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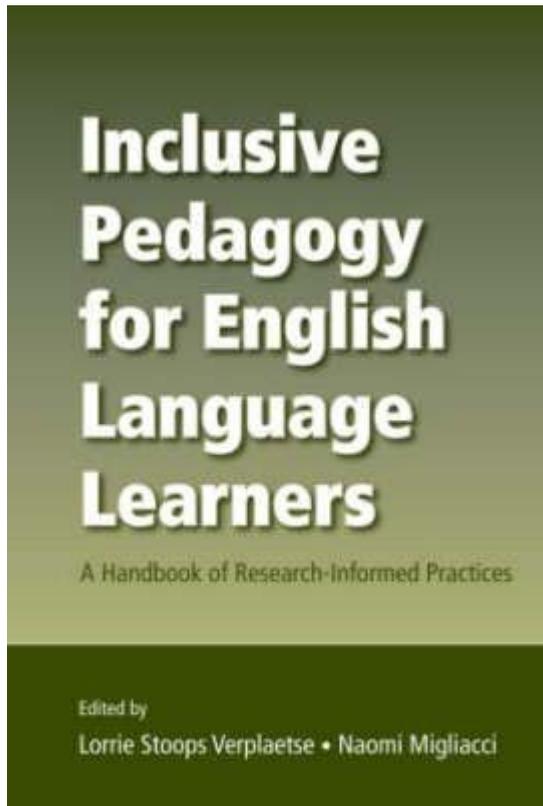
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## CHAPTER 16

# Meeting the Needs of ELLs: Acknowledging the Schism Between ESL/Bilingual and Mainstream Teachers and Illustrating That Problem's Remedy<sup>1</sup>

EDMUND T. HAMANN

### Introduction

Nationwide, education researchers, policy makers, and school reformers agree that the education of English language learners (ELLs) is an increasingly important issue as (1) more students in more districts fit in that category (Ruiz-de-Velasco, 2005; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1999; Wortham, Murillo & Hamann, 2002); as (2) they, in aggregate, continue to fare less well than most other student populations (August & Hakuta, 1997; Callahan & Gándara, 2004; NCES, 1997); and as (3) policy compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act holds their schools accountable for their cumulative average yearly progress (Abedi, 2005; Crawford, 2004). There is also an emerging understanding that the education of ELLs should be a concern of all educators (Miramontes, Nadeau, Commins & Garcia, 1997), not just a specialized and often marginalized segment of the staff (Grey, 1991). That issue—whether ELL education is viewed as a shared task among all educators, including school and district administration—is the focus of the two short case studies presented here.

This chapter considers my experiences in two school districts in two different regions of the United States. Although both districts were making substantial responses to ELLs when I last studied them, neither was an exemplar of responsiveness as measured by the academic performance of ELLs, nor did most teachers or administrators in either district see the education of ELLs as part of their own professional task. In my sketches of both cases, I seek to explain why the response was not more efficacious and to outline missed opportunities and next steps that would have increased the number of teachers willing to and capable of contributing to the success of ELLs.

I situate my analysis within the domains of policy implementation studies (McLaughlin, 1987) and ethnography (Erickson, 1984). Education researchers and school reformers

acknowledge that it is human nature to make sense of new ideas and to learn new practices by reconciling them with what one already thinks and knows (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002; Stritikus & Garcia, 2003). Thus, if we posit that ELLs are not regarded by all educators as part of their responsibility and if we ask how the learning and school success of ELLs can become the concern of all educators, we can see that we are outlining a learning task for many educators: to have them learn a new orientation towards the task of educating ELLs as well as to learn the specific skills and tactics to do so well. In turn, this sets up some important follow-up questions: How will those not currently much concerned with educating ELLs react to this charge? How will those who currently work primarily with ELLs react to this support or potential intrusion? Strategically, what needs to happen to get educators who currently have different responsibilities for and experiences with ELLs to align their efforts so that ELLs are most effectively supported? This chapter speaks to these issues.

### Some Demographic Reminders

In October 2002, the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) estimated that there were 3,908,095 limited-English-proficient students attending U.S. public schools (excluding Puerto Rico and other outlying jurisdictions) of whom 1,146,154 were attending grades 7–12 in U.S. public schools.<sup>2</sup> This tally represented 10.5% of all elementary enrollment and 5.6% of all public secondary enrollment (Kindler, 2002). Despite their large numbers, ELLs at the secondary level are not served as well by their school experience as are other student populations (NWREL, 2004)—as measured by secondary school completion rates (August & Hakuta, 1997; NCES, 1997), participation in advanced classes (Cadeiro-Kaplan, 2004; Harklau, 1994a, 1994b), or postsecondary educational pursuits (Callahan & Gándara, 2004; Harklau, Losey, & Seigal, 1999). Nor are ELLs necessarily served well at the primary level, as measured by achievement and by the long-term persistence of many learners in special programs for identified ELLs, even though these programs are ostensibly designed to exit ELLs into the mainstream (Gándara, Rumberger, Maxwell-Jolly, & Callahan, 2003).

Important explanations for this problem can be found in national survey data that discovered that 11.7% of identified ELLs receive no special support services—despite laws requiring service—and that 36.4% receive only some services. However, 86.2% of surveyed ELL services coordinators indicated that the general curriculum materials provided to teachers were aligned with state standards, but only 56.7% felt that materials specifically designed for use with ELLs were aligned with standards (Zehler, Fleischman, Hopstock, Stephenson, Pendzick, & Sapru 2003, pp. ix–x). This same survey found that the number of teachers who have identified ELLs in their classes is rapidly increasing, with almost 43% of all teachers having at least one in their class, three and half times as many as in 1991–92. Of these 1.27 million teachers, 23.2% had bilingual, English as a second language (ESL), or other ELL-related certification, and 5.6% had a master's or doctorate in a relevant field, but 9.8% were working with just provisional certifications. Also, 39.9% reported having had no in-service development related to ELLs in the last five years, and an additional 20.8% of teachers reported less than 10 total hours of in-service related to ELLs in that period. Schools with more than 30 identified ELLs had higher percentages of new teachers than did schools with less than 30. Middle school and high school teachers of identified ELLs were substantially less likely to have had significant training for working with ELLs than their elementary colleagues (Zehler, et al., 2003, pp. 69–73).

In other words, in many parts of the United States, ELLs attend schools where there is an insufficient supply of trained and qualified educators for them. And even if there are a number of qualified teachers, this does not mean that the curriculum is most appropriate or that the trained teachers have latitude to pursue all of the practices that, per their training, they are supposed to draw on when they work with ELLs (Hamann, 2003; Stritikus & Garcia, 2003). Nor is it the case that extensive-service or standards-aligned programs for ELLs automatically work well. Still, there is a substantial body of research showing that ELLs can do well at school (e.g., Ernst, Statzner, & Trueba, 1994; Lucas, 1997; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Mehan, Villanueva, Hubbard, & Lintz, 1996; Pugach, 1998; Romo & Falbo, 1996; Walqui, 2000), and some emerging research highlights the overlap between some change strategies currently being targeted at mainstream teachers—for example, a focus on adolescent literacy development across the content areas—and those practices that work particularly well with ELLs (Meltzer & Hamann, 2004, 2005). The current relative lack of success of ELLs illustrates that key educators have lacked needed information and skills to serve ELLs well, that they have lacked the will to serve ELLs as well as other students, or that the current arrangement of most school systems inhibits the prospects of many ELLs.

### The Cases

The two cases presented here both illustrate responses to ELLs, but responses that were incomplete; responses where many teachers and administrators were neither trained nor oriented toward assuring that ELLs perform well. In both cases, the response to ELLs was precipitated by the requirements that emerged from the 1974 *Lau v. Nichols* U.S. Supreme Court decision. That decision, however, was not relevant to the first district described until 1989 when changes in local employment patterns first brought identified ELLs into the schools. *Lau v. Nichols* defined identified ELLs as a special population requiring specific modification of the regular educational program. As with special education students, identified ELLs were a don't fit population (Deschenes, Cuban, & Tyack, 2001)—that is, a population for whom the regular program was deemed inadequate—and special staff were recruited and hired to take the lead on their education.

The first case comes from a large town with a manufacturing dominated economy in the U.S. South, a part of the United States that historically has not been a major destination for newcomers. But that tradition changed dramatically in the last two decades, as changes in hiring practices at local factories precipitated the arrival of more than a thousand Mexican immigrant families—and a handful of families from other non-U.S. locations. The second case comes from a medium-sized city in the Rustbelt that has newcomers from all over the world, although four fifths are native Spanish speakers, a change from that city's previous patterns of immigration.

### A Dramatic Response with Incomplete Leadership—A Large-Town District

Since its creation in the late 1800s as a town school district carved from a then-rural county district that surrounded it, the large-town district was better funded and more successful—in terms of student achievement outcomes—than any other district in its region. This Southern district served the children of local professionals and business executives as well as the Anglo working class that labored in the mills. Corporate paternalism, in terms of scholarships and donations, complemented the generous tax base and set a tone for the

district to focus on the substantial college-bound portion of its enrollment. Working-class students who were not in college-preparatory tracks were not as well attended to. Indeed, in the 1980s, in an effort to stem the high dropout rate of working-class students, the district and several large local employers signed an agreement to stop employing during school hours youth (i.e., dropouts) who had not finished high school. At that time, the district's pay to teachers exceeded the average of nearby districts, and multiple top-notch applicants usually competed for every opening.

Just as the dropout accord went into effect, a large immigrant influx began. In 1990 the district hosted less than 200 Latino students (in this case, *Latino*, *ELL*, and *immigrant* were substantially overlapping categories); by the year 2000, Latino enrollment had surpassed 2,500, forming the majority of enrollment, a status that had been accelerated by a net decline in white enrollment. Teachers who had been hired to work with one kind of student (i.e., a largely Anglo middle class) and who had done so effectively found themselves during the 1990s increasingly expected to serve a different enrollment (i.e., Mexican newcomers). They had not been prepared for this latter task, and many were resistant to it (Keyes, 1999).

A local civic leader, however, was not resistant, although he was as underprepared as any of the teachers. Inspired by the complaint of his daughter, who said that teachers and students could not communicate at the suddenly majority ELL elementary school where she was a paraprofessional, in 1996 this leader led a grassroots response to his community's demographic transition. He successfully goaded local business leaders and a new superintendent to help form a partnership with a university in Mexico. The tie to Mexico built on a partnership between a local company and an industrial conglomerate in Mexico. The leader of that Mexican conglomerate, in turn, had ties to the Mexican university.

The new partnership had multiple components. These included plans to (1) train U.S. teachers in summer courses hosted at the Mexican university; (2) write a bilingual version of the state-approved curriculum; (3) have bilingual teachers from Mexico serve year-long terms in the large town's schools; and (4) have Mexican partnership leaders engage in community research initiatives. In short, the district was poised to be exceptionally responsive to its ELLs.

One of the district's elementary school principals provided crucial support for what from the very beginning was an unorthodox collaboration. She had just written a dissertation about the professional development needs of schools experiencing growth in their ELL enrollment, so she endorsed the proposed curricular changes, the recruiting of qualified staff from Mexico, and the idea of local educators taking summer courses there. The first year of the summer training in Mexico, she and her assistant principal led a delegation of 10 educators from her building. Most of these teachers were not in the district's formal ESL program. The district's remaining seven schools—some as impacted as the principal's—sent seven teachers combined, an average of one per school. When visiting instructors came from Mexico, the principal had her building host four of them. Per the proportion of enrolled ELLs and the interest of other principals, the remaining nine visiting instructors were divided at the other seven schools. In short, one of the eight principals demonstrated the kind of mobilization that was possible to respond to the new presence of ELLs, and her school was later recognized as an exemplary Title I school. But the district-wide response was more measured.

When the first group of 17 American teachers returned from their training in Mexico that first summer of the project, they were greeted by TV and newspaper reporters, and the story of their experiences dominated local news. Although all 17 were eligible for the district

to reimburse their incidental expenses from their four weeks away, only three applied. Sharing the sentiments of several, one of those not seeking reimbursement explained that she had been so favorably overwhelmed by the district's willingness to invest in the most amazing professional development experience of her life—an investment of nearly \$5,000—that it seemed petty to seek compensation of her investment of \$200 or so.

On return, most of the summer institute veterans indicated that they expected to continue convening as a group and that they expected to share their experiences and learnings with colleagues. But no such formal follow-up experience was ever organized. Enrollment of educators for the second summer of training in Mexico declined by half, even though three veterans of the first experience repeated. When the superintendent told me he wished he could learn what his teachers were learning—he was monolingual, had never received training for working with ELLs, and had never taught in or presided over a district with a significant ELL population—I asked him why he did not participate in the summer training himself. He demurred, saying he did not think his board would want him to take that much time away from the district. In accordance with the local business community's support for the binational project, he had gone along with some unusual and intriguing programs, but he was not sufficiently convinced by them that he needed to be a learner to participate directly. As such, he missed a chance to know better how to lead his part of the binational project.

Other components of the project slowly withered or never got off the ground. A two-year effort by the Mexican university at bilingual curriculum development was ultimately rejected without even pilot implementation. Efforts to coordinate with the district's ESL teachers never amounted to much; at a large business-sponsored event that was supposed to celebrate the project's early successes, the district's ESL coordinator made a 20-minute presentation that scarcely mentioned the novel binational collaboration, setting the collaboration up as a rival rather than aligned effort. The number of visiting instructors from Mexico was capped, and then, after four years, the program was ended when under a new superintendent the district determined it was not willing to provide transportation or housing or other supports that distinguished the trained teachers from Mexico's compensation from that of local paraprofessionals.<sup>3</sup> There were a few more years of shortened summer trainings in Mexico—shortened from a month abroad to two weeks—but district participation declined, even as neighboring districts started to participate.

When last I checked, the district's scores on state tests and the SATs had declined, and the Latino dropout rate remained high. On the state's 11th-grade-administered exit exam, in 2003–04 the town district underperformed state averages in all four content areas—English language arts, mathematics, social science, and science—for all students, Hispanic students, and identified ELLs. The Hispanic failure in each subject ranged from 18 to 62%, whereas the ELL failure rate spanned from 33 to 88%—although, per Abedi (2005), even my limited use of comparing district ELL scores to state ELL scores on an exam offered in English is probably scientifically inadequate in that the validity of such an assessment is absent for showing what an ELL knows.

Some ELLs in the district were succeeding, but not in the proportion as other populations the district served. As it ended its participation in the binational collaboration, the district created a multiage newcomer school that enrolled ELL newcomer students for up to a year before turning them over to the ESL programs at the regular schools. Though commenting on the efficacy of newcomer schools can introduce a debate that would be tangential to purposes of this piece, it does not seem controversial to claim that the creation of newcomer

programs is consistent with a logic that ELLs should be the concern of a specially trained small proportion of educators rather than of all educational personnel. Many teachers and administrators still did not see meeting the needs of ELLs as their major charge, even as the language background of enrollees had changed, with the majority of students now coming from Spanish-speaking households. In short, the majority of teachers were not conceptualizing that the majority of the district's enrollment was a main responsibility of theirs. And district leadership, including board leadership, was not challenging this presumption.

### Separate Systems—An Urban District

This profile is based on my reflections from a formative evaluation I helped conduct of an urban school district's response to ELLs. At the time I was involved in the evaluation, approximately two thirds of the district's enrollment came from households where English was not the first language. Roughly, that ELL population divided into 5,000 identified ELLs and 10,000 who had exited programs for ELLs or who were deemed sufficiently English proficient to never have been placed in the district's ESL or transitional bilingual education (TBE) program.

Measured on separate rubrics, both ELL groups were not achieving well. The population of 10,000 unsupported ELLs (i.e., ELLs in the mainstream) was faring dismally. On tests aligned with the state standards, adding together *exceeds standard*, *meets standard*, and *almost meets standard*, in none of the categories were more than 15% successful. Phrased another way, at least 85% of 10,000 students were not even almost meeting standards in any category. In the various tested categories, native-English-speaking students from the district were two to three times likelier to almost meet, meet, or exceed standards—not a high success rate, but one well ahead of their nonnative-English-speaking peers.

Looking at identified ELLs who were in supported programs and measuring success by progress toward the exit criteria of those programs, half were deemed to be making adequate yearly progress toward their exit from the special language support program. That figure, however, obscured a wide discrepancy in performance: In some classrooms all students were deemed to be making progress, and in others none were. Moreover, it is useful to juxtapose the in-program success rate (50% adequately progressing) and the success rate of those out of the program on standards-aligned tests (15% almost meeting, meeting, or exceeding standards). This juxtaposition suggests that the criteria for success within the ESL and TBE programs were not aligned with state standards; if they had been, the success of ELLs in the mainstream should have matched that of the whole student population.

According to the district's written policy, all students who were not native speakers of English were to be subjects of a special ELL support framework, which, because the district had more nonnative than native speakers of English, sets up the irony of there being a special support program that targeted the majority of enrollment. But in practice the framework was only used in the ESL and TBE classrooms for identified ELLs. In a survey of all teachers in the district, teachers overwhelmingly indicated that they felt the framework and the responsibility of supporting ELLs were the responsibilities of the ESL and bilingual teachers. On the same survey, many non-ESL and nonbilingual teachers indicated a frustration that students exited from the ESL and TBE program were not ready for mainstream work.

More generally, there was a fracture in this district between ESL and bilingual teachers and mainstream ones that was a source of problems at the time of the evaluation and that had pertinent historic antecedents. Within the larger structure of the district, there was a

subunit—the language and culture division (LCD)—that was semiautonomous from the larger district. All of the ESL and bilingual teachers were within LCD, and LCD had the charge of implementing the ESL and bilingual framework. LCD took lead responsibility for the 5,000+ identified ELL students who were receiving support services and kept data on these students' progress in regards to the framework. It did not claim responsibility for non-native-English speakers in the mainstream, although the previously referenced framework included such students in its stated purview. LCD also kept different data sets than those of the district writ large. LCD's data sets included all students who received language support during the academic year, whereas the larger district's ELL tally, like its other statistics, were a point-in-time count (on October 1), so even the official counts of supported ELLs in the district varied depending on data source.

As I wrote in the evaluation,

From the beginning and throughout this evaluation, we have repeatedly been struck by the division between the programs/structures we were charged to evaluate (ESL/Bilingual and [LCD]) and the larger programs and structures that these endeavors and structures were to fit within (i.e., mainstream education and the whole Central Office). Before data collection began, we were told by the now former director of [LCD] that once a student exited the ESL/Bilingual Education program they were not her responsibility anymore; their proficiency in English had been empirically demonstrated and they were ready for whatever 'mainstream' teachers had to offer. When we tried to collect information about how exited students fared, we realized that data on ESL/Bilingual Education students were kept separately from data on all students in the district so that cross-referencing district-held performance indicators with in-program or exited status was nearly impossible.

Clearly the split between LCD and the rest of the district was partially a product of personality clashes, but it also was a result of the history of LCD's creation and of the pro-ELL stance of the educators within it, which varied from many regular program teachers. LCD was created shortly after the 1974 *Lau v. Nichols* decision. At that time the number and proportion of ELLs qualifying for services and the number of students from non-English backgrounds who were in the regular program were both much smaller, and many teachers still saw themselves as primarily teaching to a native (i.e., white) working and middle class, a population that steadily diminished thereafter. ELLs were a marginal population and not the concern of most teachers, so, as Grey (1991) found in a Kansas study, those who specialized in working with ELLs were also regarded as marginal and peripheral by many in the regular program.

At that time, many schools did not enroll enough ELLs to merit a full-time ESL or TBE teacher. So the ESL or TBE teacher at these schools was itinerant, responsible for multiple schools, and not positioned to feel much connected to the stable staff. Even as ELL enrollments grew allowing a full-time ESL or TBE teacher and then multiple full-time ESL/TBE teachers to work in a given building, such teachers still did not connect much with the rest of the staff, or vice versa. ESL and TBE classes tended to be sorted by English proficiency as a first criterion, so, unlike most regular program teachers, ESL and TBE teachers often had multigrade classrooms. Because the ESL and TBE teachers' tasks and challenges differed from regular program teachers, because ESL and TBE teachers went to the same in-services with each other, and because they shared a commitment to a group of students that were not

a main focus of their non-ESL and TBE colleagues, the ESL/TBE teachers found camaraderie with each other, which established them as a group within a group.

LCD, in many ways, functioned as a parallel structure to the rest of the district, almost as a minidistrict within a larger one, organizing its own data collection, professional development, and professional support networks. Perhaps as a legacy of nonresponsiveness by teachers in the regular program, ESL and bilingual education teachers were accustomed to bypassing traditional routes of support (e.g., the literacy coach, the principal) and dealing directly instead with ESL and TBE administrators in the district's central office. During school visits that were part of our evaluation, ESL and TBE teachers and regular program teachers we talked to both said that many regular program teachers did not understand the curriculum framework for ELLs and did not know the identified ELLs in their schools. Similarly, many regular program teachers reported not knowing which of their students had exited out of previous ESL and TBE placements.

Unfortunately, all of these dynamics preserved the noncollaboration between ESL and TBE teachers and those in regular education, and they left uninterrupted the hazards of incomplete alignment between the ESL and TBE curriculum and that of the regular program. As I wrote in the evaluation, "This separation needs to be remedied, but that remedying cannot mean the unwitting suppression of the skills and capacities that LCD has steadily assembled. The remedying of the separation needs to instead emphasize the pertinence of the skills of some ESL and Bilingual educators to challenges faced by nearly all of their peers." That is the part needed to be reconnected to the whole but not as an act of unilineal assimilation; there were good reasons for the skepticism of LCD-affiliated teachers toward the district's regular program, and there was expertise for working with ELLs that needed to be preserved and expanded on rather than ignored in a re-merger.

### Considering the Two Cases

The nature of an analysis of two unsuccessful cases, or of cases that highlight what did not quite happen and what was not quite realized, is that a researcher can say this factor existed, and it appeared to be associated with what went wrong. It is more speculative to ask, what are all of the necessary ingredients to have changed the cases, to have made those districts sources of successful rather than cautionary accounts? We return then to the questions outlined at the beginning of this chapter: How will those not currently much concerned with educating ELLs react to the charge of becoming educators of ELLs too? How will those who currently work primarily with ELLs react to this support/potential intrusion by other teachers? And, strategically what needs to happen to get educators who currently have different responsibilities for and experiences with ELLs to align their efforts so that ELLs are most effectively supported? The cases illustrate more about missteps and missed opportunities than about all that should have been pursued.

Ironically, in both districts there was evidence that the majority of teachers (i.e., those teachers who were not part of the ESL or bilingual programs) did not see themselves as educators of the majority of students. That is, they did not see themselves as educators of ELLs—though ELLs formed the majority of enrollment—and did not see a need to be trained in the areas of second-language acquisition, content-area instruction in a second language, and the like. Nor did their leaders, with the exception of a rare principal, see a need to compel, enable, endorse, or prioritize that their teachers acquire such skill sets and orientations. In

the meantime, at least based on outcomes on standards-aligned tests, identified and mainstream ELLs were faring shockingly poorly.

Yet perhaps reflecting a frustration or skepticism because of their historic marginalization by their peers, credentialed teachers who worked with identified ELLs hardly seemed enthusiastic about collaborating with their mainstream colleagues or supporting those colleagues' efforts. An unfortunate habit of distrust was in play that meant, in the first case, staying aloof from a dramatic but ultimately ephemeral binational collaboration and, in the second, keeping separate data sets and not advocating for the broader implementation of the ELL support framework outside of ESL and TBE.

Thus, this chapter's case evidence in relation to the first two questions was that there was little likelihood that mainstream teachers would see ELLs as appropriately within their charge. There was also little evidence that special program teachers wanted much to do with the mainstream teachers. Yet neither of these postures is inevitable; thus, both are interruptible, though perhaps only with difficulty. Leadership, if provided, can compel different and better outcomes for ELLs. In a crucial comparative study of 11 districts that saw substantial growth in their ELL populations between 1980 and 1990, Dentler and Hafner (1997) noted that the three districts that saw their standardized test scores rise during that period all were led by administrators with expertise on ELL-support issues.

Dentler and Hafner's (1997) study did not find that intensive professional development, per se, helped districts succeed in the face of changing enrollments. The three improved districts had intensive professional development, but so too did the five they studied that lost ground; 3 of their 11 districts neither improved nor declined. As one key, in the successful districts the intensive professional development was purposeful and coherent rather than scattershot. Because the mainstream leadership of the districts was advocating for responsiveness, there were also some core climatic differences between Dentler and Hafner's successful districts and the two that I have just described. We can imagine how the two cases just shared might have differed if:

- Large portions of the faculty could not claim that ELL education was not their task too.
- Those with special training and credentials for working with ELLs saw their work institutionally valued and embraced, so they were not guided by a learned skepticism and skittishness in their relations with administrators and nonspecialist colleagues.
- There was less of a gap to breach between ESL programs and regular programs, which meant better coordination and alignment and less of a transition to negotiate for ELLs exiting Lau-required programs.
- Teacher hiring was both more purposeful in terms of the sought-after skill sets and more competent—in that those doing the hiring knew what the appropriate skill sets to be ELL responsive would look like.

There are good teachers who work well with ELLs in almost any district, and there were in the two districts featured here. But the districts that are more successful with ELLs are systemically competent—professional development is consistent, purposeful, and ELL focused. Cooperative communication between those in ELL-focused programs and the mainstream is prioritized and cultivated. District managers know why, vis-à-vis the education of ELLs, they are doing what they are doing (Schechter & Cummins, 2003).

In both districts profiled here the number of ELLs was rapidly growing. However, in both districts there had been few identified ELLs until relatively recently, so there had been little

impetus to recruit staff trained in ELL-responsive pedagogies or to retrain many existing staff to work effectively with ELLs. As the districts began their response to the presence of ELLs, or, as accurately, as the districts began their compliance with federal requirements that they make special accommodation to students who did not speak and read English well enough to succeed academically in an unsupported classroom, ELLs were viewed as a minor population. Mainstream educators could be professionally successful without attending much to ELLs. These habits and orientations persisted even as they were no longer as apt.

In both districts the first direct attempts—beyond hiring paraprofessional interpreters—to meet the needs of ELLs were to hire and train ESL or bilingual teachers. Initially these specialists worked with ELLs in multigrade settings, in multiple classrooms, often in multiple schools. The special population they worked with and their mobility made these teachers different from most of their colleagues. Mainstream and ESL and bilingual staff interacted little with each other and the much smaller group (i.e., the ESL and bilingual teachers) quickly became accustomed to providing collegial support to each other rather than trying to derive it from their less trained mainstream colleagues. Held together both by the common experiences of working with ELLs and being misunderstood and ignored by mainstream peers, the program staff formed an alternative culture, a system within the larger district.

In short, these two districts, like hundreds of others, have gone through three phases: (1) nonresponse, none needed; (2) nonresponse, but response needed; and (3) creation of a special program for an identified special population (i.e., ELLs). But these phases have never led all or most educators in both districts to see the education of ELLs as partially their task too; to see that the regular curriculum aligns with the curriculum that exited ELLs previously encountered in ESL/TBE; or to assure that professional development is consistent and coherent in regards to helping teachers understand how to meet the needs of ELLs. These districts needed to be led to a fourth phase, one in which the expectable challenges that logically emerged from the earlier phases were identified and addressed. Only in this leadership-involving, schism-mending fourth phase is the large-scale, long-term, and deserved success of most ELLs likely.

## Notes

1. I want to thank Lorrie Verplaetse and Janelle Reeves for their thoughtful editing of earlier drafts of this chapter.
2. The word choice *limited English proficient* is intentional here. Although that term has been aptly identified as embedding a deficit label (i.e., defining students by what they do not know), it is the formal term used in the education law and policy that stem from the *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) Supreme Court decision. That formal embedding of a deficit orientation in federal jurisprudence should be noted. Here, *identified ELLs* refers to those receiving support per Lau-originating regulations, whereas the term *ELL* is slightly more inclusive than the *limited English proficient* or *identified ELLs* labels. As the General Accounting Office (2001) notes, there are ELLs who have been exited from ESL and bilingual education support systems that are still not as proficient in English for academic purposes as are native-English-speaking peers. *ELL* here refers to all students who are not native speakers of English and whose academic performance is impeded by not being fully proficient in English.
3. The Mexican teachers qualified for H1-B visas, a category reserved for skilled professionals in work categories with limited domestic supply. However, ironically, state education laws did not recognize Mexican credentials so the visiting teachers officially served as paraprofessionals. The payment of housing and transportation costs was an informal way to try to work around the limits created by the state law.

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