. The activity below helps provide experiential learning to educators about what it is like to fill out one such simple form for two different parents of ELs. Both EL parents speak the same language, but their prior experiences are worlds apart.

There are many school forms translated into languages other than English available for download online, and many districts have also often translated parental forms into the top language group(s) spoken by EL families. The form I have chosen for the PD activity that follows is a sample free and reduced-price lunch form that has been created for the U.S. Department of Agriculture for school districts to modify and download (Figure 2.3).

For purposes of this activity, teachers assume one of two identities (Ahmed or Mojtaba), which they use to complete the form individually. They know only that the form is required by the school.

The first identity:

You are Ahmed, a 45-year-old mechanical engineer from Dubai who has moved to the United States for two years on a work visa to provide specialized support to an international company. You have two children enrolled in your district's school system. You speak and read English at an intermediate level, and this is your children's second year in U.S. schools.

The second identity:

You are Mojtaba, a 30-year-old refugee from Darfur, Sudan. You have four children enrolled in U.S. schools and have two toddlers at home. You attended school through the third grade in Sudan and arrived in the United States two weeks ago. You don't speak or read English, and you are able to read Arabic at the first grade level.

Guiding Questions

After the participants have attempted to fill out the form through the eyes of Ahmed or Mojtaba, all the participants who filled out the form as Ahmed work as a small group to discuss their experience using the sample guiding questions below. All the participants who filled out the form as Mojtaba would also discuss their questions together. If participants take part in this exercise individually, they can still choose one of the identities and reflect on the guiding questions:

- What do you think this form is used for? Why do you think so?
- How much do you think Ahmed/Mojtaba will understand what is written here? Why?
- What do you think Ahmed/Mojtaba could perceive as unintended consequences for filling out this form incorrectly?
- What other life circumstances could affect how Ahmed/Mojtaba would complete this form?
- What information do you take away from this experience as an educator that you can apply to your own classroom or school context when working with families of ELs?

Once both groups have debriefed under the guise of their assumed identities, educators can compare the two groups' responses to the guiding questions as a large group; then the facilitator can inform them that the form is a free and reduced-price lunch form. As U.S. educators most likely are aware, all families of U.S. students have to fill out such a form if their child is to qualify to receive a free or reduced-price lunch. The information the family provides is based on self-reported income.

Figure 2.3. Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Form in Arabic

جزء 1: جميع أفراد الأسرة

اسماء جميع افراد الاسرة (الاسم الاول، اول حرف من الاسم الثاني، اللقب)	اسم المدرسة لكل طفل، او اذكر NA ان لم يكن الطفل في المدرسة.	ضع باشارة (√) هذا اذا كان الطفل متبنى(تحت المسؤولية القانونية لوكالة ويقدر او محكمة) *اذا كان جميع الاطفال المذكورين ادناه متبنين، تخطى هذا الجزء الى جميع ان تصل الى الجزء و 5 لتوقيع هذه الاستمارة	ضع باشارة هذا ان لم يكن هناك دخل

جزء 2: المعونات

اذا كان اي عضو من اعضاء الاسرة يحصل على معونات من أ، اعطي اسم ورقم الشخص المسجل للمعونات واذهب الى جزء و 5. ان لم يكن هناك اي شخص يستلم هذه المساعدات، تخطى هذا الجزء واذهب الى جزء و 3.

الاسم _____

رقم الملف _____

(Continued)

49

جزء 3. اذا كان أي طفل تقدم طلبا نشأته مشرداً أو مهاجر أو هارباً فقم بتأشير المربع المناسب واتصل بـ   ☐ مشرد   ☐ مهاجر   ☐ هارب

جزء 4. مجموع الدخل الإجمالي للعائلة / يجب أن تخبرنا بالمبلغ وفترات الاستلام

1. الأسهم (اذكر فقط أسماء أعضاء الأسرة الذين لديهم دخل)	الدخل من العمل قبل المقتطعات	المساعدات الحكومية، النفقة، اعالة الطفل، الرواتب	مخصصات المعاشات، الراتب التقاعدي، مخصصات الضمان الاجتماعي و SSI و VA	أي دخل آخر
2. الدخل الإجمالي وتكرر القبض				
مثال: جون سميث	$199.99/ أسبوعيا	$50.00/ شهرياً	$99.99/ شهرياً	$149.99/ كل أسبوعين
	$/____	$/____	$/____	$/____
	$/____	$/____	$/____	$/____
	$/____	$/____	$/____	$/____
	$/____	$/____	$/____	$/____
	$/____	$/____	$/____	$/____
	$/____	$/____	$/____	$/____

Figure 2.3.   (Continued)

جزء 5. التوقيع وآخر اربعة ارقام من رقم الضمان الاجتماعي (يجب ان يوقع من قبل شخص بالغ)

يجب ان يوقع هذه الاستمارة ذكر آخر اربعة ارقام من رقم الضمان الاجتماعي للشخص البالغ والموقع على الاستمارة. اذا كنت قد اكملت جزء 4، يجب على الشخص البالغ من اعضاء الاسرة. اذا كنت قد اكملت جزء 4 ولم يكن لديه رقم ضمان اجتماعي، "انظر الى البيان في الجانب الخلفي لهذه الصفحة الاجتماعي او وقع بأشير مربع" ليس لدي رقم ضمان اجتماعي ". انظر الى البيان في الجانب الخلفي لهذه الصفحة

انا اقر(اعد) ان جميع المعلومات الوارده في هذه الاستمارة صحيحة وانه قد قمت بالتبليغ عن كامل دخلهم. انا اعرف ان المدرسة سوف تحصل على تمويل فدرالي بناء على المعلومات التي زودتها. انا اعرف ان مسؤولين في المدرسة قد يتحققون من المعلومات. انا اعلم انني اذا اعطيت معلومات خاطئة متعمدا فقد يفقد اطفالي معونات الوجبات، وقد تتم مقاضاتي.

المدينة: _____

العنوان: _____

التاريخ: _____

وقع هنا : _____   الاسم بوضوح2: _____

رقم الهاتف: _____

الولاية: _____

آخر اربعة ارقام من رقم الضمان الاجتماعي: _____ - ** - * * *   ☐ لا املك رقم ضمان اجتماعي

الرمز البريدي: _____

جزء 6. الهوية العرقية والإثنية للاطفال (خيار ي)

قم بتأشير الإثنية وحدة:
☐ اسباني أو لاتيني
☐ غير اسباني أو لاتيني

اختر واحد أو اكثر (بغض النظر عن العرق)
☐ اسيوي
☐ ابيض
☐ هندي امريكي أو من سكان الاسكا الاصليين
☐ اسود أو افريقي امريكي
☐ من السكان الاصليين لهاواي أو جزر اخرى في المحيط الهادئ

However, the seemingly simple act of completing this form can be more high stakes for families of ELs, even if the form has been translated into their native language. For example, parents of ELs who understand the content of the form can be embarrassed that their child qualifies to receive a free or reduced-price lunch and might not fill in this information correctly or at all, ultimately spending family funds that may already be tight. Other families who lack immigration documentation may not wish to fill out the form because they do not know what the information will be used for, even if they have reassurance from the school that it will be used only to determine if their child can qualify for a free or reduced-price lunch.

How Ahmed's and Mojtaba's Experiences Impact Them

Ahmed and Mojtaba bring vastly different sets of experiences to the task of completing a form, and each of them will require varying amounts of support from their school's personnel to assist them with this procedure. Ahmed, a college educated mechanical engineer, already possesses literacy in Arabic and will most likely not experience difficulties completing the form, assuming it is an accurate translation into the dialect of Arabic he speaks. Since he is a career professional, his income will probably preclude his children from receiving free or reduced-price lunch at their school. In addition, if he has any questions about this form, his level of English proficiency and familiarity with schooling in general as well as one year of experience with his children's school in the United States will be an asset to him if he decides to contact the school for more information. Ahmed will therefore require much less assistance from school personnel in order to complete this form.

The experience of Mojtaba, who also speaks Arabic, will be markedly different from that of Ahmed. Mojtaba legally resides in the United States but is most likely functionally illiterate in Arabic. She would first and foremost experience difficulty understanding the content of the form, since she can barely read Arabic. Thus, despite the school's good intentions of giving her a form in her native language, she most likely will not understand its content. Mojtaba would require someone to speak with her in Arabic about the purpose and content of the form and to work with her to complete it, since she can most likely not write more than her name or some very basic information in Arabic. For example, she may not be able to write her new address or phone number (if she has a phone). Since she has not received schooling beyond the first grade and is not familiar with the U.S. school system, she might be unaware that lunch is provided at her children's school. Furthermore, she may be fearful about providing too much personal information to school authorities, fearing that her refugee

status may be revoked at any moment. Due to all the potential roadblocks for her in completing this form, it is unlikely that she will complete it without help. If she does not complete the form, she will forfeit her children's access to free or reduced-price lunch, increasing the economic burden on her family. She won't be able to contact the school with questions about the form if the school does not have an Arabic-speaking person on staff to assist her. Even though the school has made the laudable effort to provide the form in her native language, Mojtaba still requires concerted advocacy efforts from school personnel in order for this form to be meaningful to her and for her to complete it.

CONCLUSION

In order for educators to serve as advocates for the English learners in their classrooms and in their schools, they must first become open to the notion that everyone in the school is responsible for the success of its ELs. Since educators' own cultures, experiences, and education influence their beliefs about language practices and policies as well as their classroom and societal expectations of ELs, they must first examine their personal beliefs about students who are acquiring English. Because most educators haven't had experiences of being schooled in another language and have not had to adjust to life in a different culture, it is also important to offer educators a glimpse into the challenges ELs face in the classroom as well as uncertainties families of ELs experience as they learn more about the U.S. school system. Chapter 3 focuses on EL advocacy through the ESL teacher perspective.

> Has your definition of shared responsibility to educate ELs changed after reading this chapter? If so, in what ways?

REFERENCES

Byrnes, D. A., & Kiger, G. (1994). Language attitudes of teachers scales (LATS). *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 54*(1), 227–231.

English, B. (2009). Who is responsible for educating English language learners? Discursive construction of roles and responsibilities in an inquiry community. *College and Education 23*(6), 487–507. doi:10.1080/09500780902954216

Honigsfeld, A., & Dove, M. (2010). *Collaboration and co-teaching: Strategies for English learners.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Lewis-Moreno, B. (2007). Shared responsibility: Achieving success with English-language learners. *Phi Delta Kappan, 88*(10), 772–775.

Lucas, T., Reznitskaya, A., & Villegas, A.M. (2008, April). *Exploring the attitudes and preparedness of regular classroom teachers to teach English language learners.*

Presentation at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, NY.

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

Staehr Fenner, D., & Kuhlman, N. (2012). *Preparing effective teachers of English language learners: Practical applications for the TESOL P–12 Professional Teaching Standards.* Alexandria, VA: TESOL International Association.

Washburn, G. (2008). Alone, confused, and frustrated: Developing empathy and strategies for working with English language learners. *The Clearing House, 81*(6), 247–250.

Wassell, B.A., Hawrylak, M. F., & LaVan, S. (2010). Examining the structures that impact English language learners' agency in urban high schools: Resources and roadblocks in the classroom. *Education and Urban Society, 42*(5), 599–619. doi:10.1177/0013124510375598