

The Paraeducator to Teacher Pipeline:

An Innovative Teacher Education Program for Latina(os)

LATINO AND LANGUAGE MINORITY
TEACHER PROJECTS

L²mtp
STRIVING TO MAKE LANGUAGE
AND CULTURE PART OF THE SOLUTION

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Michael Genzuk, Ph.D.
Center for Multilingual, Multicultural Research
Rossier School of Education
University of Southern California

Introduction and Overview

- The Need to Recruit New Teachers in the U.S.
- High Need Areas
- The Teacher Diversity Challenge
- Teacher Prep Programs for Paraeducators
- California's Diversity Challenge
- California's Teacher Diversity Challenge
- Reasons for Establishing Induction Programs
- USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project
- Program Empowerment Principles for Latina(o) School & Career Success
- CMMR Principles for Bilingual Paraeducators
- Conclusions
- Additional CMMR Internet Resources

The Need To Recruit New Teachers In The U.S.

2,000,000 new teachers needed over next decade:

○ Rising Student Enrollments:

America's schools are serving more students than ever before
- even at the height of the baby boom.
(1995: 50.7 million; 2005: 55.9 million)

○ Aging of the Teacher Workforce:

-Average age of public school teachers is 43.
-Public school teachers with > 20 years' experience: 30%

○ Need for Teachers of Color:

-32.7% of public school students are minority vs. 13.5% of their teachers.
-85% of teachers in preparation are white female.

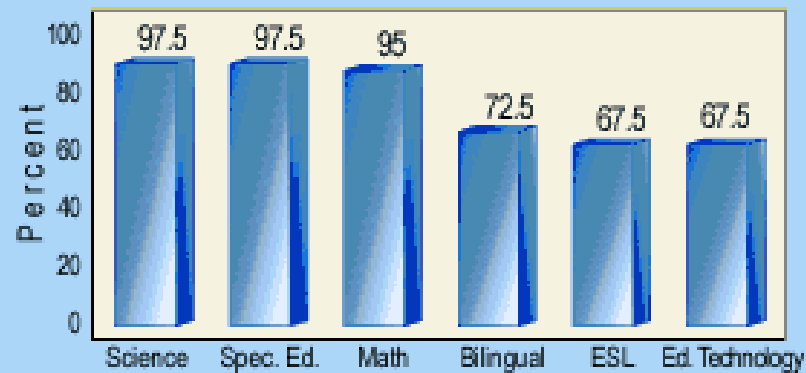
High Need Areas

- **Geographic (particular states, disadvantaged urban, rural schools)**
 - Owing to school enrollment increases, growing student population diversity (racial/ethnic and linguistic), class size reduction.
- **Subjects/fields:**
 - Special education, bilingual education, mathematics, science.
- **Teachers from underrepresented groups**
 - 42% of America's schools have no minority teachers at all.
 - Male teachers needed, especially in elementary levels

Teacher Demand

Teacher Demand

Below are the percentages of 40 urban districts reporting during the 1998-99 school year those teaching specialties in "immediate" demand.



SOURCE: Recruiting New Teachers Inc.

The Teacher Diversity Challenge

- **Minority Percentage of Current Teachers:**
 - White = 86.5%
 - Minority = 13.5%
- **Minority Percentage of Candidates for Bachelor's in Education:**
 - White = 80%
 - Minority = 20%
- **Minority Percentage of School-Age Children:**
 - White = 68.5%
 - Minority = 31.5%

Teacher Prep Programs For Paraeducators

National Survey Findings Indicate

- Over 9,000 participants in responding programs
- More than 3/4 from groups underrepresented in teaching
- 200+ programs located in 30 states, DC, and Canada
- California, Texas, and New York have the most programs
- Close to 3/4 of responding programs operate in urban areas, but not exclusively.

Teacher Prep Programs For Paraeducators

Current Participants - Number and Characteristics

- Over 11,000 paraeducators (conservative estimate)
- Highly experienced
- Mature
- Women outnumber men by nearly 5 to 1.
- 77% are from groups underrepresented in teaching

Teacher Prep Programs For Paraeducators

Incentives and Accommodations:

- Financial:
 - **scholarships, forgivable loans, waivers**
 - **book allotments**
 - **stipends, salary replacement**
 - **fee waivers, reduction**
- Flexible Class Scheduling
 - **evening**
 - **weekends**
 - **summer term**
- Support for meeting state requirements
 - **e. g. , test preparation workshops**
- Preference, priority in hiring

California's Diversity Challenge

Demographic Story

- **Over 60% of Calif. Students come from “minority” backgrounds - now “majority”**
- **Ever-increasing numbers of LM students**
- **California leads the nation in numbers 1.4 million**
- **85% LM student population Latino (1.1 million)**
- **Approx. 41% of state total in L.A. County (86% Spanish speaking)**
- **78% of the student population in L.A. is racially/ethnically other than White**

California's Teacher Diversity Challenge

- By contrast the diversity of California's teaching force has not kept pace with student population
- 80% of California's teachers are Anglo
- 71% of candidates preparing to teach statewide are Anglo
- Majority of L.A. teacher are White (66%), Latino (15%), Asian (6%)
- Chronic shortages of teachers for LM students
- Class size reduction (SB 1777) has increased recruitment challenge.
- Minority teacher recruitment has become high priority

Reasons for Establishing Induction Programs

- Recent Attempts to increase the number of teachers prepared to meet the instructional needs of LM students have proven unsuccessful.
- Promising strategy is to recruit potential candidates from the pool of LM paraeducators. Have ideal attributes needed:
 - From the same ethnic minority communities
 - Familiar with student's background, beliefs and values
 - Many are native speakers of languages other than English
 - Many have personal insight into experience of learning English

Reasons for Establishing Induction Programs

○ Large numbers available

- The total number of paraeducators involved in primary language instruction exceeds the estimated 20,000 bilingual teachers needed in California.
- Studies report that 50% of paraeducators have aspirations to become teachers (Lavadenz, 1994)
- Additional studies indicate that after working as paraeducators for 5 years 75% planned to become teachers (Genzuk, 1995).

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

“Striving to Make Language and Culture Part of the Solution”

○ Primary Objective

- To increase the number of Latinas(os) and language minorities in the teaching profession by creating a career pathway for language minority paraeducators.

○ Primary Strategy

- Provide support and assistance, financially, socially and academically to promising paraeducators to enable them to successfully complete a teacher education program and become successful bilingual teachers.

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Background

- USC Center for Multilingual, Multicultural Research founded Latino Teacher Project
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- Initial funding from Ford Foundation to support the initiation and operation of a Consortium to carry out the operating goals of the Project, later funded by US Department of Education
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- Partner organizations have succeeded in streamlining the “pathway” to teaching for participating paraeducators

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Program Description

Project has transformed teacher education experience into seamless induction process that actively involves universities, school districts, schools, and labor organizations

- **“Early Induction”** - includes the teacher education course work supplemented by a supervised laboratory experience that paraeducators encounter at participating project schools.

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Program Description (cont.)

- **“Intermediate induction”** extends the apprenticeship model, allowing paraeducators to complete their student teaching while receiving assistance from carefully selected master teachers, individual mentors, and university personnel.
- **“Advanced induction”** provides the support and assessment that have been lacking for new teachers to both improve instructional performance and retain this population in a workforce very susceptible to burnout.

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Program Description (cont.)

- **“Post induction”** involves an advanced integration into the teaching profession through graduate study, professional staff development support, and leadership development.
- **Currently we are developing an “advanced induction” program for first and second year bilingual teachers, including LTP graduates in Los Angeles (LMBTSA).**

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Consortium Structure

- The Project is administered by the USC CMMR and overseen by a widely representative consortium that shares in decision making and provides substantial support for participants which includes four core universities, six school districts, a county office of education, and two labor organizations representing both paraeducators and teachers.
- From the start, consortium members have met as a committee of the whole to review plans and progress.
- Much of the work to date has required cooperation among all consortium partners.

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Founding Consortium Partners included:

- University of Southern California
- California State University, Los Angeles
- California State University, Dominguez Hills
- Loyola Marymount University
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- Little Lake City School District
- Lennox School District
- Los Angeles County Office of Education
- L. A. City and County School Employees Union Local 99
- United Teachers Los Angeles

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Governance of Consortium - Shared Decision Making

Policy Determinations

- "Committee of the Whole" meets regularly to govern project
- Project policy is determined by consensus of Committee

Financial Judgements

- Made by Principal Investigator and Director informed by Policies set by Committee of the Whole
- Individual contracts and agreements are negotiated with Consortium members and outside contractors for services needed

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Activities of Consortium Members School District, Labor Organizations and Project Staff

- Identified and elicited participation from schools with high need for Latino/Bilingual teachers.
- Identified Paraeducators who were interested and qualified in participating in the Project.
- Identified faculty mentors and helped to develop policies so that mentors would be able to provide services to Project participants.
- Collaborated on financial, social and academic conditions favorable to support participating Paraeducators.

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Activities of Consortium Members Universities

- Heads up effort to meet and interview Project participants.
- Developed a “Program of Studies” - acts as guide or survival manual.
- Coordinates on-going meetings with other IHE’s who participate to assure this information is pertinent to all participants.
- Designs and implemented Adjunct Class sessions.
- Designs and implements university advisement components.

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Activities of Consortium Members County Office of Education

- Set up Project Seminars - DAP
- Assisted with School site presentations to staff
- Assisted in IHE communications

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Identification and Selection of Project Schools

- Schools selected from 3 participating School Districts, LAUSD, Little Lake City School District, Lennox School District.
- Because selected schools play a pivotal role in the determination of project goals and their implementation, their selection is taken seriously.
- Once the schools have been selected, the Project recruits para's from these sites.

Characteristics of Selected Schools

- A history of providing a supportive, nurturing environment for paraeducators
- A critical mass of bilingual Latina(o) paraeducators wishing to become teachers
- A preponderance of experienced, credentialed bilingual education teachers willing to work with the para's
- A sufficient number of bilingual teachers willing to serve as faculty mentors for the project para's
- Scheduling flexibility for para's so they can attend staff development activities, project-sponsored seminars and workshops, and conferences
- Scheduling flexibility for para's who need to prepare for college-related work, i.e. exams, lectures, assignments

Project Participants

- Selected schools identify, assess, and nominate bilingual paraeducators to join the project. The project admits para's in their sophomore, junior, senior, or postbaccalaureate years of teacher preparation.
- To maintain eligibility in the Project and meet state certification requirements participants must:
 - maintain a appropriate GPA
 - show evidence of making steady progress toward program completion

Factors in Selection of Candidates

- Recommendations from principals and others in schools where para's employed
- Strong academic records
- Availability of suitable mentor teachers at school sites
Fluent bilingually
- Committed to becoming bilingual teachers

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Components of Support

Financial Assistance

- Students of low socioeconomic status, which includes the majority of paraeducators, depend greatly on financial aid to pursue degrees in higher education.
- Consortium partners constantly seek financial sponsorship and assistance for participants.
- Participants receive scholarship paid biannually providing they maintain normal progress toward degree completion (2.75 GPA & 20 semester units annually)
- Scholarship can be used for non-academic expenses such as child care, transportation, etc.

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Components of Support

Academic and Social Support

- Latina(o) paraeducators run into more academic difficulties than most other teacher education candidates.
- Para's are typically the first generation in their families to attend college,
- Para's often feel insecure in higher education settings and frequently experience a sense of isolation, particularly when they attend predominantly White universities.
- The demands of a full-time job and part-time studies tend to create family tensions for many as well.

USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Project

Components of Support

Academic and Social Support

To address these academic and social concerns, the project has developed a creative network of support.

- Cohorts of paraeducators
- On-site Faculty mentors
- Adjunct class sessions
- Project socials
- School site presentations and meetings
- Professional development support
- Support for conference participation

Program Empowerment Principles for Latina(o) School & Career Success

Institutional Support - Latina(o) students must access institutional support embedded in social networks that provide attachments to individuals as “institutional agents”. These agents have the capacity and commitment to provide or negotiate institutional resources, support and opportunities. To gain access to the “institutional funds of knowledge,” Latinas(os) must be provided access to these social networks.

Social Capital - Latina(o) students must access the social relations and networks from which they can derive institutional support. Latina(o) students must be encouraged to rely on the social capital they have as a group to collaborate and cooperate to succeed in college and encourage the success of future generations.

Social Scaffolding - Latina(o) students must be placed in a zone of proximal development where they can learn from a more capable peer while engaged in an academic task and where they can learn from a more experienced mentor with respect to their career development. Mentoring is an essential feature of social scaffolding.

Program Empowerment Principles for Latina(o) School & Career Success

Additive Caring - In order for Latinas(os) to enjoy the same advantages as more privileged peers, we must build upon these students "community funds of knowledge" in an additive fashion that promotes **bilingualism, biculturalism, and binationalism** while also providing them with the resources to cross cultural and social borders.

Pro-active Front loading - In order for Latinas(os) to navigate the higher education system, programmatic interventions cannot wait for students to reach a transition period, but must engage them well before they enter the next system of education. Examples include a fast-start program, a pre-articulation program, a pre-college academic socialization bootcamp, high school/community college co-enrollment, and community college four year college co-enrollment.

Anticipatory Professional and Integrative Socialization - Many Latinas(os) are not familiar with the U.S. occupational structure, the features of a credentialing society, and how these are tied together. Many Latina(o) students are akin to vocational education students but in a traditional university academic setting. Programs must build upon this vocational orientation and academically and culturally enrich it.

Program Empowerment Principles for Latina(o) School & Career Success

Affirmation of Family and Community - Family is of foremost importance to most Latinas(os). For many Latinas(os), completing college requires balancing family, work, and university obligations. Successful interventions attend to this balance through child care, pooling of resources, flexible apprentice work hours, and flexible scheduling of classes.

Public Celebration and Acclaim for Accomplishments - Nothing reaffirms the collective conscience and spirit than does public acclaim for accomplishments, including award banquets, newsletters, certificates of awards, special graduation ceremonies, and other activities that articulate culturally responsive norms of Latina(o) generated success.

Program Empowerment Principles for Latina(o) School & Career Success

Affirmation of Differences within the Latina(o) Community -

Interventions must be sensitive to cultural and nationality differences, but they must also attend the incorporation of Latinas(os) to the U.S. Those who come as political refugees will feel a duty to bring remaining family to the U.S.; those whose families migrated north with the intention of returning but who settled must deal with articulating their own acculturation; and those who immigrated without the intention of returning are motivated to overcome all obstacles. Native-born Latinas(os) succeed to the extent that they perceive schooling will pay off.

Student Community Self-Empowerment - Latina(o) students must be placed in settings that lead to self-empowerment. We cannot wait for schools and universities to change; instead, students and community must learn to access institutional funds of knowledge. They must control their own destinies with the mediated assistance of institutional agents who can provide institutional funds of knowledge and opportunities.

CMMR Principles for Bilingual Paraeducators

Structured within the context of the
California Standards for the Teaching Profession

- As part of a teacher-paraeducator instructional team, engage and support all students in learning.
- As part of a teacher-paraeducator instructional team, create and maintain an effective and culturally responsive environment for student learning.
- As part of a teacher-paraeducator instructional team, organize subject matter in a comprehensible and meaningful manner for student learning.

CMMR Principles for Bilingual Paraeducators

Structured within the context of the
California Standards for the Teaching Profession

- As part of a teacher-paraeducator instructional team, plan instruction and design culturally and linguistically responsive learning for all students.
- As part of a teacher-paraeducator instructional team, assess student learning in a culturally and linguistically responsive manner.
- As part of a teacher-paraeducator instructional team, reflect on teaching practices and university preparation to develop as a culturally and linguistically responsive professional educator.

Conclusions

- To effectively recruit paraeducators into teacher education and to retain them through graduation and certification, programs must be specifically designed for them.
- By changing the way colleges and universities operate we can provide the sorely needed language minority teachers for understaffed schools.
- With the involvement of other significant stakeholders that will benefit from the upward mobility and professional preparation of this potential workforce, we are not only providing minority teachers but also creating a vision of possibilities for revising teacher education for all candidates. In this evolving model, teacher education is an extended induction process in which schools and other participating agencies are active partners in selecting and preparing future teachers for students.

USC Center for Multilingual, Multicultural Research

For Additional Information Visit Our Websites at:

Center for Multilingual, Multicultural Research

<http://www.cmmr.org>

Latino and Language Minority Teacher Projects

<http://www-rcf.usc.edu/~cmmr/LTP.html>

National Clearinghouse on Paraeducator Resources

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/education/CMMR/Clearinghouse.html>

Language Minority Beginning Teacher Support & Assessment

http://www.usc.edu/dept/education/CMMR/CMMR_BTSA_home.html