



El Desarrollo del Proyecto Alianza: Lessons Learned and Policy Implications

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By Belinda Bustos Flores and Ellen Riojas Clark

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND PREFACE: SCEED EXPLORATIONS IN BI-NATIONAL EDUCATION



Preface to the series

As we welcome a new century and a new millennium, dire predictions are being heard in education circles concerning the teacher shortage that U.S. schools will face in the near future. In the next few years, baby-boomer teachers will retire in large numbers. To complicate matters, not enough young people are entering the teaching profession. The pipeline leading from high school to the profession is far from capacity. This is especially true of Hispanic youth, many of whom leave school before having the option of entering teaching as a career.

However, crises sometimes point to opportunities. Such is the case of those states with large Spanish-speaking populations. Mexico has long been the most important source of Spanish-speaking immigrants to the United States. Recently, immigration from that country has begun to change. Once a phenomenon limited to unskilled and semi-skilled workers, immigration is changing. Among recent newcomers there are growing numbers of people from urban centers in Mexico where educational opportunities have become better. This change in the demographics of Mexican immigration means an increase in immigrants from the professional and technical classes. Well-prepared professionals and technicians are coming to the United States to live and work. They have much to offer their new country.

Mexican teachers are part of this shift in immigration patterns. In contrast to previous generations of teachers, the Mexican teacher of today has undergone the equivalent of a four-year college education. The observed difference between Mexican and U.S. teachers is that the former may not have a full command of the English language. Those teachers cannot teach in their chosen field in U.S. schools. Among their counterparts who teach here, there appear to be critical gaps in the Spanish proficiency and literacy of U.S. teachers who are already credentialed as bilingual education teachers (Guerrero, 1999). Having Mexican teachers in our midst—teachers who are fully proficient in Spanish—is welcome news for bilingual education. Here is a new and untapped pool of teaching talents waiting in the wings and eager to prepare for teaching duties in the United States.

Project Alianza, our co-sponsors of this monograph series, has focused energy, resources, and attention on this new resource: “normalista” teachers educated in Mexican teacher colleges (normal schools), who reside in the U.S. and who aspire to re-enter the profession in the United States. The

ii alliance, consisting of several universities, a national R&D organization, and a bi-national foundation, has taken on the challenge of reducing the structural, cultural, and linguistic obstacles that have precluded the integration of this new pool of teachers into U.S. classrooms as full professionals. With financial support from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the members of *Project Alianza* are working to overcome these obstacles. These members expect to facilitate the certification and absorption of several hundred teachers who began their education in Mexico and hope to work here, once meeting all the requirements that are met by every other teacher in the states where they expect to work. By pointing the way to a new form of international collaboration in education, *Project Alianza* will make an important contribution to diminishing the anticipated shortage of well prepared teachers in the U.S.¹

When the opportunity was extended to the Center for Bilingual Education and Research (CBER), now the Southwest Center for Education Equity and Language Diversity (SCEED) to join the *Project Alianza* partnership, we were delighted to participate. Bi-national collaboration at all levels of education between the U.S. and Mexico is one of our interests. We see no reason why the problem of educating immigrant youngsters should fall solely on U.S. schools and teachers. We were aware, even before the *Project Alianza* effort began, that important players in the Mexican educational system were willing and able to help reduce cultural and linguistic barriers to the adequate education of these students. When we reviewed the history of previous bi-national collaborations, we were surprised to learn that only a few efforts had been made to bring together educators from both sides of the border, to engage in dialogue, and to develop spaces and opportunities to explore ideas for educating immigrant children more collaboratively and, perhaps, more successfully. To the extent that research, collaboration, and innovation have taken place, these have occurred almost exclusively within the United States. It was as if an implicit assumption existed that Mexicans had no stake in the matter and that our respective professional obligations ended on our side of the border. Since we live and work along one of the most open borders in the world, it is difficult to explain why educators in the U.S. have shouldered the difficult task of educating these students without consulting or collaborating with colleagues who worked with them before they immigrated.

From these observations and concerns arose the idea of publishing a series of papers aimed at promoting a continuing bi-national conversation concerning this problem. We choose the phrase “Explorations in Bi-National Education” as the title of this collection. With six monographs currently in the series, the Southwest Center for Education Equity and Language Diversity (SCEED) hopes to contribute to the dialogue over the nature of education in areas with substantial Hispanic concentrations and on the mutual obligations of the respective countries to collaborate in meeting this challenge. By helping arrange for the integration of Mexican *normalistas* into the teaching force of the United States, we hope that other issues will surface and that researchers and scholars in both countries will rise to the challenge.

The role of SCEED and Arizona State University in *Project Alianza* has been the preparation of six policy-related research/policy reports. These have been the basis of our “bi-national explorations” series. It is our hope that they will be useful to policy makers and practitioners involved in these bi-national efforts.

The first of these monographs (Petrovic, et al., 1999) was designed to provide a wide-angle view of the ways in which Mexico and several states in the United States prepare and credential teachers for K-12. That report was titled *Mexican Normalista Teachers as a Resource for Bilingual Education in the U.S.: Connecting two Models of Teacher Preparation*. That document reviewed the Mexican system of teacher education and pointed out similarities and differences between the Mexican and U.S. models. In the course of gathering and assembling this information, we found, to no one’s surprise, that the topic is more complex than first meets the eye. The Mexican model of teacher preparation is national in scope and offers little variation between and among the Mexican states or regions and their individual institutions. All teachers in Mexican *escuelas normales* follow essentially the same curriculum prescribed by the central government through the Secretaría de Educación Pública. The U.S. system—in reality a hydra head of state systems—is as varied as the American states themselves. The role of colleges and universities is different in the two countries and the subjects and experiences stressed in each country also vary in major ways. Still, upon completing the task, it was clear that enough similarity exists that there is a solid, common base on which to build a unifying structure between the two systems.

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The second report in the bi-national education series focused on the perplexing question of language proficiency of teachers. We explored the issue of whether Spanish-speaking bilingual education teachers in the U.S. are sufficiently proficient and literate *in Spanish* to function in the more demanding—and more promising—program models such as the dual-language or two-way programs of bilingual education. Michael Guerrero, author of the monograph *Spanish Language Proficiency of Bilingual Education Teachers*, (1999) made an important contribution by asking a long-neglected question in bilingual education: what level of mastery in Spanish is required of bilingual education teachers in order to teach effectively in two languages? The findings of his analysis are worrisome. While Guerrero's exploration does not provide a conclusive answer, it points to the need for major research and development work in this area. Based on Guerrero's analysis we can infer that Mexican-trained teachers who obtained a full, college-level education in their own country, can make important contributions in the schools in the U.S. where Spanish speaking students are educated.

The third report in the bi-national education series, by Ana García and Josué M. González (2000), reported on structured conversations they held with the *normalista* teachers involved in *Project Alianza* before they completed their studies and became credentialed in the United States. The study sought to discover, in a general way, the *normalistas'* views about the teaching profession, the preparation of teachers, and the role of teachers in the community. This report, *The Views of Mexican Normalista and U.S. Bilingual Education teachers: An Exploratory Study of Perceptions, Beliefs, and Attitudes*, revealed a high level of congruence between Mexican-trained teachers and their U.S.-reared counterparts who work in bilingual-education programs. Nonetheless, some differences were found. The latter may become more marked once these teachers enter U.S. classrooms and begin to practice the profession they interrupted, often for many years, as they sought a social and economic footing in this country.

In the fourth report of the series, our colleague, John Petrovic, began the arduous task of comparing the curricula of public schools in the United States with those in Mexico. As was the case with the teacher-education report, we were faced here with a difficult comparison, since the K-12 curriculum is national in Mexico and thoroughly decentralized in the United States. By focusing on two key states with large Hispanic populations, Petrovic (2000) identified differences and similarities in curriculum objectives for math and language arts in the two countries. It is the first of many such

analyses that should be carried out in order to pin down the differences between what bi-national children experience in each country. Much remains to be done in this critical area and we hope that our initial efforts will inspire others to continue the task.

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In *Teacher Recruitment and Employment Practices in Selected States: Promising Prospects for Foreign-Trained Teachers*, the fifth report of this series, Carlos Vallejo and Ana García broadened the perspective to include the experience of states and school districts—other than those involved in *Project Alianza*—that have credentialed foreign-trained teachers. They set out to document, in broad terms, these entities' collective experiences to identify problems and opportunities that others have encountered in working with foreign-trained, and chiefly *normalista* teachers. These efforts have been generally positive, though problems exist that can be resolved with modest effort and the will to act.

The present study (Report #6), *El Desarrollo del Proyecto Alianza: Lessons Learned and Policy Implications*, is the latest in the *Alianza* group of policy reports. It documents the design and implementation of *Project Alianza* and synthesizes the lessons learned by the various institutions involved in that process. The authors, Belinda Flores and Ellen Riojas Clark, set out to inform others who might be interested in doing similar research and display what might be expected as they attempt to implement the general concept of *Project Alianza*, namely, re-credentialing Mexican teachers to work in the United States. Creatively designed, the document will no doubt be useful in that regard.

Editors' Acknowledgments

Many people have contributed to, or have encouraged the development of CBER's, and now SCEED's concept of bi-national education and the concept of a *border pedagogy* crafted expressly for the special needs of the U.S./Mexico border. They share our belief that education should not be constrained by borders and that educators must challenge the divisive nature of political borders by working together, across borders, in pursuit of their educative mission. Among those who encouraged us to develop this idea were David Berliner, then Dean of Education at Arizona State University; Margarita Calderón of the CRESPAR organization at Johns Hopkins University; and Graciela Orozco of the Mexican and American Solidarity Foundation in Mexico City. All of them have made important contributions to our work in this area.

We invited several colleagues to read our drafts and offer suggestions. They are named and thanked in the authors' acknowledgment page but I take the prerogative, as series editor, to acknowledge them as a group, and to acknowledge that we could not have completed the work without their help. We are indebted to Ashlea Deahl, James Lewis, and Wayne Wright for their expert assistance in editing and line editing the text of the latest report.

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the writing unfolded and helping us fine-tune the contents of several of the volumes in this series. The participating Project directors, school principals, college administrators, and school-based staffs who participated made this report possible. *Gracias, han sido muy amables con nosotros.*

With all these friends and supporters, we could hardly go wrong in any major way. Still, for those stubborn mistakes of commission and omission that remain, we take full responsibility.

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¹ The *Project Alianza* partners are the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA), Mexican and American Solidarity Foundation, Arizona State University (ASU), California State University at Long Beach (CSULB), The University of Texas - Pan American (UTPA), The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), and Southwest Texas State University (SWTSU).

Authors' Acknowledgements

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To all language minority students and our respective families, we dedicate this work to you.

Belinda & Ellen

ix **Authors' Biographical Information**

Belinda Bustos Flores is an assistant professor in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies and Curriculum & Instruction. Ellen Riojas Clark is an associate professor in the Division of Bicultural Bilingual Studies. Both are at The University of Texas in San Antonio. They have collaborated on numerous research projects that center on the *normalistas* and that will result in additional articles to be published under the auspices of the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional and MexTESOL.

Their collaborations have included the following articles: *Who am I? The socioconstruction of ethnic identity and self-perceptions of bilingual preservice teachers*; *Instructional Snapshots (IS) in Mexico: Preservice bilingual teachers take pictures of classroom practices*; *Los niños aprenden en casa: Valuing and connecting home cultural knowledge with the school's early childhood education program*; and *You can't have a rainbow without a tormenta: A description of an IHE's response to a community need for a dual-language school*.

Another area of research for the authors is high-stakes testing. Articles include *High-stakes testing: Barriers for prospective teachers* and *Narrowing the pipeline for ethnic minority teachers: Standards and high-stakes testing*. In Angela Valenzuela's new book, *Assessment and Educational Equity: Why 'Texas-style' Accountability Fails Latino Youth* (forthcoming), the authors have written a chapter titled, *The Centurion: Standards and high-stakes testing as gatekeepers in the new century for bilingual education teacher candidates*.

Currently, they are working on a manuscript to be entitled *Metamorfosis/ Metamorphosis: Process for the professional development of bilingual education teachers*.

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INTRODUCTION

In this monograph, we critically examine *Project Alianza* processes and outcomes as they relate to teacher-education policy for foreign-trained teachers residing in the United States. We first set the context by describing how the Project was structured at each site. We then report on the outcomes as seen by the major stakeholders in the Project, including *Project Alianza* students, on-site school administrators, and Project coordinators. We triangulate these data with the literature on ethnic-identity, self-concept, and teaching efficacy with respect to bilingual teacher preparation. Our discussion leads to conclusions about institutional outcomes as a result of *Project Alianza* and consequent policy implications for teacher-preparation program design, development, and implementation.

Project Alianza, a privately funded program, was initiated in 1998 to direct attention to an ever-changing society, in which the number of language-minority students continues to increase while the pool of bilingual teachers decreases (Waggoner, 1999; The Urban Teacher Challenge, 2000). The goals of the instituting grant addressed the bilingual education teacher shortage by tapping into the cultural and human capital of the community, specifically to recruit foreign-trained teachers, school paraprofessionals, and traditional college-age students from under-served communities (Cantú, 1999; Supick, 1999; Quezada & Inzunza-Franco, 2000). Each of these groups was seen as vital to the success of the Project's goals and important in creating a steady influx of bilingual education teachers. Before *Project Alianza*, little empirical work had been conducted regarding these three groups.

The idea for *Project Alianza* came from a pilot program at California State University at Long Beach (CSULB). In this program, foreign-born *normalistas* (Mexican-trained teachers), who are now U.S. residents, were recruited to participate in an accreditation program that combined the resources of CSULB and (Mexico's) Universidad Pedagógica Nacional (UPN). A major goal of this Project was to assist the *normalistas* in receiving their *licenciatura* (equivalent to a bachelor's degree) through the UPN and then to complete their (U.S.) certification requirements at CSULB.

During the summer of 1997, a bi-national advisory group gathered at the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) headquarters in San Antonio, Texas, to consider a plan for expanding the CSULB pilot project to

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other universities and pursue the necessary funding for a bi-national project. The CSULB pilot project was considered successful in recruiting U.S.-resident *normalistas*. However, the inability of Project participants to pass the California Basic English Skills Test (CBEST) posed a challenge to the Project. Out of 27 participants, only four, (approximately 14%), had passed all three portions of the CBEST. The difficulty stemmed from the *normalistas'* lack of English proficiency. Even when able to complete the CBEST requirement, certain individuals still lacked the ability to deliver competent instruction in English. At the end of the pilot program, only 17 of the original 27 *normalistas* were employed as paraprofessionals rather than as teachers of record (Bocanegra, 1997). At present, approximately 10 are bilingual teachers in the Los Angeles area.

In redesigning the program for *Project Alianza*, the advisory group recommended that all *normalista* coursework be completed at public universities in the United States rather than at the UPN or only through the assistance of UPN professors. The advisory group believed that making the hub universities responsible for all the preparation would increase involvement in this bi-national effort and eventually create systemic change. In addition, the advisory group recommended that the Project be expanded to include other under-recruited college populations such as paraprofessionals (teacher assistants) and native-born ethnic minority students. The group felt that the three populations could serve as resources for each other. For example, the advisory group's general opinion was that, although the *normalistas* were well prepared to teach content areas, such as literacy and mathematics—in Spanish—the majority of *normalistas* probably lacked experience within a bilingual bicultural setting, though the advisory group conceded that a few *normalistas* might have been employed as paraprofessionals in a school setting. They presumed that these paraprofessionals, some native-born and some foreign-born legal U.S. residents—while not necessarily having extensive formal knowledge, much less teaching credentials—did have many years of working with the realities of low-income schools (Flores & Milk, 1997, June 17). The third group consisted of first-generation, college-age students who, though they may have begun their undergraduate studies at the traditional age upon high-school graduation, may remain in a program of study for a longer period of time than the traditional four years because of work and other family responsibilities. This third group of students may also have attended a local community college before entering a university. Many of these students attended low-income schools. Most are bilingual in Spanish and English, and they continue to live in communities where Spanish prevails. While these two populations (paraprofessionals and first generation) share similar characteristics, their schooling experiences often differ. The two groups are similar in ethnicity, language varieties, and cultural practices, and are mostly second-, third-, or fourth-generation residents of the United States. The

paraprofessionals' schooling might have occurred when subtractive language policies were in operation—where children were actually punished for speaking Spanish. Other group members were likely in bilingual education transitional programs as children. Yet, the advisory group conceded that both groups would likely need the Spanish academic-language proficiency required for teaching in bilingual education programs.

The advisory committee also assumed that these two groups' ethnic identity formation needed development and that these two groups would benefit from language and cultural seminars delivered under the auspices of the Mexican American Solidarity Foundation and the UPN to further shape their ethnic identity. Almost a year later, the IDRA was awarded funding from the Kellogg Foundation. As notes Supik (1999), "thus began *Project Alianza* . . . on an extraordinary journey that crosses borders of countries, cultures, organizations, world views, and experiences" (p. 3).

Descriptions of Universities in the Project

Applications were solicited from universities across the country. During the first year of implementation, four major public universities were selected as hub sites: Southwest Texas State University, University of Texas at Pan American, University of Texas at San Antonio, and California State University at Long Beach. Arizona State University, in Tempe, Arizona, was selected to conduct research for the Project.

While each university incorporated the students into "cohorts," the program operated somewhat differently from one site to the next. In this monograph, the term "blocked" is used to describe coursework that is delivered and taken only by *Project Alianza* participants. To distinguish between the participants, the term "cohort" is used to describe the different categories, e.g., *normalista*, paraprofessional, and first generation (traditional). The cohort of foreign-trained teachers was dubbed the *normalista* cohort—regardless of the participants' level of preparation or country of origin. Members of this cohort from Mexico were distinguishable according to the typology outlined by Petrovic, Orozco, González and Díaz de Cossío (1999):

1. *Escuela normal básica* (equivalent to a Bachelor's degree and certification for preschool or elementary education)
2. *Escuela normal superior* (equivalent to a Bachelor's degree and certification for secondary education)
3. *Licenciatura en educación con especialización* (equivalent to a Bachelor's degree and certification with specialization; e.g., art, special education, physical education).

4 The paraprofessional group included individuals currently employed as classroom-teacher assistants as well as former classroom assistants who had left their employment to pursue teaching credentials. Although UTPA did not claim to have any paraprofessionals in the group, there was, in fact, one student who indicated on the demographic data card that she had been a paraprofessional before entering *Project Alianza*. At UTSA, the Division of Bicultural Bilingual Studies received a grant for paraprofessionals. The Project accepted both categories as described above, i.e., currently employed as a classroom assistant or with prior employment as a classroom assistant. Since previous experience tends to influence one's perceptions and beliefs (Flores, 1999), this distinction was important in the analysis of the data.

Table 1
Program Participants and Certification Program

HUB University Total Group Subtotal	BA with Certification	BA + 1 year Certification	Post-Baccalaureate
CSULB 25 <i>Normalistas</i> = 18 Paraprofessionals= 2 First generation= 5		Weekend Blocked Cohorts	
SWTSU 24 <i>Normalistas</i> = 10 Paraprofessionals= 12 First generation= 2	Evening Cohorts		Evening Cohorts
UTPA 39 <i>Normalistas</i> = 25 Paraprofessionals= 0 First generation= 21			Evening Blocked Cohorts
UTSA 64 <i>Normalistas</i> = 24 Paraprofessionals= 19 First generation= 21	Day & Evening Cohorts integrated into existing program		Day & Evening Cohorts integrated into existing program
Total 152 <i>Normalistas</i> = 77 Paraprofessionals= 33 First generation= 42			

The “traditional college-age group” was renamed “first-generation ethnic-minority college student,” a better descriptor, because not all participants were “college age,” as had been initially expected. Table 1 summarizes the total number of participants per cohort (as categorized by the university) and per university, and the type of certification program implemented at each university for *Project Alianza* participants.

California State University at Long Beach (CSULB)

The CSULB College of Education’s main purpose is to create and nurture a learning and teaching community committed to excellence in lifelong education. The college prepares professionals to be socially responsible educational leaders, to engage in research and scholarly activity that informs and improves practice; values diversity; collaborates with schools, agencies, the community, and each other; and engages in an inclusive process for planning, communicating, working, and assessing of goals.

Project Alianza at CSU Long Beach involves only *normalistas* who have received their *licenciatura* and have applied to the university as degree-seeking students. Their credentials were evaluated and analyzed by the International Admissions office. Other participants in the Project include traditional students and paraprofessionals. All participants’ English proficiency was measured with an English placement test. Participants are then enrolled, as a blocked cohort, in a degree-seeking program that is aimed at receiving the State of California teaching credential. Typically, California state universities have a five-year teacher-preparation program, with the fifth year being the teacher-preparation component. Project members take courses at night and on weekends, with Spanish-proficient, non-tenured, adjunct faculty teaching the courses in the block.

Southwest Texas State University (SWTSU)

The campus is in San Marcos, a community about halfway between Austin and San Antonio. SWTSU was established in 1899 to address the state’s need for teachers. SWTSU is a comprehensive, culturally diverse university, offering both undergraduate and graduate instruction. The teaching-learning experience, supported by research and creative activity, is the core mission of SWTSU. The University prepares students for tomorrow’s careers, encourages leadership developments, and introduces them to ideas and experiences that will broaden their lives forever.

SWTSU’s Department of Curriculum and Instruction offers programs to prepare elementary and secondary teachers that lead to teacher certification in Texas. *Project Alianza* students are a combination of *normalistas* and paraprofessionals

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and are enrolled in the teacher-preparation component of an undergraduate degree program. *Some normalistas*, who possess a *licenciatura* and a command of English, have pursued their teaching credentials through the University's post-baccalaureate program, leading to certification.

The University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA)

A member of The University of Texas system only since 1989, The University of Texas-Pan American serves one of the fastest-growing regions in the nation (south Texas). Undergraduate students can earn a bachelor's degree in one of 47 different fields, while graduate students are offered 38 master's degrees, as well as a doctorate in business administration, with an emphasis in international business and educational leadership

The College of Education at UTPA, one of six academic divisions, directs its programs and course offerings toward the preparation of professionals to teach in the rich cultural and linguistic mix of the international border area.

The UT Pan American *Alianza* program is geared for post-baccalaureate students who have *licenciaturas*. Here, they begin the professional education and bilingual education coursework that leads to certification in a post-baccalaureate four-semester program, that also includes summer attendance.

The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA)

The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) is the city's comprehensive, four-year public university, with more than 22,000 students enrolled in bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs. Established in 1969 as an academic component of the University of Texas system, UTSA is among the nation's top five Hispanic-educating universities in terms of total Hispanic enrollment. Hispanic students account for over 50% of the total enrollment, and 49.2% of all UTSA students come from under-represented groups. The Division of Bicultural Bilingual Studies, an interdisciplinary academic unit within the College of Education and Human Development, offers a Ph.D. in Culture, Literacy and Language; a Master of Arts degree with concentrations in Bilingual Education; Bicultural Studies; and English as a Second Language (ESL); as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mexican American Studies. The Division also offers certification and endorsement programs in Bilingual Education and ESL, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and is actively engaged in developing innovative models for bilingual teacher education. Substantial financial support for students is provided through externally funded grants.

The UTSA *Project Alianza* program involved *normalistas* with different levels of education. Their individual programs of study were determined based on the types of credentials held. Individuals with a *licenciatura* in education were allowed to complete a six-semester, post-baccalaureate program of study and were accepted into the Project if they demonstrated a B+ or better (8.5 on a 10-point system) in their *licenciatura* program. Individuals without *licenciatura* were given college credit from courses completed beyond the *normal básica*. These students also had to demonstrate a B+ or better in their teacher-preparation program. *Normalistas* with only *normal básica* were accepted as first-year degree-seeking students if they met the grade-point-average requirement. Before acceptance into the Program, all *normalista* applicants were screened using the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (1977). Only *normalistas* who could demonstrate an intermediate level of English proficiency were accepted.

However, any applicant whose level of English was considered to be too low was given information on ESL programs for adults and was encouraged to reapply once the proficiency level increased to the intermediate level. Paraprofessionals and first-generation college students were accepted into the Program if they completed a minimum of 30 semester hours in the core curriculum, with a minimum GPA of 2.5. The applicants were screened for Spanish-language proficiency, informally during their interview and formally across all four language domains, using the Bilingual Prochievement Test (González-Pino, 1991).

Additional Participating Universities

During the second through fourth academic year (1999-2001) of *Project Alianza* implementation, additional institutions were selected and mentored by the Project institutions. These additional institutions, in chronological order, were the University of Texas at El Paso, Texas Woman's University, Texas A&M International at Laredo, and California State University at Bakersfield. Each additional-Project site reflects a unique approach to implementing *Project Alianza*.

Rationale for Study

Project Alianza's goals extend beyond providing student support; they served as a vehicle to create systemic change within institutions of teacher education. To create change requires institutions to undergo self-reflection. *Project Alianza* tasked institutions with examining its own policies and practices for evidence of barriers that prevent first-generation ethnic-minority college students, non-traditional paraprofessionals, and U.S.-resident foreign-trained teachers from seeking and completing teacher's credentials.

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Various innovative universities had previously attempted to capture some of their community's human and cultural capital by recruiting paraprofessionals and first-generation ethnic-minority college students. But, before *Project Alianza*, little to no effort had been placed on recruiting U.S.-resident foreign-trained teachers (Flores, 2001b). Smith (2001) projects that 20,000 teachers with *licenciaturas* from Mexico's Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) are residing, though are underemployed, in the United States. They earn minimum wages as restaurant workers, custodians, maids, and field workers. Upon initiating the Project, the four universities found themselves in uncharted territory. Little was known about the actual number of U.S.-resident *normalistas*. Much less was known about their *normalista* teacher preparation and how that preparation compared with U.S. teacher preparation. Equally unknown was how to structure policy so that *normalistas* in teacher-education programs would achieve the proficiencies necessary for a bilingual teacher's credential in the United States. The review of literature begins with an overview of the theoretical underpinnings for the preparation of effective bilingual teachers and an overview of research studies that were conducted as a result of *Project Alianza* and other pertinent policy-related studies.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

When examining standards for the preparation of teachers with bilingual proficiency, evident are the theoretical and research-based findings of Tikunoff (1983) and García (1988, 1991, 1996), where they identified effective teacher characteristics for language-minority students. Among these: the effective bilingual educator (a) communicates clear directions, (b) paces lessons appropriately, (c) makes jointly determined decisions, (d) provides immediate feedback, (e) monitors student progress, (f) instructs in the native language, (g) employs dual-language methodology, (h) integrates students' home culture and values, and (i) implements a balanced, coherent curriculum. Their findings initially formed the foundation of how to best prepare effective bilingual teachers.

More recently, researchers showed the need for bilingual teachers to have linguistic and cultural competence (Clark & Pérez, 1995). They have proposed that bilingual teachers' instructional style must demonstrate (a) language proficiency, (b) linguistic knowledge, (c) cultural knowledge, and (d) teacher competencies and attitudes. According to Richard-Amato (1996), critical pedagogy and multicultural education have stimulated a widespread reexamination of teaching practices in bilingual education.

Other researchers have called for a "border pedagogy" in which educators recognize that the border is confluent, that it must be navigated and traversed, and that it is not simply a dividing line between two countries. Padilla (1998) suggests that such a "hermetic border" cannot be imagined, let alone maintained. Instead, the border region should be viewed as an energetic, constantly changing area where "new possibilities are always on the horizon." As regards to teacher preparation, Dalton (1998) delineated five standards for effective pedagogy that are applicable across grade levels, student populations and cultures, and content areas: joint productive activity, language and literacy development, making meaning, complex thinking, and instructional conversation. Padilla (1999, 2001) suggests that, to be well prepared, the bilingual teacher must understand the epistemological differences between the abstract (*saber*) or relational (*conocer*) ways of knowing. Further, as bilingual educators, they must be ready to critique and extend the current theoretical and knowledge bases.

All of these attributes seem to be noted in effective bilingual education teachers. Moreover, these attributes are part of the bilingual education teacher-preparation program, including the four universities in this study. However, a unique

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characteristic at the heart of the bilingual education teacher is a shared ethnic identity. Cazden (1988) and Jiménez, Gersten, and Rivera (1996) have observed how having a shared ethnic identity assists in mediating and negotiating meaning between teacher and student. Flores (2001) contends that it is not simply having a shared ethnic identity but that it also requires the bilingual education teacher have a “conscious” ethnic identity. In other words, the bilingual education teacher must acknowledge who he or she is, ethnically. These researchers also noted that the bilingual teacher modulated students’ learning by connecting to their own as well as their students’ prior knowledge and adapting to the children’s community interaction styles.

Although few studies have been conducted with foreign-trained teachers, several criticisms are evident in the sparse literature extant. One criticism is that these teachers lack common linguistic and cultural experiences with U.S. language-minority populations. A second criticism is that foreign-trained teachers often had negative attitudes toward the language-minority’s native-language dialect (Valadez, Etxeberria, Pescador, & Ambisca, 2000). Conversely, U.S.-born bilingual teachers are often taken to task for their lack of academic Spanish proficiency and for being required to demonstrate only minimal Spanish proficiency on state-mandated tests (Guerrero, 1997, 1998, 1999). Further, U.S. bilingual-teacher education preparation programs have been seen as lacking rigorous Spanish language requirements. However, language use alone cannot be examined when isolated from the sociocultural context.

Ethnic Identity, Self-concept, and Teaching Efficacy

Employing the bilingual continuum as the theoretical framework can assist in understanding the dynamics and intersection of dual-language literacy and bicultural identity within the sociocontext (Hornberger, 1989; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000). As are all bilingual individuals, prospective bilingual education teachers are products of their own cultural upbringing, schooling, and professional preparation. Thus, their teaching will likely reflect these experiences (Flores, 2001). The on-going instructional decisions bilingual teachers make, regarding first- and second-language usage, reflect their own experiences within these sociocultural contexts (Pérez, Flores, Strecker, 2002). Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, Álvarez, and Chiu (1999) indicated that the strongest influence on communication and interchange outcomes is a result of situational social identity rather than static social identities. Pérez *et al.* profess:

One’s identity as a member of a defined culture determines the worldview perspective and the symbolic systems used to encode and interpret the world. Culture is the way of thinking or the way of life that is represented

by the symbolic systems shared by members of a group and is socially organized and constructed. This symbolic mode is shared by a community, but also conserved, elaborated, and passed on to succeeding generations that, by virtue of this transmission, continue to maintain the cultural identity and way of life of the group.

Pérez *et al.* further proposed that the sociocultural context, as delineated through an individual's socioeconomic status, religion, family educational history, gender, ethnicity, and sociopolitical status, acts as a conduit in the formation of cultural identity.

Acknowledging the importance of shared ethnic identity between bilingual educators and their students, the existing criticism of foreign-trained teachers, and the dearth of empirical knowledge about U.S. resident *normalistas*, caused two pilot studies by Clark and Flores (2000) and Clark, Flores, and McCoy (2002) to be conducted. These studies focused on examining the ethnic identity and teacher efficacy of *normalistas*. In these studies, the researchers administered Spanish versions of the Who am I (WAI-S) as a measure of self-concept and ethnic identity and the Teacher Self-Efficacy Quiz (TSQ-S) to *normalista* applicants. The researchers found that this group of *normalistas* had a strong national identity and prided themselves in being *mexicanos*. In a previous study with Mexican American, first-generation, ethnic-minority, college-age students, Clark and Flores (2001) noted that these students' self-reported ethnic identity reflected a continuum from Hispanic to Mexican.

Clark and Flores' (2000; Clark et al., 2002) analyses of the *normalistas*' self-conceptualization, as reported on the WAI-S, depicted a positive and healthy well-being. Also noted was that most *normalistas* had both a high positive general teaching efficacy and personal teaching efficacy. Essentially, they felt that they had the capacity to teach students regardless of outside factors and also felt that their ability to teach affected the lives of their students. However, it is important to note that there was a minority of applicants whose general teaching efficacy was determined by external factors, and their lack of confidence resulted in a low personal teaching efficacy. The researchers surmised that these types of individuals are likely to blame their inability to teach on external factors (i.e., the family, community, language variety, socioeconomic status), and, as such, are not likely to be effective teachers.

Because Clark and Flores (2000) wanted to increase the power of their results in the determination of a relationship, if any, between the groups' self-conceptualizations and teacher efficacy, additional *normalista* applicants were interviewed for a subsequent study. In this study, Flores and Clark (2002) employed

MANOVA and found that the “spiritual me” (James, 1920) category, which incorporated the self-conceptualizations of character and moral worth, did indeed have a main effect on both general teaching efficacy and personal teaching efficacy ($p < .01$). These findings are supported by the García and González’ study (2000), where they found that *Project Alianza normalistas* had a high sense of confidence in their ability to teach and viewed the teaching profession as a calling, a *vocación*, a *nací maestra* and a moral commitment.

Normalistas’ Attitudes

A previously mentioned concern is that *normalistas* might have preconceived notions regarding language-minority students’ language variety, bilingualism, and bilingual education. Initial interviews with *normalista* applicants revealed a minority of the applicants did indeed have pervasive attitudes toward the Spanish spoken in the United States (Clark & Flores, 2002). García and González (2000) also reported that *normalistas* did not think U.S. bilingual teachers had a strong command of the Spanish language. Clark and Flores (2002) noted that some of the *normalista* applicants had been against bilingual education because they felt that teachers did not have sufficient fluency in Spanish, were concerned that their children would not learn Spanish correctly, or would learn to speak English with an accent. Principals revealed that foreign-trained teachers working within the U.S. school system are confronted with differing educational philosophies, academic expectations, and parent-involvement expectations (Vallejo & García, 2001). Flores (2001b) reminds us that *normalistas* were not prepared to be bilingual teachers and, as such, they are not likely to understand the rationale behind bilingual education.

In comparing the *normalista* and U.S. teacher-preparation program, Petrovic, Orozco, González, and Díaz de Cossio (1999) suggested that preparation was very similar. Likely, the only additional pedagogy needed would be that of bilingual education. English and test-taking skills should be also emphasized. They state that “we must employ teachers with the cross-cultural communication skills, which includes knowledge of the student’s language and culture as well as knowledge of the myriad cultures in the U.S. whenever possible” (p. 57). Based on previous studies (Clark & Flores, 2001; Clark, Flores, & McCoy, in press; Clark & Flores, 2002), Flores (2001b) countered, and suggested that *normalistas* would also need to have knowledge of the sociopolitical and historical experiences of the language-minority student within the U.S. educational system.

Vallejo and García (2001) report that when school principals considered *normalistas* for employment, they acknowledged the latter’s capacity to deliver content in Spanish. However, the principals also indicated that the *normalistas’* distinct

pedagogical and methodological approaches were an impediment. These principals recommended that *normalistas* receive professional development in the areas of classroom management, special-needs children, and inclusion.

Becoming Effective Bilingual Teachers

Before *Project Alianza*, few studies focused on the abilities of the *normalista* within the U.S. educational system. Hewett-Gómez and Solis (1995) found that the *normalistas* were seen to be an untapped resource along the Texas border. They reported that *normalistas* were recruited to provide, recent immigrant Spanish-speaking children, intensive support for developing literacy skills in their native language. However, in this study, the *normalistas* were not teachers of record. Rather, they were considered “tutors.” Similarly, school principals who had hired *normalistas*, reported hiring them only on an emergency or short-term basis (Vallejo & García, 2001).

Despite *normalistas* and paraprofessionals having had different linguistic and cultural experiences, the studies conducted at a metropolitan university in south Texas demonstrated their competency as knowledgeable cultural teachers of language-minority students (Pérez et al., 2002). Although both groups demonstrated their ability to adapt to the needs of these students, the *normalistas* appeared to be less adaptive than the paraprofessional group. After carefully examining the teaching style and interactions of both groups, Flores, Strecker, and Pérez (in press) surmised that both of these groups serve as fertile ground for potential teachers. These studies showed that their bilingual teacher preparation had provided the teacher candidates with the mediation tools to connect with their students. They further noted that a careful recruitment of potential candidates is critical in determining their commitment to bilingual education. Flores *et al.* also observed that grouping individuals (cohorts) from two different backgrounds, such as *normalista* and paraprofessional, with each possessing a specialized skill to offer the other, served as an excellent method through which pervasive attitudes can be examined and challenged.

Vallejo and García (2001) noted in their study that, although teacher shortages have been predicted and are now evident, there has been little interest on the part of school districts and colleges of education to recruit foreign-trained teachers as either teachers or teacher candidates. Colleges of education cited their inability to develop and implement such a program because of the lack of resources. School districts that had close ties with the colleges of education were not particularly concerned with the recruitment of foreign-trained teachers. For both the colleges of education and the school districts, matriculating and hiring *normalistas* was seen as a cumbersome process and the paperwork involved in

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certifying foreign credentials appeared overwhelming. Building principals were seen as key in the hiring and recruitment process. Vallejo and García recommended that universities streamline and standardize the application and matriculation process.

Currently, Texas has a “fast track” that allows foreign-trained teachers to obtain certification as teachers. These foreign-trained teachers must be U.S. legal residents, demonstrate English proficiency, have an equivalent to a bachelor’s degree, and submit their documents for evaluation to the State Board of Education ([SBEC], (2000). Upon meeting these initial requirements, potential candidates must pass the required state certification tests (ExCET). Although this fast track initially appears to provide an open-door policy for U.S.-resident foreign-trained teachers, Flores (2001b) contended, based on empirical evidence, that it is doubtful that many foreign-trained teachers can meet all of these requirements without some kind of assistance from a teacher-preparation program. SBEC did not maintain data that reveal how many foreign-trained teachers have met these criteria. In the case of the *normalistas* recruited by *Project Alianza* across all universities, the majority were Spanish dominant, with little-to-no English proficiency (García & González, 2000). Flores (2001b) further discussed the difficulty experienced by the *normalistas* in passing the state-mandated college-entrance basic-skills test. She noted that, as the English proficiency of the candidates increased, so did the likelihood of passing the entry test. Flores also demonstrated how difficult passing the state-mandated exit test was for the *normalistas* upon initial entry to the program of study. The *normalistas* were given a pre-test in Spanish, and, out of a group of 48, only one passed. One year later, subsequent pre-tests were administered in English. Only four candidates out of 16 passed the professional exit exam and none, out of 23 candidates, passed the comprehensive exit exam. Flores proposed that the level of *normalistas*’ pedagogical and content knowledge, as well as their English proficiency, would likely influence their performance on teacher exit exams.

In sum, the integration of *normalistas* into a U.S. bilingual-teacher preparation program is a daunting task that should not be entered into without a plan of action. Flores (2001b) used findings from previous empirical studies as a basis for determining the factors that should be considered in recruiting U.S. resident *normalistas* into the bilingual education teacher-preparation program or as potential bilingual teachers. These factors included language dominance, psychosocial factors, such as ethnic identity, biculturalism, teacher efficacy, datedness of pedagogical and content knowledge, degree equivalence and program of study, and support structures. Other factors include financial aid, advising and mentoring, and designing flexible schedules. Research by Molina-Hernández (1997, 1999)

also points to the importance of engaging *normalistas* in critical reflection as they undergo bilingual-teacher preparation. Roberts, Jupp, and Davies (1991) additionally affirmed that critical reflection and discourse analysis are necessary in discerning the sociopolitical context and community standing.

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With this in mind, the driving research questions were found to be:

1. What lessons have been learned from *Project Alianza*?
2. What institutional changes have occurred as a result of the Project?
3. What are the policy implications of the findings regarding IHE's mission, implementation, programming, effectiveness, and role in *Project Alianza*?

DATA-ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

Case-study methodology was employed (Stake, 1995). With the research goals in mind, researchers determined that interviews would be conducted with individuals who could provide differing perspectives on *Project Alianza*. Four interview protocols were designed for each of the *Project Alianza* participant prototypes and can be found in the Appendix for coordinators, pre-service teachers, principals, and in-service teachers. To provide a profile of the pre-service and in-service teachers, a demographic data form was developed to determine the characteristics for each of these groups. This form can also be found in the Appendix. Data from the demographic data forms were entered into a database and were used in describing the Project participants.

The UTSA project director reviewed the initial interview questions and based on the suggestions given, the protocol was subsequently modified by the researchers. Then, via teleconferencing, the interview questions were presented and discussed with the *Project Alianza* consortium, consisting of hub and satellite universities, IDRA, ASU, and the Mexican American Solidarity Foundation. Following the initial interviews at UTSA and subsequent discussion, the interview questions were modified for use in the remainder of the interviews. These interviews allowed for consistency across sites and across interviews. Since the UTSA researchers are affiliated with UTSA's *Project Alianza*, a research assistant was trained to conduct the interviews to minimize interview bias. Two researchers conducted the interviews at the other sites. Since one of the researchers had been involved in the Project during its inception and was personally acquainted with the Project directors, this researcher chose to interview the Project pre-service and in-service teachers to also reduce interviewer bias. All interviews were tape-recorded.

IHE Administrators

The four original IHE sites were visited and administrators were individually interviewed to provide an overview of the Project goals and accomplishments. In some cases, the university upper administration was not available for personal interviews. In those cases, telephone or electronic mail interviews were conducted. At each site, an attempt was made to interview Project coordinators, Project directors, and university administrators. The coordinator at most of the campuses was interviewed face-to-face. In one case, a coordinator was interviewed via

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email. In addition, at three IHE's, the division director, and/or the deans, were also interviewed. The interviews with the university administrators took approximately two hours to conduct. At UTPA, the second researcher interviewed the recently hired coordinator, the previous coordinator, and the initial coordinator, each for a total of two hours.

School Administrators

At each university site, an attempt was made to interview those who had hired graduates. As yet, CSULB has not had any program participants complete their five-year program. In Texas, a total of five principals of elementary schools, where *Project Alianza* graduates have been hired, were interviewed. Two of the principals headed rural schools in central Texas, two more in south Texas, and one principal has a dual-language school located near a housing project in the inner-city section of a major city. All five principals were interviewed regarding the hired Project teachers on their effectiveness, professionalism, and their professional relationships with administrators, teachers, parents, and students. Principals' interviews lasted about one hour and a half. (See Tables 1 or 2 for overview of sites.)

Table 2

***Project Alianza* Pre-service Teacher Focus Group Participants**

Participants by Site	<i>Normalistas</i>	Paraprofessionals	First Generation	Total
CSLB	4	2	4	10
SWTSU				
UTPA	2	1	3	6
UTSA	7	3	2	12
TOTAL	13	6	9	28

Pre-service Participants

Pre-service teacher candidates currently participating in *Project Alianza* were interviewed via focus groups. The interviewer informed each group beforehand as to the purpose of the interview and study. Participants were encouraged to give candid responses and were assured that their responses would remain anonymous. To further assure confidentiality, Project administrators or principals were not present during the interviews. The second researcher interviewed the administrators separately.

At CSULB, the focus group consisted of four *normalistas*, two paraprofessionals, and four first-generation, ethnic-minority college students. This group was in its third year of the five-year program. One of the UTSA's focus groups consisted of *normalistas* only. An additional UTSA focus group was interviewed, consisting of both paraprofessionals and first-generation, ethnic-minority college students. The UTSA *normalistas* or paraprofessionals were completing their final courses and were ready for an internship. The traditional college-age students were planning to begin student teaching the following semester. At UTPA, two different focus groups, consisting of three to four members were interviewed. One group, mostly *normalistas*, was about to complete their program of study. The other group consisted mostly of first-generation, ethnic-minority college students, and was ready to begin student teaching. The focus groups at CSULB and UTSA each had approximately 10 members and took about two hours to interview. Due to a change in Project administration during the study, no pre-service teachers were interviewed at SWT. The other interviews took approximately an hour to complete (see Table 2).

***Alianza* Beginning Teacher**

Project Alianza graduates were interviewed individually, with one exception, where two teachers were interviewed together. The interviews lasted about an hour. At each site, an attempt was made to interview a representative from each of the three groups. Although this was not accomplished, the group interviewed is representative of *Project Alianza*. Approximately half of the interviewees were completing their first year, while the other half was completing their second year of teaching. All of the eight participants were teaching in bilingual education classrooms. Two of the participants—one former paraprofessional and one first-generation, ethnic-minority college student—were teaching in transitional bilingual classrooms in rural schools in central Texas. Three participants were teaching in a two-way bilingual program in an inner-city school located near a housing project. Three were teaching in the southernmost region of the state (often referred to as the “Texas valley”) in newly built schools in a bilingual program for recent immigrants (see Table 3 for entry status and current teaching setting).

Table 3
Entry Status and Current Teaching Setting

	Transitional Bilingual Program Rural School	Two-way Bilingual Program Inner-city School	Federal Program for Recent Immigrants	Total
<i>Normalista</i>		1	3	4
Paraprofessionals	1	1		2
First Generation	1	1	0	2
TOTAL	2 (SWTSU)	3 (UTSA)	3 (UTPA)	8

In the cases of the pre-service and in-service teachers, participants were encouraged to speak freely of their concerns and assured that confidentiality would be maintained. To protect their identity, pseudonyms were used in the manuscript. Most were curious about the nature of the study and if the outcome of the study would determine whether or not the institution would get future funding. They were assured that this was not the major objective of the study but were told that the findings could assist the universities in providing a better program or in seeking additional funding.

Data Analysis

Since the institutions of higher education (IHEs) implemented the *Alianza* projects, it was important to obtain and analyze the perceptions and views of those involved at the administrative level. A total of 11 IHE administrators were interviewed. Administrators were interviewed regarding institutional barriers, special coordination practices, recruitment, attitudes, field experience and placement, changes to existing teacher-training programs, the impact of *Project Alianza* on IHE, technology training, and community awareness.

In examining and analyzing the pre-service teachers' views and perceptions about *Project Alianza*, the institution can determine whether its program goals and objectives are meeting the needs of its students, while fulfilling the goals of the Project. The Project can only be considered successful if those involved actually receive the intended benefits through their participation. Thus, at each site, an attempt was made to hold a focus-group interview of "completing" *Project Alianza* participants. A total of 28 pre-service teachers participated in the focus groups.

Since bilingual teachers are one of the measurable products of the *Alianza* project, it was important to consider their perceptions of the Project now that these former participants are currently teaching. A total of eight beginning teachers participated in the study and their views are analyzed in relation to the institutional goals.

Finally, because schools themselves are the recipients of what each university produces, it was important to include the perceptions and views of school administrators who had hired the *Alianza* graduates. Five principals were interviewed. The analysis of their perceptions is invaluable in determining the degree to which the Project was successful.

The interviews were transcribed, coded, and then examined for emerging themes. During the first phase, one of the researchers examined the pre-service and in-service teacher interviews for commonality. The other researcher examined the IHE Project administration and principal transcripts. Member-checking was employed via telephone or e-mail, whenever a point had to be clarified. These initial themes were then cross-validated across the participants. The cross-validated common themes serve as the basis for the findings, discussion, implications, and recommendations. Document analysis of Project reports that had been submitted for evaluation purposes was also made to corroborate with the themes and findings. The triangulation of the data, member-checking, peer-review, and document analysis, helped assure trustworthiness of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

To understand the findings, data reporting was collapsed from the different contexts and analyzed according to the following broad themes:

1. Mission and goals of the university teacher-preparation program and *Project Alianza*;
2. Implementation of Project components;
3. Programming, curricular, and instructional issues;
4. Effectiveness of teacher-preparation program; and
5. Reconceptualization of the role of the IHE in the teacher-preparation program.

PROJECT ALIANZA FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Introduction

Since the institutions of higher education (IHEs) implemented the *Alianza* projects, it was felt important to obtain the perceptions and views of those involved at every level of Project implementation. The perspectives were gathered through interviews with those involved with the Project, at administrative levels of the member universities, school principals, and pre-service and in-service teachers. Researchers sought answers to such questions as what was successful and why, what light the Project shed on existing policies, and these policies' contribution to facilitating or impeding the credentialing of bilingual teachers and their eventual placement in classrooms.

To understand the findings, data reporting has been collapsed from the different contexts of IHEs, students, graduates, and the field. Findings were analyzed from the following components: the mission and goals of the university teacher-training program and *Project Alianza*; Project components; programming, curricular, and instructional issues; the effectiveness of the teacher-preparation program; and the reconceptualization of the IHE in the teacher-preparation program.

Mission and Goals of the IHE and *Project Alianza*

Each of the IHE's bilingual education teacher-training programs have, as their primary goal, the preparation of teachers who will best meet the needs of language-minority students. As is seen by most teacher-training institutions throughout the nation, it is becoming more difficult to meet the demand for teachers of language-minority students. As one dean states: "The current teacher and (nursing) shortage provides a ready rationale for aggressively [identifying and] developing human capital in this country. . . [and to] create adaptive mechanisms to develop and credential that potential."

Another dean states similarly, "There is a way to address the extreme shortage of bilingual teachers: the foreign-trained teacher. . . . *Project Alianza* arrived at the right time . . . as the goals of [the Project] were congruent with the universities' teacher-training program goals."

Implementation of Project Components

Recruitment

Recruitment efforts made by the IHEs reflect a variety of approaches that utilized media in different formats, the community, as well as the schools and school district. One university's recruitment approach was:

. . . through the consul's office where he put us in touch with the *clubs*, the *oriundo*. *Oriundos* are the native state clubs from Mexico, so that there is a club for Jalisco, and a club for Nuevo León and a club for Coahuila. They have *aviscosos* in charge of all these clubs and they call them to a special meeting and they presented the project and, out of that, word of mouth took care of it. We didn't have to do a lot of the recruitment that we sometimes do on other projects.

One IHE followed this route:

Because of the bi-national nature of the Project, we knew that the consul's office had offered to be of assistance. In the first *Alianza* project. . . it was the consul. . . who was the center of all the coordination . . . followed by word-of-mouth, a newspaper article in the *LA Opinion* that was picked up nationally, and then a story via Spanish TV. . . . There [was also] a local group. . . the Center for International Education, that also became a vehicle for recruitment.

Following is a listing of the different approaches used by the different IHEs to recruit for the Program:

1. Brochures were sent to different schools and organizations, county offices, the California Association for Bilingual Education.
2. Flyers were sent to community agencies.
3. Ads were run in community newspapers such as *La Opinion*, *La Prensa*, and other local Spanish-language newspapers.
4. Word-of-mouth, i.e., students in the Project, talked about the program with other individuals.
5. Programs or news clips were run on national and local TV and radio stations.
6. Announcements were made at local schools and school districts either through fliers, inserts in paychecks, or at faculty and staff meetings.

7. Traditional students were recruited from recent applicants to the program or students already admitted to teacher-preparation program.
8. Paraprofessionals were recruited and recommended by local school districts.
9. Electronic communications, such as e-mails, etc., also assisted in disseminating information about *Project Alianza*.

The IHE's efforts, just through simple word-of-mouth, were successful in recruiting. Some students had learned about the Project when seeking advisement, others were informed by the school districts. Friends or family members provided information, and others simply chose the university program because of its reputation. The following excerpts give us a glimpse of a student's positive experiences. Cecilia, a first-generation, ethnic-minority UTPA student recalls how she learned of the Project:

I wanted to change my major to Spanish because I [wanted] to become a teacher. But I was informed that Spanish was not going to be enough for me to teach . . . plus it didn't give [sufficient] background. . . such as to know how to associate with the children . . . The dean discussed the program with me and . . . the interdisciplinary studies, plus the bilingual component . . . [caused me] to sign up.

A *normalista* working as a paraprofessional discusses her fortune in finding her way to the Project:

Afortunadamente, por parte de mi distrito me di cuenta de que existía este programa, lo cual me alegró bastante. Sabía que había pocas posibilidades porque había muchos aplicantes, pero afortunadamente me aceptaron; llené el criterio que era necesario para esto, y estoy muy contenta de estar en el proyecto, . . . y me siento muy contenta de estar en las clases en la universidad. Estoy aprendiendo bastante, y yo sé que aunque me estén haciendo comenzar de nuevo, casi desde el principio, es como updating my skills, y yo me siento muy bien, me gusta mucho.

(Luckily, because of my district I realized that this program existed, and I am glad about that. I knew that there were few possibilities because there were many applicants, but luckily they accepted me. I fulfilled the necessary criterion; I am very happy to be in the project, and I feel very happy to be in classes at the university. I am learning enough, and I know that although they are making me begin again, almost from the beginning; it is itself like updating my skills, and I feel very good about that; I like it a lot.)

Another traditional student from CSULB remarks that she chose the program because of the University's strong reputation:

I want this because it has one of the best teaching programs in the central California area . . . [if] I am able to . . . get accepted into the Program . . . I believe that it will help me achieve my goals that much quicker . . . because of [aspects like] the group support, the ability to learn another language and, of course, to go on into the field of bilingual education; I think [it] is very important.

Admissions

Likely the biggest obstacle for most projects was the admission of the *normalistas* into university teacher-training programs. Many of the admission barriers dealt with a combination of elements such as state entry tests, foreign credentials, language assessment, and definitions of foreign students. Most IHEs have well-established methods and policies for dealing with foreign students, but not for U.S. residents with foreign credentials. Applicants to *Project Alianza* cannot be viewed or classified either as foreign students or as international students simply because of their former educational experiences. For many IHEs, admissions were a challenge: some *normalistas* came with an equivalent degree to a BA, others brought different types or levels of teacher preparation. One director notes:

The major barrier was the lack of procedures that allow someone who has completed their higher education in another country to attend UTSA. This includes things such as transcripts, which we would not accept if they were not translated first. The translation of transcripts was not only a large expense for students but it also . . . took time, and that discouraged people from applying to the university.

Another director reflects:

Major barriers . . . probably had to do with reading and interpreting the *normalistas'* transcripts to ensure that they received proper credit for courses already taken. At the beginning of the Project, this was a major challenge. However, as we learned more about the Mexican school system and their teacher-preparation program, it became easier to handle.

Another Project director recalls evaluating and creating an equivalency to the U.S. system for credentialing posed additional barriers.

A Program coordinator recollects an incident that occurred when a *normalista* had applied to the university before *Project Alianza*. Essentially the university posture was that they did not accept the "normal school" foreign credentials. The admissions advisor's suggestion was that the *normalista* take the GED (a high

school equivalency exam) and apply to the local community college to begin a degree program. Disillusioned, she walked away and did not pursue higher education until she heard about *Project Alianza*. Two years later, her foreign credentials, equivalent to a bachelor's degree, were accepted when she applied to the Project. The program coordinator recounts similar incidents happening to others: "You have to wonder how many *normalistas*, *licenciadas*, the university has turned away over the years."

Once *Project Alianza* was implemented, a *normalista* expressed the following viewpoint on the current admission process: "*Porque aquí no tuvimos que pasar admisión, no hay exámenes de admisión, no ha sido sino hasta más tarde que nos dan, han dado el cierre para poder llenar esos requisitos, mientras que el estudiante tradicional tiene que ser regido por muchas reglas.*" (Because here we did not have to pass admission [exams], there are no entrance examinations, it wasn't until later that they gave them to us, they gave us until the end to fill those requirements, while the traditional student was governed by many rules.)

State-Mandated Entry-Level Tests

One of the more serious concerns for the universities was that the state-mandated, entry-level tests were going to be an obstacle for the *normalista* applicants. Some of the IHEs went through the process of obtaining temporary waivers for the entry tests. Although in most institutions, some type of waiver had been arranged for state-mandated entry tests, completion of these tests remained a major concern of *normalistas*.

Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP)

UTSA's *normalistas* identified the TASP writing segment as their biggest barrier. Of the eight participants, half had passed the test. Two of the remaining four passed the test later in the semester. Certain students suggested that "speaking" presented a greater difficulty for them. Some noted that they had not taken risks when speaking in English until this past semester, their last in the program. Their concern was that their inability to pass all the TASP was inducing them to take further coursework until they completed this requirement. At CSULB, the *normalistas* were also concerned with California's CBEST. However, clearly indicated in the interviews was that they see the entry tests as a temporary barrier and not one that would stop them from pursuing their goals. Hilda, a *normalista* from UTSA, captures the notion of effort required of *normalistas* best:

. . . When we get into the Program, we do not have that high an English level. . . . For us, it was like a *milagro*—*un milagro* to be in this program . . . [As] for me, I work hard . . . because I have kids and . . . I do not see any barrier because I know someday that I am going to finish. For me it is not [a] barrier, even though I [did not pass] the TASP.

It is also important to note that on her subsequent try, Hilda passed the writing portion of the TASP, allowing her to complete her last nine hours. She will graduate in the spring. Because of the difficulties faced by the students, one of the universities felt it had been too lenient with the state entry-test requirements and needed to revisit the issue. In subsequent semesters, the admission process was "tightened up" as indicates a Project coordinator:

Initially . . . we had been having concerns about our *Project Alianza* students, *normalistas*, getting into the university because of the TASP. . . it had, with the first cohort, been a little bit more lenient about letting them in . . .

The Project coordinator continues:

[Later], when I came on board and I was recruiting the second and then . . . the third cohort . . . the university was much more stringent . . . almost, but not quite as much as for the regular admissions . . . I think the pendulum had kinda swung a little too far. They realized . . . what the students were going through, that the English proficiency was an issue. . . [and] students weren't taking the TASP. I think they let them in conditionally . . . they would take and retake the TASP [until] they were almost juniors and almost seniors and . . . they still couldn't pass those TASPs. . . . [The University] allowed me to make a decision when TASP was first taken, look at the scores and say, 'okay, if we work with this person say half a semester, another two months, another possible three months, then ask the student to retake it as soon as possible thereafter.' If I felt the student would be able to succeed the second time around, then he or she would be admitted conditionally. . . The TASP isn't going away . . . [and] that was one of the barriers.

Other Texas Project directors agree that overcoming the TASP proved to be the most obvious institutional impediment.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

In addition to the TASP, students who are *normalistas* had to take an English placement test. The different universities dealt with the test differently; some waived it for a time and others did not. UTSA's project staff used the Michigan Test to determine the *normalistas'* English proficiency and placement. They determined that the TOEFL should not be required because *normalistas* are legal U.S. residents and do not have foreign status. When UTSA staff notified the other IHEs that the TOEFL was not to be used as an admission requirement, they convinced other satellite universities to do likewise. UTSA's Project staff used the *normalistas'* resident status to define the admission status, thus sidestepping the prospect that the TOEFL could be used as a high-stakes barrier for

their *normalistas*. Instead, the Michigan Test helped determine the *normalistas*' needs in relation to second-language development. SWT was also successful in getting the TOEFL waived. As to the other universities:

. . . The other issue was the TOEFL. . . It was a university requirement that students must score 500 or higher if they're considered foreign students. . . Some students didn't quite score that . . . we asked the registrar to allow us to admit the group even though some of . . . [them] scored a 370/380. That's why we decided to use the dual-language mode—it was designed to build fluency in English since lower TOEFL scores predict greater struggle with English content.

Programming

Staffing

Different IHEs had different structures for the Project; some had staff plus a coordinator; others did not. Some tried to implement the Project with existing staff, others used Title VII project staff. During this period, federal guidelines encouraged collaboration between projects to build capacity for teacher-training programs. The collaboration helped, but increased the duties of the Title VII staff.

Nevertheless, creative solutions to these problems still required time. Directors and deans spoke of the differences in staff. When a program did not have sufficient staff, there was considerable hardship on the faculty. Several Project personnel commented that the Project did not allocate funding for staff. The amount of energy and time commitment taken by the Project is expressed in the following remark by a project coordinator:

I teach here since 8:00 o'clock in the morning. . . Usually I have to stay at night because our *Project Alianza* students take their courses at night and they need someone to be here to counsel them in these required courses. They need . . . [guidance and] we need somebody at night to . . . train them in our dual-language model.

Directors of programs expressed similar concerns regarding the Project's structure.:

I don't think we were given any release time . . . We're short on faculty and so we [all] taught full loads. Leo taught full loads, Mary taught full loads, I taught full loads and, typically, we were given a stipend on top of it. Four [classes are a full load and at varying levels and mixes, graduate vs. undergraduate].

Other viewpoints regarding support staff:

Maybe another challenge was the lack of support staff. . . . Again, *Project Alianza* didn't have a secretary. We have wonderful departmental secretaries, but they work with about 30, 40 of us and it'd be like, 'I need like this immediately please,' and they say, 'sure,' and you know they'd get to it when they could, *bien lindas* . . . I couldn't give her *Project Alianza* stuff, she's not funded that way. And so that was an issue.

Another Project director reflects on the lack of staff: ". . . There needs to be [a] secretary or someone to help out . . . like when we were going to TABE. Right now, it's pretty busy." Most others agree with the need for full-time help."

Faculty

One of the major differences in Project programs was the faculty assigned to teach in the different university programs. Two of the four universities hired non-tenure-track faculty to teach the cohorts. In most cases, they were school district personnel who usually possessed a master's degree and who could speak Spanish. CSULB also hired Mexican professors to teach the courses. In the case of each of these universities, Project students had little to no contact with regular tenure-track faculty.

In a discussion regarding the adjunct faculty specifically hired to teach *Project Alianza* cohorts, a director laments:

We had to kind of remind [the faculty brought in] what the whole model is. . . . Sometimes we also have difficulty finding staff that has [sufficient] training because, in south Texas, a lot of our schools are still following the transitional model of teaching. . . . *Project Alianza* . . . [faculty] pretty much are teachers that have a master's or they're coordinators, bilingual coordinators from the school districts here in the valley.

Interestingly, one project coordinator worked with the regular tenure-track faculty to sensitize them to the special needs of *Project Alianza*:

I . . . contacted each of the professors and told them who and what the *Project Alianza* initiative was . . . that they were second-language learners, but . . . were considered professionals in their own country . . . I also provided for supplementing instruction each semester, and coordinated with Tomás Rivera for support in college algebra and other courses.

A director discusses the special coordination efforts that took place with other faculty and other departments:

Faculty who had our students in their classes were informed about the goals of the program and about the students' academic and professional background. I also had faculty members who approached me about strategies they should utilize to better meet the needs of our students. A strong relationship was also established with the ESL and International Students' Office. After a *normalista* was interviewed, he/she was tested by the ESL/International Students' Department to assess English skills. Appropriate ESL classes were then identified for each new participant, and, [at semester's end, progress assessment] of each student. This office also provided valuable assistance as students transitioned to regular university courses.

Program models

Each university has different program models, but the majority is based on their own existing bilingual education teacher-preparation program. UTSA has a 24-hour bilingual education specialization that was integrated with the regular IDS (interdisciplinary studies) program. SWT followed similarly and, for the first time, was able to offer teacher-preparation courses during the evening, since most participants work during daytime hours.

A coordinator described a different approach used in their program, a dual-language model similar to that used by *Project Alianza* in elementary schools. The approach utilized dominant speakers in both English and Spanish, with teaching done accordingly for each group. The aim was for monolingual or non-proficient speakers to develop the second language. A dean credited Dr. Leo Gomez with the model's first-year efficacy.

A director offers observations on a different model:

The difference between the *Project Alianza* classes and the regular day program is that, in the evening program, we try to follow the 50/50 model, in which some days are supposed to be instructed in English and in some days they're supposed to be instructed in Spanish.

At all universities the inclusion of *normalistas* meant, in essence, traveling through uncharted territory. "We were learning about them and our perceptions about them were verified, but sometimes modified." Another director's concerns are typical:

All of us were a little leery going [in]. . . The *normalistas*, as well as the regular students that were part of the Project, were coming in at the junior level. . . . The evening route, as ya'll know . . . is five semesters. Well, in two, a little over two and a half years, they'd have to be ready to take that EXCET totally in English. We found them to be very intelligent, very capable, [but] unfortunately for most of the groups . . . that's just not enough time.

All of the *normalistas* believe that their program of study required excessive coursework. They contend that the only support they need is in obtaining and mastering English competency in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension. Although they realize that they had learned a great deal, they feel that the requirement of having to take core courses like geology or history is rather redundant. These types of remarks are typical of the Texas *normalistas* who were pursuing a degree program in lieu of a post-baccalaureate program, and from the CSULB *normalistas*, because the University had not accepted their prior course work into their program of study.

Most did not see the need for all the coursework [core curriculum] required. Even Brenda, who sees the value of core courses but also, sees a need for change, states:

I don't really think we ought to change the system. . . because the four [undergraduate] years . . . is really a necessary part. . . . It forms character . . . it forms the discipline that you need when you go out into the field. The classes you choose also help you to explore in [so many] ways. I think is a very necessary step. . . . I do agree that it should be more like school in Mexico where, you then go to a teaching school. . . . [There] you are taught all the principles . . . such as how to feel comfortable in front of a classroom, how to bring your subjects into the classroom for the children, the best methods of presentation. . . .

Brenda offers further valuable insights into needing a collaborative partnership with schools:

. . . I would like to [be aligned with] . . . an elementary school . . . where the teachers can go and teach for the first year. . . . From there, they can . . . apply or take a test or, whatever they need for evaluation. They can

then apply for a job outside of the school that they working with. Those children who are in that school . . . will get the benefit of young or new and vigorous teacher along with [that from] a seasoned teacher. . . . The teacher will have to intentionally not treat the student teacher as an aide, but allow her to develop and learn exactly how to run a classroom; that goes for lesson planning, to the administrative parts involved with the record keeping, and all of the politics associated with the school . . . [such as] meetings with the principal, with the parents. . . This is going to be the basis of what you are going to do once you get your own classroom, based on one year of student teaching.

Essentially, pre-service teachers are saying that the teacher-preparation program should focus more on teaching methodology and strategies and less on courses not pertinent to their careers as teachers. Also evident is that some *normalistas* and paraprofessionals believe their programs of study were not really meeting their pedagogical needs and failed to recognize the knowledge and practical experience that they bring:

. . . si usted examina los portafolios de todas, la mayoría ya ejercitaron esta carrera en su país. Entonces tendrían que hacer e revisar el plan que se le esta otorgando a la joven, que ya necesita desarrollarse más en comparación al adulto que ya esta profesional, ya tiene experiencia en como nosotros podemos hacer llevarlas a un plan mas rápido, para que no se sienta desesperadas, porque uno dice, esto ya lo vi, esto ya lo vi, ya estamos mas formadas, no solamente por los años de edad, experiencia, sino por la profesión que se ha tenido.

(. . . if you examine everyone's portfolio, the majority were already practicing teachers in their country. They [the university] would have revise the curriculum that is stipulated for a younger person, who needs to development him- or herself more compared to the adult, who is already a professional, already experienced and can progress through the curriculum more quickly, and so that they [young students] do not get desperate, because someone says, "I already saw this." We are already more professionally developed, not only by age and [life] experience, but also through the profession that we have had [in another country].)

After switching into English, she continues:

Hey! They already have . . . their primary language knowledge; they're not coming here empty. Actually, nobody comes empty. We all bring knowledge. So, build on that knowledge but, a little bit different . . . [from] the traditional. . . . When they did the recruiting for this group,

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they were asking for professional minorities who have not been able to do their jobs here because they don't have proper credentials. So, give us the "nitty gritty" that we really need to just get . . . competent in English and then put it [in]to practice. That's one of the changes that I would like to see. Something faster.

Project participants

Unique to *Project Alianza's* approach is that it brought together three distinct cohorts that included *normalistas*, paraprofessionals, and first-generation college students. The following are observations made by university administrators, directors, or Project coordinators regarding the different cohorts. Their comments dealt with the differences they see among the *normalista* group, the paraprofessionals; and the first generation college students:

We had multiple perspectives; the *normalistas*, who had a lot of knowledge in pedagogy, and the paraprofessionals, who would question approaches based on their experiences as classroom aides, and then the novice student, who, at times, offered what they knew based on their own (Pre-K–5th) schooling experiences in bilingual education classrooms.

At one university, the cohorts were separated not only because of funding sources, but also because of their distinct needs: "We kept *Alianza* largely for the *normalistas* and had another project, ESCALA, that was more oriented towards paraprofessionals."

A university director recounts the challenges faced by the participants:

Sometimes we needed to remind the students, they're in it together. They would separate . . . into . . . *normalistas* and into . . . regular students. . . . There would be a couple in every cohort who would feel, if I were a *normalista*, why would Belinda, being a regular student . . . want to present with me when we're presenting in English and Dalinda is more Spanish dominant? Secondly, if you know who has difficulty or is anxious about presenting in English, and if it's going to affect my grade, why should I be presenting with a *normalista*? That's another thing: I guess the regular students, being born and raised here in the valley and educated here, regardless of what their first language was, have gone through the school system that focuses on English. The *normalistas* would correct their Spanish, actually, they would correct mine, too. They correct all the professors. But, a lot of the students would say that they felt [the] *normalistas* were kind of throwing [the corrections] in their face[s] and, of course, they would throw the English [right]. We may not have always seen it clearly in the classrooms, but I know we often saw it to a degree.

Following is a director's observation about *normalistas*:

The *normalistas* are hard workers. To them, it is a blessing that we have *Project Alianza* because, when you go to Mexico and you get an education, nothing is for free. To them, it's like, 'What? You're even going to pay for our books? So they take full advantage of it. I think it's a good program for our students.

Project personnel made observations regarding the paraprofessionals and the first generation, referred to here as the traditional students: "... the ones that are paraprofessionals, of course ... keep on mentioning that they are just very lucky that we have this program with both groups... . . . Everybody is a hard worker."

Another Project director confirms:

The students were very different, the *normalistas* . . . more so than the regular students. They were very sociable. It's not that our regular students aren't. I think our regular students feel that if they are going to drop in, they have to have a question . . . or a concern, regarding some type of assignment. Then *normalistas* would come in just to come in, and sit down and ask 'how are you doing?' during the discussion or conversation we'd be having. We'd determine if there is a problem, academic, financial, or personal, etc., issues that were going on in their lives. Again, most of the time, that wasn't the reason why they came in.

The *normalistas* navigated the system by capitalizing on their cultural practices:

We thought it was culturally motivated [aggression] in a personal sense rather than just in the classroom. They would constantly be bringing us little *cariñitos*. . . . They'd see us here for a minute and they'd say, 'oh, do you got a minute?' and we'd say, 'okay,' and they'd come in and they'd sit down.

School principals also discuss the differences within the participants and other students:

They have a very good idea as to what they need to do with these kids right away. I think they blend . . . very well with what we do. They've been able to understand our curriculum and our level of instruction . . . how we do instruction here and how we provide staff development. I think that's been the key. The staff development that we've given them has been able to help them adjust with the rest of the staff on how they need to teach these students.

Another principal from south Texas had this to say about a *normalista*, hired for an early childhood bilingual classroom:

It's early childhood . . . in her case, what she taught in Mexico about early childhood and kinder students . . . pre-kinder in Mexico is not very different than what is done here. Topics such as penmanship, phonics, reading, the alphabet, numbers, shapes; it's not very much different from what she was doing in Mexico. . . . It's basically the same [here], but she's doing it in Spanish. In fact, she's given us ideas in some things that they did in Mexico in her school that we can implement here with our students, such as penmanship.

A principal reflects on a *Project Alianza* teacher recently hired for their school:

Basically, the bilingual classroom here in kinder is, in a lot of ways, the same as the way she taught it in Mexico: learning the basics of phonics, letters, decoding, numbers and shapes. So really the instruction is not very different. . . . One of the things that Ms. García has mentioned is that we have a lot more supplies . . . materials, and resources that she can use. So she's excited about having all these other resources available.

A principal, reflecting on the differences, sums up a general feeling:

Ms. Barrera, as well as Ms. García, had teaching experience in Mexico. They were certified teachers there. . . . They came in with a lot of credentials and a lot of qualities. They could relate to my kids. . . . who are recent immigrants. So I felt that they were perfect candidates to help make a smooth transition for the immigrant students coming from Mexico. . . . That teacher could relate to them a lot better and could identify with them better because they know the kids' background and where they're coming from and the level of education they had in Mexico.

A principal from a dual-language school in an urban city had the opportunity to hire Project participants from each cohort. She remarks, "I've hired several of the university's students before, but these last three are just great, so well prepared." She feels very fortunate to have them on her staff. "All three have great command of Spanish and know how to just step in and pick up and go."

Curricular and Instructional Considerations

At the core of the urgencies of staffing and licensing requirements and a central educational policy issue for IHEs are curricular and instructional considerations in bilingual-teacher education. Curricular considerations describe changes or modifications that occurred in terms of what content was taught; instructional considerations describe changes or modifications as to how content was taught

at the onset of the Project. Evident from the analysis of interview data and from document analysis, unique curricular and instructional considerations included (a) language issues, (b) cultural issues, (c) cohort configuration, (d) heterogeneous cooperative grouping, and (e) field experiences.

Language issues

One of the key characteristics that distinguishes *Project Alianza* from other bilingual-teacher-preparation programs is that language dominance, language acquisition, language distribution, and literacy, must be considered in the planning of coursework (curriculum) for the Project's participants. On the one hand, there are the *normalistas*, who are Spanish-dominant and have little English skills; on the other hand, we have the paraprofessionals and first-generation college student cohorts, whose bilingualism ranges along the bilingual continuum (Hornberger, 1989; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000). Exploring the English continuum, the paraprofessional and first-generation cohorts' language proficiency ranges within the advanced levels of English proficiency and literacy. Their Spanish proficiency and literacy ranges from the basic interpersonal skills level to cognitive academic-language proficiency. For most of the paraprofessionals and first generation students, Spanish was their first language before entering formal schooling. Interestingly, first-generation college students, who were afforded bilingual education during their schooling, demonstrated higher levels of Spanish. *Normalistas*, for the most part, are beginners, or beginning intermediate speakers of English. They could be classified as having beginning basic interpersonal skills in English and having a full repertoire of cognitive academic-language proficiency and literacy in Spanish. Thus, each cohort has very specific individual language-development needs. In general, the different universities approached the teaching of English for the *normalistas* in different ways. At two universities, language seminars were held to assist the development of the less-dominant language. However, as indicated by university officials, one of the barriers that *normalistas* faced is a lack of English proficiency.

Other universities also had formal language institutes to help the *normalistas* acquire English namely, through English as a Second Language (ESL) methodology. As one director notes:

The first thing was the ESL training, because it was clear that, unless we were going to screen out those that didn't have English proficiency . . . we needed . . . to provide some type . . . [of] intensive English experience to bring them to a level where they could begin to engage in higher ed[ucation] in English. The second area . . . is coordinat[ing] with academic departments . . . so they could understand that we had students who had particular needs and that the Project was a high priority for the university.

. . . It required . . . them to work with us [because]we're working with students who will need to have an adequate level of proficiency at the end of the process. . . . They need to be allowed to continue their education while they're getting their proficiency.

Another university approaches the development of English in a different manner: "We hired a tutor to do ESL, language development with them, to try to accelerate their English development."

Despite curricular changes, evident in the participants' responses, is the need for greater language support. In the case of UTSA and CSULB, the *normalistas* were concerned with their second-language proficiency, especially their inability to clearly express their thoughts in English. They wanted to feel more competent with their communication and felt that, at times, they regressed. These feelings are not unusual for adult second-language learners. Martina, a *normalista* from Long Beach, reflects:

Y mi primera barrera es la pronunciación, porque ahora que estoy haciendo mi servicio social . . . siento que algunas palabras, cuando yo digo una palabra y no sé como se va a pronunciar, le digo al niño como dices aquí; y entonces cuando el niño la repite, pues yo repito atrás de él . . . es tal vez una manera de protegerme, verdad? Pero aprendo al mismo tiempo. Creo que es una barrera grande, y estoy trabajando en eso.

(And my first barrier is the pronunciation because now that I am doing my internship . . . I sense that some words, when I say a word and I don't know how it is pronounced, I tell the child how you say it, and then, when the child repeats it, I repeat after him . . . it is perhaps a way I protect myself, right? But I learn at the same time. I think that it is a large barrier, and I am working on that.)

On the other hand, some native-born participants at CSULB and UTPA were concerned with their Spanish proficiency. As Brenda, a first-generation, ethnic-minority student from Long Beach expresses:

I have a completely opposite problem . . . it's in reverse. I am currently studying [Spanish] . . . but I'm not proficient in it; so, obviously, I'm having the same [but inverse] problem to theirs [*normalistas*]. Other than that, I'm pretty comfortable in the classroom.

Unfortunately, most of the universities did not employ other strategies beyond what they have always done to assist first-generation and paraprofessionals develop their Spanish cognitive-language proficiency.

As one of the coordinators comments: “As far as development of Spanish skills among students who were not that proficient in Spanish, we really didn’t engage in that as others [might] have . . . at some of the other universities.”

In examining the first-year teachers’ interviews, the novice teachers express the importance of having professors who prepared them by incorporating Spanish while using *realia*, or hands-on experiences:

Dr. Ramos would come in and make it fun and bring materials. . . . It was hands on, and we had to create lesson plans . . . she’d ask questions. . . . She really got us involved . . . I think that’s where I learned. She’s actually the one that gave me the little vocabulary I came into the classroom knowing, (other than what I researched on my own). She’s been wonderful. I think the program is an excellent program . . . I was fortunate!

One university pairs *Project Alianza* participants, based on their language dominance. Thus, a native-born teacher candidate was paired with a *normalista*. The coordinator reflects on their goal and outcome for the native born:

Since our goal was for them to learn Spanish . . . and most . . . were . . . born and raised here in the valley. Yeah, of course their English . . . was strong. Their Spanish was typically at the conversational-Spanish level. They worked on trying to develop the academic Spanish, and they did . . . improve, because . . . they would hear the *normalistas* talk about philosophies and theories and then present. . . . So academically . . . their Spanish did improve.

She further notes the less-than-positive impact of this dual-language model on the *normalistas*, who are “going back to the dual-language [model] . . . because . . . we didn’t give them [normalistas, the necessary] three or four years to develop that English sufficiently.”

One university director reflects:

Because their Spanish is . . . so advanced, they understand a lot of concepts. It’s the transition between the Spanish and turning it into the English. You could be speaking to them in English and they say, ‘oh, okay, yes, hmm,’ and they understand everything. But, I guess once you put it on paper, it’s like, ‘what do I do now?’ They just need a little bit of help. They’re getting there.

Another coordinator considers what changes could be made for their participants:

Give them [*normalistas*] the opportunity to have . . . ESL seminars. Those language institutes, if we would've had more time, could've been something. We could've done more for our regular students, like SSL. But, bring them in before[hand], do a lot more intensive language development, and then pair them up with the regular students so that they could then begin the teacher-preparation program.

Cultural issues

Evident is that pre-service native-born teachers had different experiences from the foreign-born in terms of cultural practices. One coordinator remembers that the *normalistas* seemed appalled with the literary works of Sandra Cisneros and the code-switching that occurred in other Chicano literary works. University Project officials discussed special efforts that were coordinated because of these differences: "Really, the only one that we worked with was in the Chicano literature class, to be sure that this was something that could help *normalistas* understand the viability of a U.S.-based *mexicano* culture."

Another director reflects on the experiences faced by the group of first-generation students on a trip to Mexico:

They were so clearly U.S.-born, and had a U.S. perspective on many things! It was definitely a cultural experience, culture shock, really. It was a very powerful experience for them and not . . . easy either. . . . They had to address their own issues, even though it was a short period of time . . . Out of this . . . we see the potential for expanding.

Clark and Flores (1997) reaffirm the importance and positive outcomes of having field experiences on both sides of the border, especially for examining the micro and macro aspects of the learning environment.

Cohort Configuration

Another curricular consideration implemented was the use of cohorts. Cohorts were configured to provide Project participants a support system and allow the Project to deliver coursework efficaciously. A director comments on the benefits of placing Project participants in cohorts:

They worked real well together and I think it was that cohort. It wasn't that they just went through the program, they went through together. . . . We all had the same impression, that the students definitely pulled each other through the program. As if all of us had gotten through something, as a cohort. . . . There are times when someone feels like they just can't

handle . . . [the Project] because of personal reasons, or financial, or maybe even academic and, yet, that's what the students kept on telling us, is that . . . [the greatest] asset to being in the Project is that it was a cohort. They started together and, hopefully, they are going to finish together.

Project Alianza participants see the cohort as a support group. They are not just taking classes on their own, but rather, have others in the group who are like them and with whom they can identify. The cohort is like a family that provides support and encouragement in times of stress, or when individuals question themselves about their ability. Brenda, a traditional-route student states:

The support group that Laura mentioned is very important and sometimes you just don't have that because you're busy—going to school, working full time, raising your children, taking care of your home—you never think that what you have to do becomes overwhelming at times. Sometimes you just push it to the limit, give it all it's worth, Then you have to re-assess. For me, this group came just in . . . the nick of time, I was re-assessing 'Am I going to finish?' but, after hearing what everybody said, and one of the ladies here said that "Motivation is the key" and I believe that. This is quite a motivating group.

Project Alianza is also seen as a conduit for dispelling myths and stereotypes about each group. Mirasol, a traditional-route student from Long Beach, captures this notion best:

El Proyecto Alianza por eso trabaja, porque hablamos entre nosotros. Gloria (the project coordinator) habla con nosotros, y yo estoy hablando, ustedes, todos estamos hablando, pero si nadie habla, entonces la comunicación no existe, entonces cuando no existe la comunicación, hay problemas.

(*Project Alianza* works, because we speak among ourselves. Gloria [the project coordinator] speaks with us, and I am talking, you are, we all are talking, but if no one speaks, then communication does not exist, and when communication does not exist, there are problems.)

Like the pre-service teachers, novice teachers mentioned the interactive experience of having *normalistas* and paraprofessionals as being mutually beneficial. Ruth, a first-generation teacher, describes the experience:

I definitely believe it. I think that the Project was something that was beneficial. Dr. Ramos did a wonderful job with Dr. McKillig. She invited us to go to different workshops and different seminars, so that was a[n] . . . opportunity, that . . . just invaluable . . . There was a lot of camaraderie and I regret not being able to keep in touch with a lot of them.

Heterogeneous Cooperative Groups

The interactive experience of including *normalistas*, paraprofessionals, and first-generation ethnic-minority students in cooperative groups is mentioned by the professors as being beneficial, that is, students can learn from one another. A director reflects:

The heterogeneous grouping was designed to get *normalistas* into diverse group settings, and we did a lot of work through those groups. Much of the content would be developed through group work. . . . Each group would include, say, a *normalista* and a paraprofessional. . . . These are mixed classes, so I would intentionally make heterogeneous groups out of what we had. . . . Each group would have a high Spanish proficiency, or a *normalista* or two *normalistas*, but they'd be spread all around in all the groups.

The rationale and proficiency for working in groups is voiced by another director:

That's part of it, to work with others who have different view points. But part of it is so they can hear each other's Spanish proficiencies and learn from each other in terms of Spanish and English. And part of it is so that they can . . . deal with different perspectives and . . . challenge each other's perspectives.

Having clearly defined cohorts and recognizing their needs allows those involved in the program to make curricular and instructional decisions to maximize the learning experience. Likewise, Ruth, a third-grade bilingual teacher, sees the benefits of the interaction between the groups, noting the paraprofessional's experience as especially valuable: "Having these different people in college, where there's different people, also helps you grow."

Field Experiences

All of the *Project Alianza* universities engage the participants in field experiences. Some of the field experiences are coordinated with a specific class requirement, others are simply required by the Project. One coordinator, citing the importance of field experience in preparing pre-service bilingual teachers:

In the case of the *normalistas*, although they had taught in their home countries, we felt that the field experience would allow them to become acquainted with the U.S. educational system and the role of the bilingual teacher. In the case of the paraprofessionals, even though they had had experience within the classroom, we wanted to broaden their experiences by sending them to other schools, other classrooms.

Nevertheless, as revealed in both pre-service and in-service *Project Alianza* participants' interviews, all felt that they could have been engaged in more field experiences. This was true despite the background experience of the participants. Herlinda, an experienced *normalista* of 10 years and now a second-year, bilingual early childhood teacher, proposes:

Pues en lo que yo me confiero, a mí me gustó como me preparé nada más que si me faltó un poquito más de como yo no hice a student teaching subvención de México y yo toda mi formación estaba en México, entonces todo lo que yo traía en México pues lo apliqué aquí, pero si me faltó un poquito a conocer un poquito más a las maestras de aquí. ¿Como trabajan ellas? ¿Como le hacen? . . . Yo creo que es en lo personal mejor que deja que las normalistas se estudian más en contacto con los maestros para que aprendan un poquito más y también que los maestros se sientan como contentos de que los pueden ayudar. . . . Yo me ayudo bastante la preparación que tenía yo en México porque yo estudié educación especial aparte de maestra. Entonces mis fundamentos en México eran muy fuertes porque aprendimos mucho sobre educación sobre estrategias de lectoescritura, sicología, y todo eso me ayudo bastante, pero si me faltó un poquito más de contacto con los maestros de escuela aquí en San Antonio.

(I liked how I prepared myself except perhaps that I did not student teach in Mexico, and all of my training was in Mexico. Everything that I learned in Mexico I applied here [in the U.S.], but yes, I was missing a familiarity with the teachers from here [in the U.S.]. "How do they work?" "How do they do it?" . . . I believe that it is through personal [interaction] that the normalistas study [and learn when] in contact with the [U.S.] teachers, so that they [normalistas] may learn a little more. Also, the [U.S.] teachers feel happy that they can help [the normalistas]. . . . I helped myself enough through the preparation that I had in Mexico, because I studied special education separately from teaching. My fundamentals from Mexico were very strong because we learned a lot about education, about strategies for developing literacy, and about psychology. All of that helped me enough, but yes, I missed [having] a little more contact with the teachers here in San Antonio.)

Since schools differ in the manner their programs are implemented, there are minor concerns from novice teachers that stem from not knowing specific requirements, such as, completing paper work, preparing lesson plans, and implementing the curriculum. Bianca, a former bilingual paraprofessional with two years of experience, and now a second-year kindergarten bilingual teacher, remembers saying to herself: "I graduated already, I'm gonna be a teacher, I'm gonna be teaching' and that's it—then they send me to more training."

She suggests:

In this school, the principal has very high expectations of everybody. If there is something wrong, she comes and tells you. Sometimes you feel bad because you think you know everything already, but you really don't. But then, after like a year, you realize that they are just doing it for your own good. Like last year, for at least half the school year, I was crying. I didn't want to come to work . . . because I felt like I was not doing what they were expecting me to [do]. I felt frustrated, and, even though I have six years of experience as an [teacher] assistant . . . their expectations are very high.

Alianza bilingual teachers also expressed the need to be told that the reality of the everyday classroom may not match their expectations. Carolina, a former paraprofessional with seven years of experience, and now a third-grade bilingual teacher, remarks:

I think they do the very best that they can to prepare [us]. I think, possibly just letting prospective teachers understand that it's not a perfect world . . . there will be times they will get frustrated because circumstances get beyond their control. The situation might not always be the way they've read about.

Effectiveness of *Project Alianza* as a Teacher-Preparation Model

Since one of the goals of *Project Alianza* was to prepare teachers who can work effectively with language-minority children in bicultural and multicultural settings, the effectiveness of the teacher-preparation program was determined by how graduates of the program are perceived by their school districts' personnel office and by school principals. School district employment officers report being "very pleased by the university's effort in training these personnel." Another university director proclaims:

Alianza has developed a reputation for itself and some of the personnel offices are calling saying, "when are we going to get some of those great students?" And so I think there's an awareness of the school, among, particularly among a couple of districts that have dual-language programs and know how heavily they need very strong Spanish skills for those programs.

Principals who hired *Project Alianza* graduates appear satisfied that they have employed highly qualified personnel. Evident in their interviews are the specific qualities and attributes by which they judge a teacher's effectiveness. Teachers' competence is evaluated on the following common characteristics: instructional

style and lesson delivery, ability to address the needs of diverse learners, providing a classroom climate conducive to learning, and teachers' professionalism in regard to colleagues, administration, and parents. These characteristics are also evident in some of the first-year teacher interviews.

Instructional Style and Lesson Delivery

Principals rate *Project Alianza's* teaching practices based on content-level and grade-level appropriateness. An inner-city principal's description of a teacher's lessons typifies the *Project Alianza* graduate's instructional style as being developmentally appropriate, meaningful, and relevant, "She has an excellent rapport with children. The extent of her lessons are always meaningful, they're hands-on, very practical type of activities that she does with children . . . [and keeps them] interested."

Language Proficiency

For bilingual teachers, instructional style and lesson-delivery effectiveness also is based on their bilingual proficiency. In the case of native born, the principals often reflected on their Spanish proficiency. An IHE director candidly reveals:

Their [native-born] Spanish is not as fluent, is not at the CALP level, but it's getting there. . . . Then, we're lucky that some students are just as fluent in both [languages]. They're not *normalistas*, but they're from south Texas, and they've got close ties to Mexico, so they're . . . fluent in both and they're just in a perfect situation.

A bilingual principal comments about the ability to speak professional Spanish, "Well, a lot of us are fluent, but a lot of people are not; they don't have the CALP. It's just basic communication skills. . . . If they were to pick up a biology book in Spanish, they would have difficulty." Nevertheless, those principals interviewed are favorably impressed with the *Project Alianza's* first- and second-year teachers' language abilities and training.

Conversely, a couple of the Mexican American bilingual teachers were critical of their Spanish proficiency. However, both remarked how their daily experiences and interaction with the children, their parents, and other bilingual teachers have helped increase their confidence and fluency. Carolina clarifies the reciprocal relationship regarding language learning: "I feel sometimes, like I am one of the kids . . . [when they] tell me how to say something, and so we learn from each other."

In the case of *normalistas*, principals often consider the latter's English proficiency, acknowledging Spanish skills as fundamental for teaching. A principal in south Texas comments about a *normalista* hired to teach fourth grade: "Her Spanish use is very good and her English is very good, for instructional purposes." The principal differentiates between this *normalistas'* language proficiency in relation to content. "Her English is 'okay' in terms of content delivery."

Principals also consider proficiency when making personnel decisions. In one case, a principal overlooked the limited-English proficiency of one *normalista* because of her strong resolve, as a novice bilingual teacher, to improve her English competence. Another principal assessed the English-language proficiency of a former *normalista*, now certified as a bilingual education teacher and assigned to a bilingual program specifically designed for recent immigrants:

The comfort of Spanish is there for her, so she's working very hard to become more and more comfortable with English. She's able to speak in English, that's not the point. However, the comfort zone is more in Spanish. What she needs to do and what her job description is right now, her instruction . . . [needs] to be of the most benefit for the kids.

In examining the interview transcripts of the two *normalistas* who had just been hired as bilingual teachers, they recognized their limitations with their English proficiency. They have overcome some of their concerns as they practice daily with children and colleagues.

Diverse Learners

In all cases, school principals expressed an appreciation for *Project Alianza* and the impact of the Project at their schools and, subsequently, the impact and the potential impact on language-minority students in the public school systems. All principals acknowledge that the university and the bilingual education teacher-training program had prepared Project graduates satisfactorily for the challenges of the bilingual education classroom.

Principals evidently concur that the university is fulfilling its mission to prepare teachers to meet the needs of most diverse learners. One principal comments on the effectiveness of a first-year bilingual teacher: "She's very responsible, very self-motivated. She's what I think I would call a natural. . . . It comes easy to her. She's a hard worker, [and] it's obvious that she enjoys teaching."

Another principal affirms the notion that working with diverse populations requires specialized skills. "I often tell my staff that it's not easy to work here, that it requires the best, and I consider her to be one of the best teachers here."

Principals speak to the importance for teacher candidates having hands-on experiences with diverse populations during their field-based experiences, prior experiences, and student teaching:

She seemed to be very sincere. She . . . [had] experience working as a paraprofessional, and so that was one of the things that impressed me, that she had . . . worked her way up, and continued going to school and . . . basically want[ed] to improve.

Classroom Climate/Environment

Principals judge the climate of the classroom, not only in terms of student behavior, but also by overall classroom organizational environment, including the relevancy of wall displays in relation to student learning. As one principal indicates:

Excellent! She's always very well prepared. It's very evident by the work that she has displayed outside . . . and inside of the classroom. That really is a reflection on what happens on a regular basis in there. Her activities are appropriate for the very young children, yet there's a lot of learning at the same time. Her classroom is beautiful! She has also been looked at by the district as one of the model classrooms for the three-year-olds in our district. She is often visited by other schools, other teachers, wanting to learn from her, wanting to pick up ideas. So, she has truly become a leader and a role model, for not only teachers in this school, but for other teachers in our district.

In comparison to other types of teaching-certification programs, an IHE director reports:

A couple of principals I'm familiar with are particularly excited about their classroom-management skills. The fact that they're experienced teachers and they don't have to deal with them as they might, say, someone from an alternative certification program, [one] who has never been in a classroom . . .

This general impression is not only true for *normalistas* or paraprofessionals who have classroom experience, but also for the native-born, first-year teacher. A principal comments, "I guess I could describe her as a new teacher that comes across with [having] many years of experience, because it's hard to believe that this is her first year."

Linguistic and Cultural Relevancy

The principals also indicated that the teachers' stimulating classroom environment not only reflected the child's primary language, but also their culture. They mention that *Project Alianza* teachers worked with other teachers to demonstrate home and ethnic culture through school celebrations and lessons. As one principal notes:

It's very often noticeable as you see some of the work that's displayed, that she always takes into account what the culture of our school is, as well as taking others into consideration. The activities that you see on display, some of the school products are those which promote self-identity—are promoting a child's image.

Another principal indicates:

You can walk into the classroom and it's very obvious that she promotes their culture as well as the differences that we may be faced with. She's always promoting their self-confidence and making sure that the children feel comfortable and safe in [the] positive, nurturing environment that she provides.

Having a teacher who can relate to the children is seen by the principal as a positive benefit:

They have a background very similar to the kids they are teaching. They know what they're [the kids] going through and they know the obstacles those kids are facing. Just that, [in] itself, that experience that they bring . . . it's something that you can't teach anyone.

When examining the *Project Alianza* bilingual teachers' interviews and the field notes describing their classrooms, we see that these teachers are cognizant of the role of linguistic and cultural relevancy. All the bilingual teachers readily identified the importance of having a classroom environment that not only reflects the children's primary language, but also their culture. The teachers provided various examples of how they inculcate ethnic pride through celebrations, literature, and classroom displays. They use examples within their lessons of cultural practices for linking with novel knowledge. A second-grade teacher reflects:

I try to have a . . . print-rich environment, colorful and, if you notice, I have a sign: *¡Se Habla Español!* One of the books that I read . . . [is] *Pepita Talks Twice*. Kids love it . . . [they identify] and that's why it's important to know two languages.

In one classroom in south Texas, the teacher had decorated the room very patriotically with flags from both the United States and Mexico. Pictures of both presidents shaking hands were at the door. When the researcher walked in, the children immediately rose to their feet and welcomed the visitor. While waiting for the teacher's conference time, the researcher observed the children's enthusiasm toward the math lesson that had just been presented. When the teacher remarked, "Today we will continue learning about x ," the children enthusiastically responded "yes!"

On another occasion, the researcher met with the teacher in her classroom. The early childhood classroom was decorated with children's work attractively displayed along the walls. The children were playing in centers, and, when the researcher entered, the children inquired as to the researcher's identity. The teacher then asked all the children to pay attention. Quickly the children sat up and greeted the researcher, "*Buenas tardes, Doctora. . . .*"

In one rural school, when the researchers arrived, the teacher was holding after-school tutoring session. Even after a long day of teaching, the teacher was still enthusiastically working with children. Her classroom was bright, cheerful, and well organized, with both English and Spanish word walls.

All interviewed teachers feel that the university and the bilingual teacher-preparation program had prepared them well for the challenges of the bilingual classroom. Alicia (UTPA), a kindergarten bilingual teacher reflects:

Yo pienso que en realidad el programa que ahorita esta llevando a cabo el proyecto Alianza con la universidad, está muy completo puesto que se ven todos los problemas. El problema está muy enfocado a lo que realmente se lleva ahorita en las escuelas a nivel estatal.

(I think that the program that right now *Project Alianza* is accomplishing with the university, is really very complete, in that all [classroom] issues are considered. A [discussion of] problems focuses very tightly on what actually happens in schools at the state level.)

Professionalism

All principals seemed excited with such professionalism demonstrated by Project graduates now teaching in their schools. The graduates' willingness to continue to learn is typified in this principal's remarks:

She's always seeking to improve . . . [herself as well as] her classroom environment. She's very self-motivated . . . she's always on task when I walk into her classroom, so I'm very pleased with her progress.

One principal reveals how there is a close match between the school's philosophy and Project teacher's practices, "This school is built on a foundation of whatever the kids come with. This is where they're going to excel and then go from there to create a world of possibilities for them beyond us. And I feel that she exemplifies that. She's a very dedicated teacher."

One of the Project directors articulates how school districts view Project participants' professionalism: "They like their aggressive enthusiasm about teaching, teaching as a vocation. It's contagious, this perseverance and this excitement about the field of teaching." Principals recognize the professional relationships that the *Project Alianza* graduates maintained in all their interactions. They further acknowledge that the teachers' professionalism has a direct impact on the local communities, their schools, other teachers, parents, and language-minority students in their public school systems. A principal in south Texas reaffirms:

Ah, how she addresses people! How she deals with the children on a one-to-one basis! She discusses with me . . . [the] issues that need to be discussed. She's just totally professional.

A principal in an inner city in Texas comments on the professionalism of a Project teacher: "She's always dressed in a very professional manner. It's comfortable and very appropriate for an early childhood setting." As another south central Texas principal articulates:

She would keep almost her whole class after school for tutoring to help them. She would have a lot of parent contact . . . and she would teach the[m] the strategies that the kids were learning, so that they [could] help their kids at home.

Yet another principal offers an observation of a former paraprofessional, "She gets along very well with the children. And by that I mean that she's very nurturing, she's caring, she's enthusiastic, and she is excellent with parents. She's always available." Further:

She always is willing to learn new ideas and keep up-to-date with new strategies and . . . keep the children interested. She's often providing in-services, parent workshops, always making sure that the parents are involved in their children's progress, as well as making them aware of where they stand academically.

State-mandated Exit Test

Another indicator of *Project Alianza's* success as a teacher-preparation model is the graduates' capacity to pass the state-mandated exit test. Since only graduates from the Texas universities had completed their program of study, the mandated exit-test program is the Examination for Certification in Texas (ExCET). The test consists of two to three separate exams: (a) professional development, (b) the bilingual comprehensive exam, and (c) early childhood exam (only required for those seeking early childhood certification). In addition, Texas graduates pursuing bilingual certification must demonstrate "advanced mastery" in Spanish on the Texas Oral Proficiency Test (TOPT). Some universities also require teacher candidates to first pass the university's qualifying exams in each area to be eligible to then register for the state-mandated tests. Once all tests are passed and there is verification that all program requirements have been met, teacher candidates are finally recommended for certification.

University officials are concerned that the *normalistas'* lack of English language proficiency might deter their success on the exit exams and thus impede their attainment of teaching credentials. As one director indicates:

I think the English language proficiency is . . . not an [institutional] barrier, but obviously it's a barrier, because the ExCET is all in English, and here at Pan Am, we were trying to do the dual-language approach. . . .

Although there is some concern expressed by the participants about the ExCETs, all of the *Project Alianza* participants were confident that they could pass the state-mandated exit test. In several situations, *normalistas* indicated that they planned to delay employment and spend another semester (summer) concentrating on the test. As an incentive, they would cite examples of graduates of the program who had passed the test:

Look at Mari, she passed the test, so can I! After this semester, I plan to focus next semester on passing the test. I don't plan to work; I don't want that pressure. *Asi puedo . . . enseñar . . . más tranquila.*

In the case of novice bilingual teachers, most had completed all their state-mandated exit-test requirements, with the exception of the two newly hired, UTPA former *normalistas*, who had just completed their program of study. There seemed to be a bit of concern, but they felt confident that they will eventually pass the test.

Retention versus Attrition

Another means of determining program effectiveness is to determine the level of retention of Project participants. In all universities, there is little attrition (1 to 2 candidates); attrition was due to varying factors, e.g., personal, economic, or academic problems. One university director states:

None of the students were released from the Project due to their level of proficiency. . . . [Two participants] did not continue on with the cohort, but what we started doing was . . . send them across campus to English language institutes. They went to other English classes, and then we tried hooking them up with regular evening-program students so they could continue through the teacher-prep program. But they were no longer with the cohort, because the cohort moved on. . . . I'm sure that was disheartening to [them]: . . . They started with this group, and they saw the group move on.

Satisfaction

The satisfaction level of Project participants was also an indicator of program effectiveness. Essentially, *Project Alianza* provided a haven for participants, in that it assisted in the admission process, temporarily waived entry requirements, and provided academic, social, and financial support. Participants seemed proud to declare their membership in *Project Alianza*. They seem to have a sense of group identity and a realization that they are role models for their children. Cathy, from Long Beach, declares, "*Pienso que si tengo mis hijos es un ejemplo para ellos el que yo continúe y termine, llegué a mi meta, porque así ellos se darán cuenta de que uno puede hacerlo si uno quiere.*" [I believe I am an example for my children and as such I must continue, finish, reach my goals. Because they will take notice that they can accomplish anything they set your mind to do.]

For the *normalistas*, the Project reaffirms their teacher identity. As Lisa, a *normalista* from UTPA tells us:

Para mí . . . ha sido muy importante también entrar en este programa, hace casi diez años que yo llegué a este país, y trabajé durante cuatro años en una panadería. Como dije, esto me hacía sentir mal y hasta cierto punto frustrada, hasta que en un momento dado, siendo voluntaria en la escuela de mis hijos, supe de este programa. Y vine y me aceptaron y estoy muy contenta de estar aquí.

(For me. . . it has also been very important to enter this program. Almost ten years ago I came to this country, and I worked for four years in a bakery. As I said, this made me feel bad, and to a certain point frustrated, until the moment came, as a volunteer in my children's school, that I found out about this program. And I came, and they accepted me, and I am very happy to be here.)

For the paraprofessionals, their overall positive outcome was that the Project provides them with the time, support, and financial assistance to become teachers. In the case of the first generation college group, they too seem appreciative for having been selected as participants in the grant and for the financial support.

In all cases, the novice bilingual teachers expressed an appreciation for the Project and for specific individuals. In revealing their thoughts, some were moved to tears. For many, it was a dream come true, as Evangelina, a former *normalista* and now a fourth-grade bilingual teacher, describes below. Although she was teaching cosmetology to adults, she felt that was not her calling:

No era yo. Este, regresar fue volver a nacer, volver a lo mío, esto fue una alegría muy grande, esta oportunidad que me dieron fue una bendición, ya se los digo. Porque no nada más yo, venimos miles y miles de gente, que en México nos preparamos y llegamos aquí y no eres nada! No eres nadie y puedes—tienes la capacidad de hacer algo y tu tienes ambiente escondido, es tu oportunidad. Y empecé a trabajar con los niños y dije “¡Ay Señor! Volví a ser yo, volví a ser lo que yo quería.” Me volví a desarrollar—este—sentía como un arbolito que me empezaban a salir ramas otra vez y frutos otra vez! Así es que yo estoy muy agradecida con el proyecto. Nada es perfecto en esta vida. Todo tiene defecto. Todo tiene limitaciones, pero el simple hecho de darnos la oportunidad, de volver a lo que queríamos y lo que tengamos en el corazón, ya es bastante. La otra parte era cuestión de nosotros, ponerle ganas, porque sí, el idioma era—es—una barrera muy grande. Nos hemos desarrollado, hemos aprendido, pero no tenemos el idioma, así es que teníamos que esforzarnos, teníamos que echarle muchas ganas. Y la que tenía las ganas, la decisión y el corazón de ser maestra, pues, le pusimos y a hacerlo, así es que me sentí—yo, me sentí una mujer realizada otra vez.

(That was not I. To go back was to be reborn. . . I went back to mine. . . This was a great joy, this opportunity that they gave me was a blessing, I have told them. Because not only I, but also thousands and thousands of people — we prepared ourselves in Mexico, and we arrive here, and you are nothing! You are no one, and you can — you have the capacity to do something, and you have hidden background, this is your opportunity. I began to work with children, and I said, “Oh, Lord! I am going to return to be what I wanted to be.” I returned to develop. I felt like a tree sprouting branches and blossoming fruit! That is how I am very grateful for the project. Nothing is perfect in this life. Everything is flawed. Everything has limitations, but the simple deed to give us the opportunity to return to what we wanted and what we had in our hearts — that’s enough. The other part was the question of ourselves to have the desire,

because yes, the language was — is — a large barrier. We have developed; we have learned, but we don't have the language. So we had to make an effort; we had to show a lot of desire. And she, who had the desire, the decisiveness, and the heart to be a teacher, went and did it. That's how I felt. I felt like a self-actualized [professional] woman once again.)

Reconceptualizing the Role of the IHE in the Teacher Training Program

Transforming the Institutional Culture

The exploration of these *Alianza* participants provides us a guide as to what were the key elements of benefit to the participants and which elements led to the success of the Project. On initial inspection, it is evident that *Project Alianza* allowed for the transformation of lives. The impact of *Project Alianza* was felt not only by the participants, but their families as well. For the *normalistas*, certain challenges were seen as temporary and not as barriers that will keep them from reaching their goals. The student's needs created the impetus for changing how admission was handled, how prerequisites were addressed, and what curricular and instructional accommodations were made. In examining the changes that occurred at the institutional level as a result of *Project Alianza*, it is evident that there was a distinct transformation of institutional culture. The institution was made to re-think its role in teacher preparation, specifically, in redefining the term "college student," building a supportive community, redesigning curriculum, reconceptualizing attitudes, maintaining personnel, institutionalizing the Project, and establishing bi-national relationships.

Redefining Who is a "College Student"

Project Alianza forced various university faculty and staff to redefine who is a college student. One director speaks to the expansion of what is a new definition for the term "student": "It is now a 35-year-old professional, whose English is not at the level that it should be, but is very well trained and capable, and whose experiences and abilities are not understood and are underutilized."

Professors see the pride and dedication that the students exhibit in their coursework. They also see that the *normalistas'* lack of English proficiency does not deter them from achieving their goals. The following comment best sums it up:

It's had an impact on how those who work with students, their conception of what a university student might look like. And there's a much broader . . . [notion] that highly talented people, highly intelligent people and people who end up with outstanding academic records don't necessarily

have great English proficiency. So there's certainly an increased understanding of [one] not confusing English proficiency with academic ability.

Positive comments and constructive concerns are evident in the participants' responses and provide suggestions as to how to improve the Project. One of the overriding positive results is the recognition by the university that *normalistas* are a viable resource for the university. It was, for them, an official recognition that they are educated and did not come to this country with nothing to offer. They also feel indebted to the Project because of the financial support:

Pero me llegó la oportunidad de saber del Programa Alianza y ese fue el proyecto que me ha dado la oportunidad de realizar este sueño. Entonces yo creo que esto es la mayor oportunidad que nos han dado. No solamente porque la mayoría de nosotros somos de otros países, somos extranjeras. Se mantiene el desafío de los dos mundos, sino que también nos han dado el guía para como descifrarnos en un sistema. A muchas de nosotras se nos hubiera llevado mucho mas tiempo o tal vez nunca lo hubiéramos realizado.

(But the opportunity came to me to know about *Project Alianza*, and that was the project that gave me the opportunity to realize this dream. I believe that this is the greatest opportunity they gave us. Not only because the majority of us are from other countries and are foreigners. They [the professors] maintain the challenge of two worlds, but they also guide us on how to interpret the system. It would have taken a lot more time for many of us, or perhaps we would have never realized our [professional] selves [without *Project Alianza*].)

Building a Supportive Community

A director's comments: "In summary, *Alianza* is a code word to help people see things differently. It helps communicate a philosophy and it helps build communities." Some faculty members realized they were going to have to change how they approach this group of second-language learners. *Normalistas* sought support by talking to professors about their lack of understanding because they were second-language learners. In all cases, faculty were willing to assist the *normalistas*.

At UTSA, the dean called it "Felicia's gift" when she reflected on this professor's (Felicia) commitment to make sure the *normalistas* were successful. In her email to all faculty, she recounted that when a professor learned the *normalistas* were having difficulty with a science course they were taking . . . [the professor] volunteered to tutor the *normalistas* in her home.

Community borders extended beyond the university classroom. In a couple of cases, novice teachers waxed enthusiastically that their professors were still available to provide assistance when they had questions or doubts. Students sought and received help from their professor on how to deal with parents. Bianca remembers when setting up her classroom, one of her former professors assisted her and her team:

Dr. Cortez . . . helped us . . . [set up] the centers . . . we were . . . arranging the room . . . for a whole half of the school year, almost, because . . . we were getting the furniture little by little. That was kind of hard, the beginning, because you're trying to teach and then you're trying to fix your room at the same time and that's kind of frustrating.

Program, Curricular, and Instructional Changes

At several of the universities, the realization of the newly defined student created the impetus for change. A dean observes, regarding program-model changes:

We were able to implement something new in our teacher-training program, a dual-language approach. What was also helpful was that we were able to create special classes for these *normalistas*, along with our regular students . . . that were recruited into the Project and who were aware of the Project objectives and were aware of what we intended . . . the dual instruction . . . and that their responsibility to be in the Project was to assist the *normalistas* in trying to become more proficient or to comprehend the instruction.

Curricular Changes

At other universities, *Project Alianza* changed the existing teacher-training program: "Bilingual education is now fundamentally different; it is a new model for preparing teachers. *Project Alianza* is seen as a stimulus and a factor that create[s] changes in the teacher-education program. In some cases, fundamental changes occurred."

Another director adds: "We've increased the amount of Spanish that the [native-born] trainees will have in their coursework. We've gone from two courses in Spanish, to five." He also states, "I think field-basing more courses . . . [might be] because of *Alianza*, but it's not unrelated. . . ." This director affirms that their experience with *Project Alianza* assisted the faculty in developing the new certification program of study:

Specifically, we added a course called "Bilingual Families, Communities in Schools." That was a big gap in our program then. They deal with the whole issue of how teachers understand the communities that they're

working in and develop strategies for having those communities contribute to the educational progress of the kids.

A faculty member describes what he did in his particular class to address the needs of the *Project Alianza* student:

In my class . . . I changed the curriculum . . . to include a whole short segment on language varieties in different issues that relate to what's good Spanish and what's bad Spanish . . . and judgments that are made. . . . Even though I know it's in some of the courses we teach, I felt that I couldn't even begin to talk about foundation issues until they had some awareness of that.

Instructional Changes

Other faculty made instructional changes to provide students with greater opportunities to participate in classroom activities. As one professor describes, increasing the number of writing assignments "So that they'd have more chance to develop their English," yet on "the big papers or exams . . . I encouraged them to answer in Spanish . . . which allowed them to be more reflective and to get a bit deeper engagement with the content than if they were operating in their weaker language."

Reconceptualizing Attitudes

Regarding attitudes at the university, a director discusses what he perceived to be the change:

There was a shift in the culture at [the university] and I say this was perfect timing, because you had the old culture, which essentially tried to protect [the IHE] from external factors or forces that would downgrade the level of education. . . . There was a sense that, even though we don't have highly selective admissions standards . . . we have to . . . establish quality by keeping out certain kinds of students who would create a negative association that [it] is not a real university. And so the old culture meets the new culture, where the new culture is . . . saying that the [IHE's] major failure is to connect with its community and to be seen by that community as truly their university. . . . We have to reach out to . . . those that have the skills we need and experiences that are valuable to the university. It's our job to figure out how we can make them a part of the university.

Often, within the institution, there are individuals who do not understand the underlying philosophy of the Project. Comments by a dean regarding attitudes held by people, faculty, and administrations not key to the Project suggest that

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these individuals must be cultivated to become allies. The dean's commentary also affirms that implementing a project requires strategy when confronting those who create obstacles:

Then you utilize those [who] are allies to confront those [who] are obstacles. [You want] the person who's got authority and power, [the one] who you want to have running the meeting, explain why *Alianza* is important to the university and why certain things need to happen for it to be successful. Then everyone, including the admissions office, all of a sudden, is searching for ways to help these students in procedures.

A dean reflects on how strategic planning assisted in implementing *Project Alianza* and in challenging prevailing attitudes about foreign-trained professionals:

Those meetings all have to do with institutional policies and procedures—all the way from how the admissions office relates to and processes these kind of students to how the [retention] center deals with TASP issues or . . . to how the compliance officer for the institution for TASP collaborates with us instead of saying 'you can't do this.' The strategy with the department was collegial. They always want to help, as opposed to having to go to a dean to force their departments. We didn't do that; we didn't have to do that.

Challenging and changing institutional policies at one institution seemed to help clear the way for other institutions to challenge their own policies.

Continuity of Project Personnel

Continuity of personnel is considered a weak component of the Project. Perhaps the lack of staff and the lack of continuity resulted in the inability of the IHE to communicate information to Project participants. This may also influence the retention and satisfaction of the Project candidates. At both CSULB and UTPA, participants indicated the need for greater communication between the Project and the participants. Laura, a paraprofessional from CSULB, expressed her need to engage in meaningful dialogue:

Pero soy un individuo que necesita apoyo, necesito dialogar a nivel profesional para que me inspire a elevarme, no nada más the casual relationship, "good morning," ¿cómo estas?, ¿cómo te va?, ¿qué va aquí? No, yo quiero hablar más en detalle, entonces yo pienso que estos programas . . . triunfan mucho, pero necesitamos también, quien los empuje. Así como los niños necesitan a los padres, nosotros también necesitamos y yo creo que ahí es donde yo estoy. Necesito más apoyo.

(But I am an individual who needs support. I need professional dialogue, so that I improve myself. No longer the casual relationship, “good morning,” “How are you?” “How are you doing?” “How are things going?” No, I want to speak in greater detail, I think that these programs... triumph a lot, but we also need those who push. Just as children need parents, we also need [them], and I think that there is where I am. I need more support.)

The participants also noted that the Project should provide information via the Web or by just simply posting information about professional development, especially for in-service development and professional conferences. Participants see these experiences as invaluable:

Tienen conferencias como CABA, y esas son conferencias para maestros. Y en un workshop que yo atendí me enamore de una maestra que se llama Bárbara . . . en ese workshop me enseñe que llevé a una amiga . . . ha tomado las clases, the method clases y ella dijo, cuando yo le dije todo lo que me enseñe . . . dijo ella: “Oh, my gosh! Todo lo que tu te enseñaste en un workshop yo lo tuve en un semestre.” . . . quiero más información.

(They have conferences like CABA, and those are teachers’ conferences. And in a workshop that I attended, I fell in love with a teacher named Barbara . . . I brought to a friend what I learned in that workshop . . . she has taken the . . . methods classes, and she said, when I told her everything that I learned “Oh, my gosh!” Everything that you learned in a workshop, I had in a semester.” . . . I want more information.)

Other Project members revealed that the stressful effects due to lack of staff and faculty release time ultimately affected the continuity of the program:

Institutionalization of Project Alianza

To institutionalize *Project Alianza*, university officials recognized the importance of preparing well-qualified personnel who can meet the needs of the community. The findings revealed that the teacher-preparation program incorporates within its coursework, the elements necessary to develop competencies for effective bilingual education teachers. At these sites, researchers found a genuine appreciation for the Project and the desire that funding for the Project continue. As one dean states, “We will continue this program whether there is money or not. We have a waiting list; the population is here. You might say the “customers” are here. So it will continue.” Another IHE administrator reaffirms this: “I’ve been giving out the paper work, but I tell them, we don’t know if we’ll have the funds, but . . . I hope it will continue.”

One of the IHE's directors reflects on what they have learned as a result of the Project, that is, to institutionalize:

That's one of the things we've realized. We may need to invest in infrastructure, and then let other funds support the students. We were so concerned about the current *Alianza*. We put all our money into the student support because we [thought . . . that's the only way we can ever get students. But everyone, not just us at UTSA, has said, you can't really run a program without investing in staff. So, in the next . . . [iteration] of this Project, it looks like we will put most of our money into infrastructure support, staff support, and then hope that other sources of monies can help the students get through, including loans or financial aid—maybe other grants as well.

Despite the lack of continuity in Project staff and faculty, it is evident in the analysis of the interview transcripts, especially those with the deans, that *Project Alianza* is going to be a major part of the universities' missions.

One dean observes, "We found we could make changes in how we admit students and how we train teachers. We have to overhaul our programming and we saw this as a result of *Project Alianza*. It is a good program and one that can serve as a model." Another dean sums up the impact on teacher education by the *Project Alianza* model:

That can be answered on two levels, and one is, what are the benefits for those individuals as professionals? And the kids that they are going to be teaching? There's a huge benefit to them and their personal development. . . . but there's this link to Mexico in terms of who they are. . . . Mexico is an incredibly rich, diverse, culturally powerful nation and so it just opens up a whole awareness of what it means to be a teacher of immigrant kids and to take pride in it.

This dean critically analyzes the IHE changes: "*Project Alianza* has had a profound effect on our teacher-preparation program, although the full articulation of those affects is still before [us]."

The qualitative evaluation and documentation of the experiences of the *Alianza normalista* students led the Project administrators to think about enlarging and deepening the concept of teacher preparation to include teacher formation (*fundación de maestros*) and vocation. The powerful vocation articulated by the *normalistas* in journals, half conversations, and presentations to internal and external

audiences, was the inspiration for numerous conversations by the dean with faculty involved in teacher preparation. The seed planted by the *normalistas* has resulted in the following symbolic and practical activities:

1. The creation of an "Induction to the Profession" ceremony that is conducted before graduation and after the completion of student teaching.
2. Work is underway to write an "oath," much like the Hippocratic oath, that students will recite at the "Induction to the Profession" ceremony. The oath will reinforce teaching as a profession and as a vocation.
3. An orientation session for students provides student teaching settings that stress both the professional and vocation demands of teaching in both practical and symbolic terms.
4. Several faculty members have been encouraged by the dean to look at holistic approaches to teacher preparation that include the spiritual aspects of teaching and learning. This work builds on Parker Palmer's *The Courage to Teach*, but is inspired by the "spiritual" commitment of *normalistas* to their work.
5. New state legislation providing tuition and support for teacher aides seeking to become certified teachers holds great promise for the continuation of *Project Alianza* strategies. At a recent coordination board meeting, the dean of the College of Education and Human Development presented the *Alianza* concept and results. The board reacted enthusiastically and planned future conversations on the possibility of creating a statewide model.
6. The dean has had discussions with faculty in the College of Business, encouraging the adaptation of a *Project Alianza* model to professional preparations in that college, namely, in the Department of Accounting. Because UTSA has been undergoing major change during the last year, progress on these conversations is slow, but positive. On the basis of experience with *Project Alianza*, the Department of Accounting eliminated course requirements for their programs to prepare students to take the examination for certified public accountants.

Another outcome is the reference to a new vision, that of border pedagogy:

Visionaries talk about a border pedagogy, this whole idea . . . that [an] educator should be able to have a kind of preparation where you—it doesn't matter if you teach here, you teach across the river, you're effective in both cases. Why? Because you have developed the skills of a bi-national, bicultural preparation and you can actually have the awareness, the perspective, the skills, and the knowledge to teach effectively there or here, because we're a common border area. And those are the individuals then that become the brokers, I guess, for a new type of bi-national reality.

Policy Component: Bi-national Relationships

Project Alianza has challenged the institution to look beyond its borders and to recognize that, to prepare effective teachers, the institution must have a bicultural perspective and bi-national relationships. A director ruminates:

One of the things we haven't talked about is . . . the impact of the whole bi-national relation. . . . How that is [an] incredibly powerful and rich piece for bilingual teacher preparation. . . . How good it would be if we can build on that . . . and begin to see [the university] as a kind of a bi-national teacher-preparation institution, where students have ready access and opportunities [and] to be involved in Mexico and Mexican schools as a part of their teacher training. We've done it on small scale, but there's the obstacle of resources, with money as well as staff—and staffing probably even more important than money here because you need people who can provide that guidance and attention to students to make it work. *Alianza* has opened . . . the door. These are all things we've dreamed about for 20 years. *Alianza* has made it possible to do things like this, [rather than just] to dream them. It's also made us aware of . . . how much support there is for this vision . . . in schools as well as here. It's possible to do, and people have seen that. Our people have succeeded and they're out there now, working. . . . This is the future. This is what we can do.

Another component of bi-national preparation included summer institutes coordinated by the Mexican American Solidarity Foundation. Each university partnered with a sister *escuela*, a *normal* institution. Students were sent to the institutions and were given the opportunity to observe and teach a mini-lesson at the local schools. As one director expounds:

Those are very high-quality experiences there . . . and it's [a] very intensive one-week period. When students come back and share their experiences with the others, [that] is a tremendous amount of learning that comes out of that for everybody. And, the bi-national perspective begins to seep into people's awareness.

This bi-national relationship affirms that the only borders that exist are those drawn by cartographers. The long-term effects of bi-national relationships will likely result in positive changes in how teachers are prepared on both sides of the border. This type of relationship also will likely improve the quality of education provided to children as bi-national constituents.

CONCLUSION

What Lessons Have Been Learned from *Project Alianza*?

Since the inception of bilingual education, there has been an ongoing shortage of well-prepared personnel for these programs. For the most part, teacher-preparation programs have addressed this need through traditional recruitment and training efforts. We found that there are three additional distinct groups that can be tapped into as prospective bilingual educators: first-generation, ethnic-minority college students; paraprofessionals employed as teaching assistants; and U.S.-resident, foreign-trained (*normalista*) teachers.

Although some innovative universities had already begun to recruit paraprofessionals, before *Project Alianza*, there was no concerted effort to recruit foreign-trained teachers. Desperate school districts needing bilingual educators also looked beyond their immediate communities and sought to establish teacher-exchange programs. We feel that teacher-exchange programs are, in essence, only a band-aid approach in solving the shortage crisis.

Project Alianza forced the universities' teacher-preparation programs to explore the existence of additional hidden human capital. At every university, the educational community essentially ignored this population as a valuable educational resource. In only one instance did we find resident *normalistas* tutoring language-minority students along the Texas border.

Project Alianza challenged the academy's theories of bicultural bilingual education, ethnic identity development, and second-language acquisition for adults. Project officials made a concerted effort to ensure that the foreign-trained *normalista* acquired the needed English-language proficiency, not only to do well in the coursework, but also in the impending state-mandated exit tests. In the cases of the U. S. native born, they provided for acquisition of the requisite academic-language proficiency for effective delivery of content-matter knowledge in Spanish.

Once these institutions recognized the specific attributes and needs that each group brought, teacher-preparation program faculty addressed curricular and instructional issues in their respective programs. These issues included providing for development of dual-language and cultural literacy of all prospective teachers and assisting in developing their professional and ethnic identity as bicultural-bilingual teachers.

For the *normalistas*, in addition to acquiring English literacy at the academic level, becoming fully biliterate meant attaining the language and cultural literacy of the bicultural bilingual community. Increasing the *normalistas*' understanding of what it means to be an ethnic minority in the United States enhanced their appreciation for dialectal and regional differences of Spanish in the Southwest. Increasing *normalistas*' sociopolitical and historical awareness also heightened their sensitivity toward language-minority children. This conceptual understanding helped transform them into bicultural bilingual educators, fully prepared for the demands of a U.S. classroom.

The native born, or the immigrant who immigrated as a child, has needs distinct from the foreign-trained teacher. This group, although bilingual and possibly possessing bilingual schooling experiences, needs further Spanish-literacy development, especially at the academic professional levels. Depending on the family's immigration status and maintenance of cultural traditions, this individual may have a healthy sense of bicultural identity or may need further ethnic identity development.

Integrating these distinct groups with each other allowed one university to implement a dual-language model for the preparation of bilingual teachers. In the other universities, a cohort-based blocked-course approach was used. However, neither plan guaranteed that the cohorts would interact with one another. Rather, the cohorts were reminded of the purpose of the dual-language model or were purposefully grouped heterogeneously for class assignments. Heterogeneous grouping helped assure that the groups intermingled with each other and learned from each other. University officials contemplating similar teacher-preparation programs need to be vigilant in providing these experiences.

We found, through the interviews of the Project's pre-service and in-service teachers, that there are individuals from each cohort whose biculturalism and bilingualism allow them to fit into either group and act as cultural brokers for the cohorts. These individuals are able to traverse groups because of their prior schooling or work experience. In the cases of U.S. native-born or immigrant individuals, those who are the more likely to demonstrate this linguistic and cultural confluence are individuals who had been products of bilingual education, had immigrated as adolescents, or were first generation. Foreign-trained teachers, who had been employed as teacher assistants in "barrio" schools before *Project Alianza*, also demonstrate this linguistic and cultural confluence.

The unique ability to traverse distinct linguistic and cultural groups is important in the preparation of bilingual education teachers. Even when there is a careful configuration of a dual-language teacher-preparation program, there is a need

for cultural brokers. In all institutions, the field-experience component was deemed very important; however, the experience in itself may not have provided the teacher candidates with all the tools to be cultural brokers. Even though the summer cultural institutes apparently benefited those able to attend, not all *Project Alianza* participants were able to take part in this enriching experience. Thus, to develop bicultural bilingual teachers who can act as cultural brokers, traverse across distinct groups, and deliver effective instruction, all bilingual pre-service teachers, regardless of prior training, need experiences in their coursework and field experiences to develop cultural brokering skills.

What Institutional Changes Have Occurred as a Result of *Project Alianza*?

While *Project Alianza* served as an impetus for institutional change, these institutional changes began to challenge institutional policies. For instance, at all universities, we found structural changes in the admissions and assessment process for U.S.-resident, foreign-credentialed teachers. These changes in policy serve to open the door for more U.S.-residents with foreign credentials.

Moreover, there appeared to be a change in attitude and an increased awareness of the potential of these individual professionals. For university officials as well as faculty and staff in the teacher-preparation program, *Project Alianza* helped redefine who a college student is and helped change their perception of individuals who do not have English proficiency. It also increased the awareness among various monolingual teacher-education faculty that having second-language learners in their classroom requires them to modify their lesson delivery.

Project Alianza helped focus the conversation on the benefits of biculturalism and bilingualism, especially when faculty realized that they too, must have the requisite knowledge and skills to work with second-language learners. The assistance of a cultural broker also played a role in this realization, especially during heterogeneous grouping. For bilingual-teacher educators, *Project Alianza* was an opportunity to observe and apply bilingual education methods rather than by theory alone. Informed by the *Project Alianza* faculty's knowledge and expertise with second-language learners, university officials deferred state-mandated assessment requirements, and faculty made reasoned curricular or instructional accommodations for second-language learners.

What are the Policy Implications of the Findings Regarding IHE's Mission, Implementation, Programming, Effectiveness, and Role in *Project Alianza*?

These policy implications are drawn from this study's findings, which caused us to challenge the teacher-education programs of institutions of higher education. Using a multidimensional, kaleidoscopic approach to examine and impact the

teacher shortage issue, *Project Alianza's* findings generate the following recommendations and implications for the preparation of teachers for language-minority students:

1. Untapped human capital exists within the community; the university must tap into communities and find and develop it.
2. Foreign-trained teachers can become excellent bilingual teachers when given the appropriate tools for developing language and cultural literacy within a bilingual community as well as for learning the sociopolitical and historical background of the community. The university must work to structure teacher-preparation programs to provide the appropriate tools in these teachers' program of study.
3. An entry test does not necessarily predict future professional ability. The university must provide for multiple means of demonstrating potential by developing alternatives to entry tests.
4. Building on a teacher candidate's already existing language and cultural literacy through field experiences on both sides of the border, develops their professional identity as cultural brokers. The university must structure experiences that develop language and cultural literacy in both languages, in its teacher-preparation program design.
5. The Project can be replicated in other settings with the same language groups or even different language/cultural groups, provided that adequate staffing exists. The university must provide sufficient fiscal support for staff and to attract specialized faculty.
6. The development of border pedagogy requires joint decision-making on the part of experts and community members from both sides of the border. The university must factor this requirement into considering faculty and staff load.

All of these implications lead to these corollaries for university officials considering implementation of similar teacher-preparation programs:

1. The university's mission: The mission exists in relation to the needs of the community.
2. The university's situation: The university both leads to, and reaches into, the community, for direction in establishing purpose and in identifying and connecting with its clientele.

3. Foreign-trained teachers' academic and cultural characteristics: Having limited-English proficiency does not imply having a limited academic ability.
4. The role of placement and proficiency tests: University officials are wise to reconsider the notion that placement and proficiency tests should be used as institutional admission requirements. Instead, use them as diagnostics to develop curriculum or make instructional decisions. When tests are used for high-stakes decisions, the institution is, in fact, denying educational opportunity. A denial of educational opportunity is nothing less than institutional racism.
5. Admissions process for foreign-trained teachers: University officials are urged to develop an expedient, equitable admission process for resident, foreign-credentialed prospective students that is distinct from foreign or international admission, and that accurately assesses the value of post-secondary education in other countries.
6. Teacher-preparation program design: Recognize and build on the different types of preparation and experiences that different students possess. Rather than designing a "one-size-fits-all" program of study, universities must creatively design teacher-preparation programs that meet the needs of the community and build on the attributes of their teacher candidates.
7. Teacher-preparation program design: Articulate 2+2 agreements that lead to a bachelor's degree (*licenciatura*) and certification on both sides of the border.
8. Professional identity: Teacher-preparation programs should include an ethnic-identity-formation component to assist in its incorporation in pre-service teachers and to equip them with the skills and tools to develop such in all students.
9. Induction Support: Teacher-preparation programs should provide support and mentor teachers in their first year of teaching.
10. Leadership: Teacher-preparation programs develop both theoretical knowledge and technical skill, not only to equip teachers in professional practice, but also to help them become leaders in their schools and communities.
11. The relationship between practice and educational theory: Teacher-preparation programs for bilingual education must be based on the effect of theory on practice and practice on theory.

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Two notions exhibit tension in the Southwest borderlands: (a) Carlos Fuentes forecasts a fully integrated U.S.-Mexico labor market (Saldaña, 2002), and (b) many look upon the border region's cultural and linguistic resources from a monolithic perspective. University officials are urged to acknowledge the former by correcting the latter. Establishing bi-national relationships in teacher-preparation programs that encourage clinical experiences on both sides of the border will assist in the development of a border pedagogy that prepares their constituency for a global economy:

The border is not necessarily just a place of subtraction, divergence, and marginalization. It can be a place of congregation, synthesis, and convergence. *Juntos pero no revueltos* (together but not blended) is not a significant ontological possibility at the border—at least in the long run. *Juntos y revueltos* (together and blended) is the inevitable ontological result of the confluence of cultures at the border. To keep cultures completely separated at the border would imply the construction of a hermetic border that is difficult to conceive, and even more difficult to engineer and maintain. The better choice, it would seem, is to accept the ontological proposition that the border region is confluent in nature, primarily additive in its effects, transformational in its character, and energizing, so that new possibilities are always on the horizon. If we accept this proposition, then the Chicano pedagogy that we seek should include this ontological perspective. (Padilla, 2001, p. 3)

Since its inception, *Project Alianza's* goals were not only to prepare bilingual education teachers, but also to challenge preconceived notions about human and cultural capital. More importantly, institutions should be forced to reexamine teacher preparation and reshape policy in view of institutional changes brought about through the integration of foreign-trained teachers in these Project sites. IHEs are well-advised to articulate, research, and establish a border pedagogy within their teacher-preparation programs and to provide for its diffusion in borderlands schools by fully bicultural bilingual education teachers.

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APPENDIX

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Project Alianza Institutional Questions

Name and Institution of Interviewee:

1. What were some institutional barriers in implementing Project Alianza?
2. What special coordination practices (support mechanisms?) did you have to develop?
 - a. Key professors
 - b. Courses in Spanish
 - c. ESL training
3. What kinds of activities did you have to do to recruit? What were some barriers to recruitment?
4. What barriers did the prospective participants face in order to be allowed into project or IHE?
5. What were some prevailing attitudes held by people/faculty/administrations not key to project?
6. What has been the school district reaction to field experience and placement?
7. As result of this project, what facets or developments will you implement into your existing teacher-training program
8. What has been the impact of Project Alianza on your institution?
9. What technology training was provided for the participants?
10. What opportunities did the trainees have to interact with the community?
11. What opportunities did the trainees have to develop multicultural awareness?
12. What specific changes were made:
 - a. To your (overall) teacher-training program curriculum?
 - b. To other program requirements?
 - c. To the content of specific courses?

Project Alianza Principal Interview

Effectiveness:

1. Why did you hire _____ for your school?
2. How has _____ fit into your school?
3. What was your overall impression of _____ during observations or formal evaluation? Can we have a copy of evaluation?
4. How is she/he performing as a BL teacher?
 - a. Is she/he effective in instructional delivery?
 - b. Effective in language use?
 - c. Effective in promoting student academic achievement? And in promoting student self-efficacy (self-regulation)?
 - d. Effective in developing students' ethnic identity and self-concept?
5. Based on his/her performance would you offer them a renewal contract?

Professionalism:

1. How would you rate _____'s professionalism on a scale of 1 (low) through 5 (high)?
2. What aspects of professionalism have you observed in _____?
3. In a couple of sentences, describe _____'s commitment to teaching? To bilingual education?

Professional Relationships:

1. How does she/he interact with students?
2. How does she/he interact with other teachers?
3. How does she/he interact with administrators?
4. How does she/he interact with parents?

Project Alianza Teacher Interview

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(Data Form Information)

Please complete form with the following information:

Name:

Address:

Phone number:

Email:

School & school district:

Ethnicity:

Grade level:

Bilingual Placement (circle): Y/N

Circle your previous training: Para Professional? Number of years?

Normalista? (basica/superior/titulada/licenciatura)?

Number of years taught in Mexico?

What has been your major area of concern as a first-year teacher?

What teacher exit exam have you passed?

TOPT

Bilingual Comprehensive

Professional Development

Early Childhood

Project Alianza: First Year Teacher Interview Reflections

1. Has your perspective about teaching in a bilingual education setting changed during this first year? If so, how has it changed?
2. How do you feel the university has prepared you for the planning and teaching of language minority students?
3. Describe some positive aspects of your classroom environment and identify concerns that you might have.
4. How do you engage students in learning?
5. What is the role of culture and ethnic identity in your classroom?
6. How do you communicate expectations?
7. What has been the most difficult experience that you have encountered as a bilingual teacher during this first semester? How has this issue been addressed?
8. How have you grown professionally?
9. What are your long-range plans?
10. Can you give us some suggestions as how the university can improve the teacher preparation program? Improve the bilingual education teacher preparation component?
11. How have you helped other teachers?

Project Alianza : Preservice Teacher Interview

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(Data Form Information)

Please complete form with the following information:

Name:

Address:

Phone number:

Email:

University:

Ethnicity:

1. How long have you been in Project Alianza?
2. Circle your experiences prior to entering Project Alianza (rank order if more than one, "1 through 3"):
 - Paraprofessional?
 - Traditional?
 - Normalista? (basica/superior/titulada/licenciatura)?
3. Name three things you feel confident about as a future bilingual teacher.
4. Name three things you fear will keep you from becoming a bilingual teacher.

**Preservice Teacher Focus Group Questions
(Focus group: Normalista, Paraprofessional, and
Traditional Preservice Teachers):**

1. What has been the most difficult challenge that you have faced as preservice teacher?
2. Why did you decide to pursue this program of study?
3. What do you think will keep you from finishing the program?
4. What are some differences between children in Mexico and those in your state?
5. Why do you think children who are Mexican American are not as academically successful as other groups of students?
6. What are your long-range plans?
7. What changes do you think the university has (needs) to make in its teacher-training program?
8. I believe I will be a good bilingual teacher because:
9. I believe I may have some difficulties to overcome as a bilingual teacher, because

Questions for former *normalista* teachers only:

1. What are some major differences in teaching in U.S. schools versus Mexico?
 - a. Some ways in which primary education in Mexico is better than in the U.S. are:
 - b. Some ways in which primary education in the U.S. is better than in Mexico are:
2. What are some major differences in your former teacher preparation and the present training?

Questions for former paraprofessionals only:

1. What has been the impact of your experience as a paraprofessional during your teacher preparation program?

ABOUT CBER

The Center for Bilingual Education and Research (CBER) is part of the College of Education, Arizona State University. CBER was founded in 1980. It is one of several university units that promote scholarship and discourse on issues and opportunities related to language, race, and ethnicity. During its early history, CBER served mainly as a technical assistance unit providing training and assistance to schools in the Southwest. In 1998, CBER shifted its focus and is now concerned with policy analysis and scholarship in bilingual and dual-language education.

CBER collaborates with others who share an interest in contextualizing bilingual and dual-language education in a broader framework of needs involving school restructuring and modernization better to serve all children. CBER's vision is to inform bi-national pedagogy uniquely suited to education in the borderlands.

ABOUT IDRA

The Intercultural Development Research Association is a vanguard leadership development and research team working with people to create self-renewing schools that value and empower *all* children, families and communities. It is an independent, non-profit organization that advocates the right of every child to a quality education. For more than 25 years, IDRA has worked for excellence and equity in education in Texas and across the United States. IDRA conducts research and development activities; creates, implements and administers innovative education programs; provides teacher, administrator, and parent training and technical assistance; and develops leadership in communities to result in enlightened educational policies that work for *all* children.

ABOUT MEXICAN AND AMERICAN SOLIDARITY FOUNDATION (FUNDACIÓN SOLIDARIDAD MÉXICO AMERICANA)

The Mexican and American Solidarity Foundation was created to encourage closer ties between Mexicans and the Mexican American and Hispanic community in the United States, as well as to foster collaboration and improve relations between the United States and Mexico. It is a binational, private, non-profit, nonpartisan organization.

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