# The development of teacher expertise to work with multilingual students: A critical sociocultural perspective

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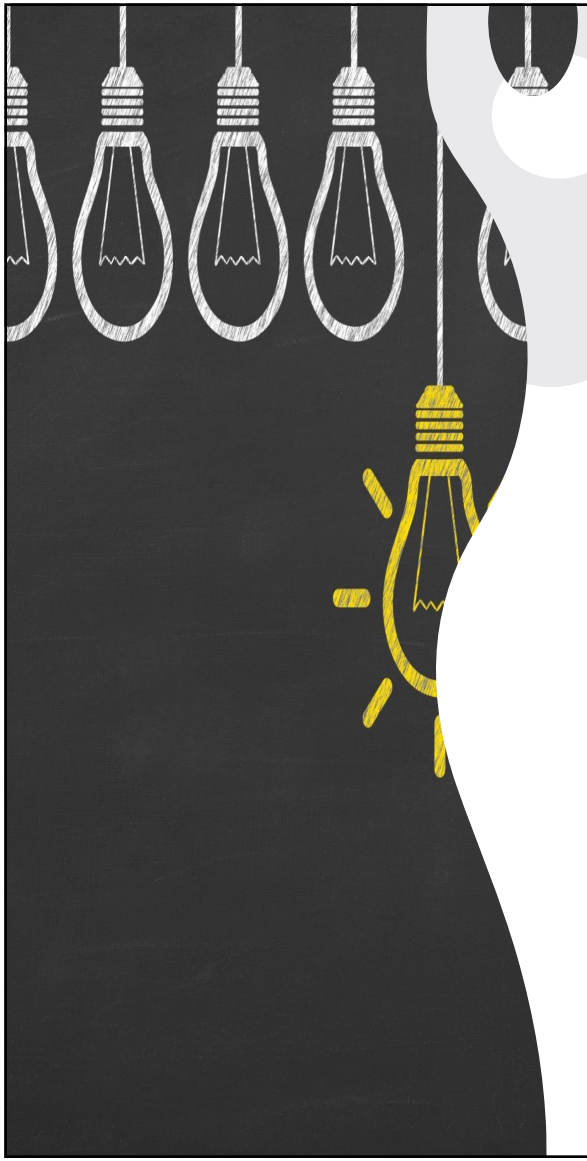
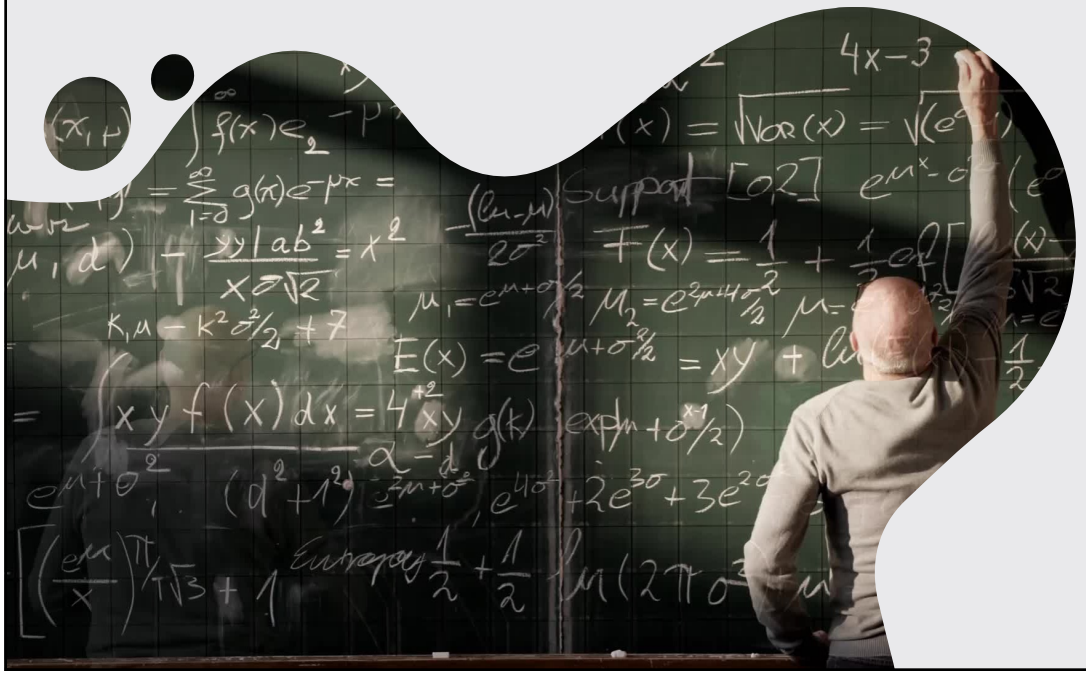


# Agenda

1. What is teacher expertise? Or who are teacher experts?
2. Critical review of teacher expertise research
3. What are the foundations of teacher expertise to work with multilingual students?
4. Examples of pre-service teachers' understanding of working with multilingual students in K-12 schools
5. Critical sociocultural teaching practices (theoretically grounded, equity-oriented approach to working with multilingual students)

# Teacher Expertise? What characterizes teacher experts?



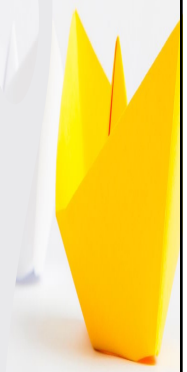
Collins dictionary

**Expertise** is special skill or knowledge that is acquired by training, study, or practice.

# Definition of Teacher Experts (NCTE)

While NCTE celebrates veteran teachers who have given decades to their classroom teaching careers, being a veteran teacher is not the sole definition of a teacher expert. Instead, teacher experts can be defined as teachers who continue teaching in their P–12 classrooms while also making a commitment to intentional professional growth that is sustained over time and years of practice (in and beyond classroom spaces). Teacher experts:

- continually hone the art and craft of teaching by studying their own practice;
- engage in teaching that responds effectively to particular moments in the context of their classrooms and work with students;
- foster authentic, equitable, and caring relationships with students, their families, and the communities in which they teach; and
- seek leadership opportunities and professional learning within their schools and elsewhere while remaining active classroom teachers.



# Pathways to Teacher Expertise (NCTE)

Pathways to becoming a teacher expert are individual and varied. An educator who is committed to sustained professional learning and reflective practice, whether through formal or informal design, may be a teacher expert. Some examples of pathways to teacher expertise include but are not limited to

- classroom-based action research;
- coursework and advanced degrees;
- mentorship of early career educators;
- involvement in instructional leadership teams;
- leadership in curriculum committees;
- leadership in professional organizations;

## Three most commonly cited domains of expertise: Professional practice, knowledge base, and pedagogical practice

### Professional practice

"Salient findings indicate that, with regard to professional practice, expert teachers reflect extensively and often critically on their practice, help their colleagues frequently, and are continuous learners throughout their careers." Expert teachers are driven by "moral duty" toward their learners and exhibit unconditional care for them; have a passion for teaching, a positive self-image, and a desire to succeed in their profession; have a habit of reflection and a desire for lifelong learning; and work in collaboration with their peers.

Anderson, J., & Taner, G. (2023). Building the expert teacher prototype: A metasummary of teacher expertise studies in primary and secondary education. *Educational Research Review 38*, 100485.

# Professional Practice

Teacher experts (TEs) have a continuous desire to improve and learn throughout their careers, often through proactive engagement in their own continuing professional development and in-service qualifications, and often through collaboration with peers.

This interest in collaboration manifested itself both directly and indirectly. Direct manifestation included, for example, their participation in professional learning communities. Indirect manifestation included frequent evidence of ETs helping colleagues and offering support of a range of types, such as mentoring and informal peer support alongside formalized teacher educator and leadership positions. They were also found regularly to share resources and/or ideas with colleagues

# Knowledge base, cognitive processes and beliefs

**Knowledge base**:

Expert teachers have well-developed pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987), knowledge about their learners (general & specific), and their curriculum.

*Educational contexts

**Cognitive processes**:

ETs are often found to engage in what Bereiter and Scardamalia (1993) call "progressive problem solving": learning from their experimentation/improvisation when confronted with the unexpected.

**Beliefs**:

The most salient of many that are reported relate to issues of interpersonal practice, including beliefs in the importance of building good relationships with their learners, in engaging them throughout the lesson, and in treating each learner as an individual, aware of their diverse needs and backgrounds (again linking back to teacher knowledge of learners). [sense of moral duty towards learners]

# Pedagogical practice

ETs display flexibility in the classroom, build strong interpersonal relationships with their learners, whom they engage through their choice of activities and content, and frequently make use of strategies typically emphasized in both constructivist and learner-centered education literatures.

ETs are careful planners, although they may not necessarily plan in written form (for some, planning may be wholly mental), and they consider learners' needs when planning, yet without overlooking long-term (e.g., curricular) objectives. However, paradoxically, ETs are also frequently reported as flexible and contingent planners, aware that they may need to change tack in class if required.

ETs regularly adapt core curriculum (e.g., textbook) materials, and that they supplement these with their own materials or activity types. One of the most frequently reported themes reveals that expert teachers are—despite their careful planning—able to display flexibility during the lesson, improvising and responding appropriately to the learning as it happens (i.e., what is frequently referred to as "adaptive expertise" in the literature) cf. "Responsive mediation" (Johnson & Golombek, 2016, 2018, 2020)

Formative assessment is central to ETs' practices.

# Pedagogical practice

## Interaction dynamics in the classroom

There was strong evidence that ETs make regular use of collaborative learning), including, sometimes, the more specific practices of “cooperative learning”. There was also evidence that this was balanced with teacher-led activities, such as whole-class teaching that involved a wide range of strategies to convey content (further evidence of ETs' well-developed PCK), and with independent (non-collaborative) seatwork). During both seatwork and pair/groupwork, ETs were frequently observed to monitor learning actively, circulating around the classroom and offering individual support, while also assessing progress and keeping learners on task. This was prominent among several ways in which ETs were found to individualize learning, enabling them to provide differentiated instruction appropriate to learners’ individual needs, interests or challenges

ledge base

# Teacher expertise to work with multilingual students? What are your thoughts?

| | What research on TE found | Additional components: Working with multilingual students? |
|---|---|---|
| **professional practice** | ETs reflect extensively and often critically reflect on their practice, collaborate with their colleagues frequently, and are continuous learners. throughout their careers. | |
| **knowledge base, cognitive processes, beliefs** | -ETs have well-developed pedagogical content knowledge and knowledge about their learners, curriculum, and educational contexts.<br>-They are good at progressive problem solving.<br>-They are driven by sense of moral duty towards their learners. | |
| **Pedagogic practice** | -ETs build strong interpersonal relationships with their learners.<br>-They frequently use constructivist, learner-centered strategies<br>-They display "adaptive expertise"<br>-They monitor learning actively while also assessing progress and keeping learners on task (ongoing formative assessment) | |

# Participants' contributions: teacher expertise to work with multilingual students

Missing in the teacher expertise prototype reported by Anderson, J., & Taner, G. (2023).

- Trauma-informed pedagogy
- Knowledge about L2 development
- The ability to adapt curriculum and teaching practices
- Knowledge about students' time of arrival & educational backgrounds
- Knowledge about children/adolescents' development
- Content-teacher & language-teacher collaboration [shared responsibility to teach multilingual students]
- Additive positioning of multilingual students
- Engagement with parents and community

# “Be the Beacon”
# composed by a PSU pre-service teacher candidate

In the classroom, I stand, a beacon of light,
Witnessing the struggle, the silent cry,
For those whose words falter in unfamiliar tongue,
Whose voices are hushed, their songs not sung.

Whispers softly, lost amidst the clamor
Of an unfamiliar sea of words,
Their struggles echo silent screams for help
Against the currents of linguistic oppression

As a torchbearer of tomorrow's learning,
I stand firm in my commitment
To dismantle these barriers,
To sow seeds of equity, understanding to all who need.

Translanguaging becomes my compass,
Navigating through the maze of languages,
Creating bridges where walls once stood,
A symphony of voices harmonizing in unity.

I reach out to parents, forging alliances,
A support team united in purpose,
Nurturing not just students, but dreams,
Together, we weave a safety net of empowerment.

Multiple languages adorn our space,
A celebration of diversity,
Where every word is a beacon
Guiding us towards understanding light.

In this classroom, I plant the seeds of change,
Cultivating a garden of inclusivity,
Where linguistic barriers have no place
And the promise of education knows no bounds.

## Collaborating with Dr. Annela Teemant

Professor of Language Education
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)


Teemant, A. (2014). A mixed methods investigation of instructional coaching for teachers of diverse learners. *Urban Education, 49*(5), 574–604.

Teemant, A., & Sherman, B. J. (2022). Coaching content teachers toward pedagogical equity for multilingual students. *The European Journal of Applied Linguistics and TEFL, 11*(1), 169–187.

Haneda, M., Teemant, A., & Sherman, B.J. (2017). Instructional coaching through dialogic interaction: Helping a teacher to become agentive in her practice. Language & Education, 31(1), 46-64)

# Critical Sociocultural Perspectives on Learning

## Vygotsky's Learning Theory

Knowledge is cultural

Learning is social

Teaching is facilitating

Performance is situative

- The space between the teacher and learners is active with responsive assistance during Zone of Proximal Development Activity.
- Learning is change.

## Freire's Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy, unlike traditional pedagogy, rejects the "banking concept of education" where teachers "make deposits which students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat" (1970, p. 53).

Culture and context matter in learning!

In critical classrooms, Freire argued that students must ***name*** or identify their experiences, question and ***reflect*** critically upon academic content, power relationships, and everyday assumptions, and then ***take action*** to transform inequities—or improve the world.

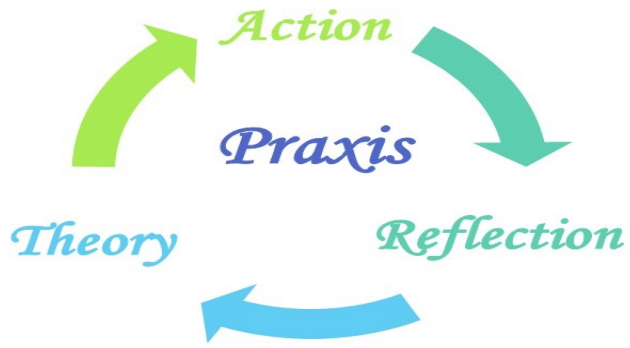
Change is a humanizing process of becoming.

# Critical Sociocultural Perspectives on Learning

## Freire's concept of praxis

Praxis (Action/Reflection)

"reflection and action directed at the structures to be transformed" (1970., p. 126)

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Change is a humanizing process of becoming.

Freire (1994) vividly described learners as being "in the process of *becoming*—as unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality" (p. 65). Through dialogue, he maintained that teachers and students "become jointly responsible for a process, in which all grow" (p .61)

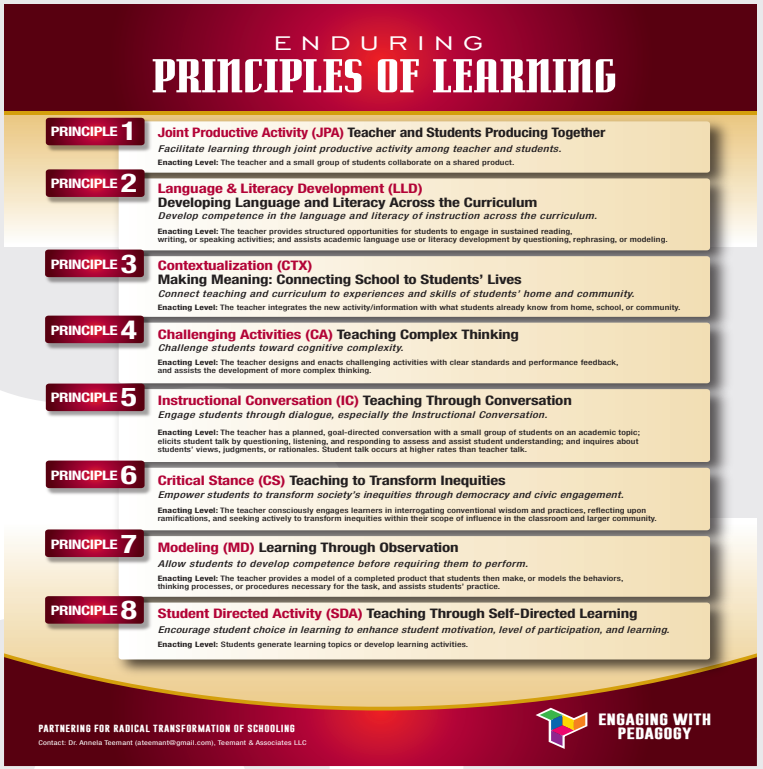
# Enduring Principles of Learning Program

*Work During Zone of Proximal Development Activity*

**A Coherent Pedagogical Approach Integrating Language, Learning, & Culture**

## Critical Sociocultural Practices:

- Collaboration
- Language Use
- Meaning Making
- Complex Thinking
- Dialogic Learning
- Civic Engagement
- Modeling
- Self-Directed Activity




**Target: Simultaneous use of at least 3 of the 8 principles in each activity to mediate learning.**

The EPL Program is Innovative and Intentional in its Mirrored Layering of Contextualized, Dialogic, and Mediated Spaces for Learning

- Teacher Educator Guided Learning: 30-hour Intensive Summer Institute
- Coach-Teacher Interactions: Seven Cycles of Coaching
- Teacher-Student Interactions: Year-Long Learning Community Implementation with Students

# Quantitative Findings

**RQ1. Transformation:** Do coached teachers significantly differ from control group teachers in using the Enduring Principles of Learning during mathematics instruction?
**Finding:** The EPL coaching program significantly transformed teachers' use of critical sociocultural practices compared to a control group with large effect sizes.

Table 2

*T-test* for Equality of Means (2-tailed), Standard Error Difference, and 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
Note: * indicates p-value is statistically significant

| Ratings Categories | t | df | p-value | Hedges' correction | M Difference (Never – Ever) | 95% CI of the Difference | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| JPA | -2.50 | 29.20 | 0.019* | 0.87 | -0.66 | -1.20 | -0.12 |
| LLD | -2.73 | 32 | 0.010* | 1.12 | -0.98 | -1.71 | -0.25 |
| CXT | 0.02 | 32 | 0.984 | 1.07 | 0.01 | -0.73 | 0.75 |
| CA | -2.04 | 32 | 0.049* | 0.98 | -0.68 | -1.36 | -0.00 |
| IC | -1.98 | 32 | 0.056 | 0.95 | -0.64 | -1.30 | 0.02 |
| CS | -0.78 | 32 | 0.439 | 0.38 | -0.10 | -0.36 | 0.16 |
| Total | -2.43 | 32 | 0.021* | 3.91 | -3.24 | -5.95 | -0.53 |

# Quantitative Findings

**RQ 2: Impact on Student Learning:** Do students of coached elementary mathematics teachers outperform control group students in (a) language development (WIDA ACCESS Overall Score) or (b) mathematics learning (NWEA second grade?

**Finding:** Coached teacher use of EPL pedagogy significantly increased students' K-2 NWEA mathematics achievement compared to never-coached teachers.

Coached teachers had a statistically significant and positive effect on K-1 students' mathematics performance, with students of coached teachers scoring 13.58 points higher than those of never-coached teachers.

Coached teachers significantly and positively affected second-grade students' test performance, with students scoring 9.42 points higher than students of never-coached teachers.

# What facilitates or inhibits equity-oriented professional learning


Haneda, M., , Magdany-Saa, M., Teemant, A., & Sherman, B.J. (2024). Tensions in school context and teacher praxis in equity-oriented professional learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 140.

Highlights

- Coaching supports teachers in taking up new equity-oriented pedagogical practices.
- School contexts produce different tensions that impact teacher learning.
- School climate and principal leadership style generate different types of tension.
- Supportive work environments allow teachers to embrace tensions productively.
- Negative school factors stifle teacher reflection and uptake of new practices.