

Modeling Sociocultural Pedagogy in Distance Education

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Increasing numbers of English as a second language (ESL) learners throughout the United States have created an urgent need for professional development for millions of teachers. Distance education offers an opportunity for high-quality professional development to be delivered to collaborative teams of teachers at local school sites. However, research has shown that effectively meeting the needs of second language learners requires sociocultural pedagogy. The challenge has been to develop an approach to distance education that attends to sociocultural perspectives of learning and models sociocultural pedagogy. In developing a bilingual/ESL endorsement program, teacher educators at Brigham Young University have met this challenge with the ProfessorsPlus model for sociocultural pedagogy in distance education. This article describes this innovative approach to distance education.

During the past decade the number of students in the United States classified as limited English proficient (LEP) has increased dramatically and includes 3.7 million students or 8% of pre-K–12 enrollment (Kindler 2002). Research has indicated that preparing teachers to respond to the needs of students who are diverse in culture, language, or learning is paramount if public schools are to equitably serve all students (Darling-Hammond 1997; Goodlad 1998; Kohl and Witty 1996), and there is clear evidence that effectively teaching diverse student populations in mainstream classrooms requires sociocultural pedagogy (Tharp 1997; Dalton 1998). Research has also shown that K–12 teachers have not been prepared to effectively support and accommodate English as a second language (ESL) students in their classrooms (Clair 1995; Faltis and Hudelson 1994; Penfield 1987). In 1997, Brigham Young University (BYU) responded to this urgent need by developing its Bilingual/ESL Endorsement Through Distance Education (BEEDE) program. This article describes the sociocultural model for distance education developed for and used in the BEEDE program.

The scope and urgency of the need to quickly prepare large numbers of in-service teachers fits the typical motives for selecting a distance learning format designed to meet the needs of working adults. Distance learning formats increase scheduling flexibility and overcome physical barriers of content delivery. Although distance learning includes “any formal approach to instruction in which the majority of the instruction occurs while educator and learner are not in each other’s physical presence” (Mehrotra, Hollister, and McGahey 2001, 1), distance education intended to prepare teachers to more effectively teach diverse students must be different from most distance education in two important ways. It must (1) attend to sociocultural perspectives on learning and (2) model sociocultural pedagogy. This article describes an innovative distance education model that embraces these two components.

A COMPELLING NEED FOR SOCIOCULTURAL PEDAGOGY IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Sociocultural perspectives on learning and teaching (Vygotsky 1978; Bakhtin 1981; Rogoff and Wertsch 1984; Wertsch 1985, 1991; Tharp and Gallimore 1989; Rogoff 1990) and sociocultural models for pedagogy (Tharp 1997; Dalton 1998) provide a research-based foundation upon which to build the content and pedagogy of a bilingual/ESL endorsement program that is able to encourage and model teaching that is both equitable for and effective with all students. These sociocultural perspectives on learning, teaching, and performance can be summarized as follows:

- *Learning is social.* Learning occurs through internalization and automatization of social activities. Individuals construct personal understandings and abilities by way of cooperative interactions and negotiation of shared meanings in social contexts. Language and other social tools mediate learning, and structured experiences can produce expected patterns of development.
- *Teaching is assisting.* Teaching consists of structuring goal-directed learning activities and assisting performance of learners during meaningful and productive social interactions. Teachers, as more-capable others, provide assistance within the learner’s zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is the range between unassisted and assisted successful performance. Effective learning activities provide opportunities for guided reinvention of knowledge that is valued by society in situations that are motivating for learners.
- *Performance is situative.* Automatization occurs in learners when performance of a particular task in a familiar situation becomes automatic,

subconscious, and integrated and thus no longer requires self-regulation or assistance from others. Deautomatization occurs when performance of a new task or performance in an unfamiliar situation is beyond the learner's present development and the learner returns to requiring self-regulating activities or assistance from others for success.

SOCIOCULTURAL PEDAGOGY

Researchers at the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE) have synthesized the broad consensus of sociocultural research on learning and teaching into a model for sociocultural pedagogy consisting of five standards for effective pedagogy. This model provides five specific actions by teachers and student peers designed to support learning by providing assistance during social interaction in and discourse about culturally meaningful activities. These five standards are:

1. Joint productive activity (JPA): Facilitate learning through joint productive activity among teacher and students.
2. Language and literacy development (LLD): Develop competence in the language and literacy of instruction across the curriculum.
3. Making meaning (MM): Connect teaching and curriculum with experiences and skills of students' home and community.
4. Complex thinking (CT): Challenge students toward cognitive complexity.
5. Instructional conversation (IC): Engage students through dialogue, especially the instructional conversation. (Dalton 1998, 6)

Meeting the needs of diverse learners requires more than minor adjustments in the common tradition of teacher-centered, behavior-oriented practices. The sociocultural practices encouraged by these five standards work with all students because they provide strategies for becoming both *effective* (able to help each individual student learn what is essential) and *equitable* (able to ensure that all students experience learning success).

Professional development programs need to model in clear and convincing ways the sociocultural pedagogy teachers are expected to learn and implement in their classrooms. A distance education format that models sociocultural pedagogy should be very different from typical distance education formats that tend to isolate students, dispense knowledge through one-way communication, and have low expectations for student-teacher and student-student interaction in culturally meaningful productive activities and discourse. The challenge has been to devise a distance education

delivery system that effectively uses and builds understanding of sociocultural pedagogy.

EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In addition to modeling sociocultural pedagogy, professional development from a sociocultural perspective should also reflect relevant research on designing effective professional development and attending to the needs of adult learners. Richardson (1996) argued that “the context of schooling and classroom experiences exert powerful influences on teachers’ developing beliefs and knowledge” (113). Consequently, effective professional development must exert similarly “powerful” influences to have any chance at changing teachers’ beliefs and practices. These influences need to include (1) problematizing current practices, (2) socially constructing alternative practices, and (3) reflecting on results of changes in practice. Hawley and Valli (1999) indicated that effective professional development works best when, among other things, it is school-based, is organized around collaborative problem solving, develops understanding, and is part of an ongoing, comprehensive change process designed to improve student learning.

In addition, Egan and Gibb (1997) summarized features of effective student-centered instruction for adult learners. This instruction is clear and understandable (Lowman 1984), responds to the ways in which students learn and communicate (Kolb 1984), acknowledges students’ interests and motivations (Forsyth and McMillan 1991), honors the social nature of learning (Johnson, Johnson, and Smith 1991), engages students (Bonwell and Eison 1991), and focuses on the explicit needs of learners for meaningful and timely feedback (Van Houten 1980).

SUMMARIZING SOCIOCULTURAL PEDAGOGY FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Combining what is known about effective professional development with these ideas for student-centered adult learning, we can argue that effective distance education for the professional development of teachers should model sociocultural pedagogy while responding to instructional design issues involving (1) clarity, (2) motivation, (3) community, (4) immediacy, (5) engagement, and (6) reflection. Part of the challenge for designing distance education from a sociocultural perspective involves the attention to these features of effective professional development and distance education from within the general model for sociocultural pedagogy.

In what follows, the content, purposes, and goals of BYU’s BEEDE program will first be outlined. The distance education model used in the

BEEDE program will then be detailed, demonstrating the model's attention to teaching and modeling sociocultural perspectives and pedagogy.

BEEDE PROGRAM CONTENT, PURPOSES, AND GOALS

The primary purpose of the BEEDE program is to advance the education of language minority students through professional development of teachers. The program meets this purpose by preparing teachers to work with linguistically and culturally diverse learners in their regular classrooms using pedagogy that is inclusive of and effective with all learners. Teachers learn important principles and practices that support their own continued learning and growth as professionals through interaction with and service to all of the students in their classrooms. The design goals for the program included (1) providing active, technology-supported distance learning experiences, making the latest research-based knowledge for teaching ESL students (cf. Fillmore and Snow 2000) both accessible to participants and applicable to their students; (2) nurturing reflective teachers as they integrate theory and practice in solving their own teaching challenges; and (3) immersing participants in exemplary pedagogy, content, technology, and assessment. In accomplishing these goals, the BEEDE program provides an extended, coherent experience that focuses on the content, pedagogy, and pedagogical content knowledge needed to teach English to speakers of other languages in the context of teaching academic content.

The program consists of six college-level courses and a practicum component with ESL students. The six courses are Foundations of Bilingual Education, Understanding Language Acquisition, Assessment for Linguistically Diverse Students, Developing Second Language Literacy, Methods for Integrating Content and Language Instruction, and Family, School, and Community Partnerships. Each of these courses integrates content and strategies of second language acquisition, academic content, and sociocultural pedagogy that can be effective with all learners. Taking these courses sequentially, the endorsement program requires approximately two years to complete.

The first of these courses, Foundations of Bilingual Education, introduces the Inclusive Pedagogy framework (Table 1) as a way of learning about language minority students and as a statement of standards for responding to their individual needs. The term *inclusive pedagogy* both signifies developing common understandings within culturally diverse communities and reminds teachers that teaching can be an act of advocacy for minority students. We use the Inclusive Pedagogy framework to conceptually organize professional development that enables educators to learn how to respond in educationally appropriate ways to the linguistic,

Table 1. Inclusive pedagogy framework

Standards	Goal questions	Reflection for change questions
<p>Collaboration</p> <p>Meeting the needs of today's language minority students demands collaboration across academic disciplines, institutions, and school-home cultures.</p>	<p>1. Who are our language minority students?</p> <p>2. What needs do language minority students have?</p> <p>3. How can collaboration help me better meet students' needs and utilize their strengths?</p> <p>4. What programs and practices exist to serve language minority students?</p> <p>5. What does it mean to know in my discipline and classroom in contrast to other disciplines and classrooms?</p>	<p>How can I engage with other people in different disciplines and classrooms within my educational setting to support students' development as knowers?</p>
<p>Guiding principles</p> <p>Effective instruction for language minority students must be guided by theoretical and moral principles.</p>	<p>1. How does recognizing multiple perspectives inform my teaching and learning?</p> <p>2. How can I develop and maintain high expectations for all students?</p> <p>3. How does current knowledge about language minority students inform my instructional decisions?</p> <p>4. How can accountability be instilled and promoted in my students and me throughout our educational lives?</p>	<p>How can I apply these guiding principles to my teaching and curriculum?</p>
<p>Essential policy</p> <p>Essential policy must be an integral part of advocacy for language minority students.</p>	<p>1. How do my content area standards interface with standards addressing language minority students?</p> <p>2. How can/do classifications both expand and limit my ability to advocate for language minority students?</p>	<p>What are my moral obligations toward language minority students in my teaching?</p>

Critical learning domains	Learning involves cognitive, social/affective, and linguistic development.	3. What policies and legislation address the education of language minority students?	How can I demonstrate understanding of diverse learners' commonalities and uniqueness in critical learning domains in the process of teaching?
Classroom strategies	Teachers must know the what and the why of effective classroom strategies for language minority students.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can I influence students' ability to recognize, participate in, and master playing the school game? 2. How can I support students in a learning environment so that they are able to demonstrate what they know? 3. How do I teach in ways that support the language development of language minority students? 	<p>What specific changes will I make in my own teaching to accommodate language minority students?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can I adjust my planning to meet the needs and utilize the strengths of language minority students? 2. How can my teaching accommodate language minority students? 3. How can I diversify assessment practices to enable language minority students to demonstrate their knowledge?

Source: Teemant et al. 1998.

cultural, and learning diversity of students in their classrooms. This framework emphasizes sociocultural content and inquiry as a tool to support social construction of effective ways for meeting the needs of all students.

The Inclusive Pedagogy framework is defined by five characteristics, each of which is associated with a standard, three to five goal questions, and a reflection-for-change question. The characteristics provide the lenses through which factors impacting the school experience of language minority students in the United States can be examined. The goal questions promote common understandings, and the reflection-for-change questions promote united advocacy. In the BEEDE program the focus of the Inclusive Pedagogy framework is on meeting the needs of ESL students. However, this same framework is used in other educational contexts to address the needs of all special population students: ESL, multicultural, learning disabled, and gifted/talented.

Enacting the program's goals, purposes, sociocultural content, and focus on teacher inquiry relies heavily on the distance education delivery system.

DESIGNING SOCIOCULTURAL PEDAGOGY FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION: THE ProfessorsPlus MODEL

As with most design projects, progressing from initial conceptions to final products is an iterative process. Initial attempts often provide experiences that encourage innovation to eliminate difficulties and improve results. Design of the model for sociocultural distance education used in the BEEDE program benefited from previous experiences with distance education for professional development at BYU (Graham et al. 2001). Technical difficulties using the Utah Education Network, Utah's two-way synchronous audio/video network, led to the addition of an on-site content facilitator whose role was to orchestrate discourse and support participation in small-group learning activities following live professor presentations. The success of these content facilitators prompted a new design focused on a technologically simpler, yet more effective and more flexible system, which supported greater attention to modeling sociocultural pedagogy and responding to research on effective professional development. This improved delivery system would become a partnership between university professors and content-trained on-site facilitators, which we call the ProfessorsPlus distance education model. This model provides the delivery system for the BEEDE program courses.

The name of the model signifies a partnership in the design of the various program components. In general, the Professors part of the model includes carefully crafted video and print instructional materials for students as well as training and support materials for facilitators. The Plus part

of the model is the on-site, master's-prepared facilitator with extensive public school classroom experience. The video and print materials ensure consistent, high-quality content delivery, while the on-site facilitator creates a productive learning environment and provides the individualized scaffolding essential for learning in the sociocultural model. These two major components are described in greater detail in the following two sections.

THE Professors IN THE ProfessorsPlus MODEL

The Professors part of the model includes production of high-quality instructional video segments to anchor essential course content, a printed instructional guide of collaborative learning and homework activities, supplementary books and readings, video-based case studies on CD-ROM, professional development portfolios, and a facilitator guide. These components work together to enhance learning and transfer to classroom practices and to model sociocultural pedagogy, particularly joint productive activity, making meaning, complex thinking, and language and literacy development.

Instructional Guide

The printed instructional guide moves students along a clearly defined learning trajectory that requires active participation. The instructional guide supports active learning; encourages thoughtful, analytical reflection; and models appropriate sociocultural strategies teachers can use with their own language minority students. Many of the learning activities in the instructional guide focus on developing critical thinking skills through analysis of teaching and learning situations. Instructions for learning activities and homework assignments are provided in similar templates, providing information to support teachers' own later use of the modeled learning strategies. Table 2 shows the learning activity template and Figure 1 provides a sample learning activity.

Video Segments and Active Viewing Guides

The video segments provide a multimedia learning experience to capture audience attention and contextualize key teaching points. In these video segments, the perspectives of various university professors, researchers, and other experts are juxtaposed against real-world voices of students, teachers, parents, and other community members. This strategy makes the relationship between theory and practice immediately visible. These video


Table 2. Learning activity template

[Icon]	Learning Activity Number 0.0	
LEARNING ACTIVITY NAME		
<i>Type of strategy</i>		
Purpose	Description	Assessment
Identifies the course purposes this activity meets	Guiding Principle: Name of the Principle ESL Planning Strategy: Name of the Planning Strategy <i>Statement of the specific planning strategy</i> SLA Premise: Category of the Premise <i>Statement of the specific premise</i> Teaching Strategy: Name of the Type of Teaching Strategy <i>This is a description of the teaching strategy. It describes how the strategy brings together resources and student performance or skill development to complete a learning activity.</i>	Identifies the kind and number of points given to the assignment
<i>Time Allotment: 0 minutes</i>		
<i>Student Position:</i> <i>In this statement, we identify how we have positioned students for success. We articulate the knowledge and experience students bring to the learning activity and how the activity will support their learning.</i>		
<i>Instructions:</i> These are step-by-step directions for how to complete the activity.		

Source: Teemant, Harris, and Pinnegar 2003.

segments are provided on familiar, low-cost, and low technology VHS videotapes. Watching these video segments typically involves 15–25% of in-class time during the course.

The instructional guide contains an active viewing guide for each video segment to increase active learning. These active viewing guides scaffold students' active learning in three ways: (1) paraphrasing and providing a permanent record of the content of the video segment, (2) providing space for note taking, and (3) providing questions in the form of conjectures about the content of the video to guide students as they construct meaning and make notes. Table 3 shows the template for active viewing guides and Figure 2 provides an example of an active viewing guide.



Learning Activity

Session Two

2.3

Language as a . . .
Guided Discussion

Purpose	Description	Assessment
1. Identify your attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs and articulate how they impact your interaction with students.	Guiding Principle: High Expectations ESL Planning Strategy: Cognitive–Build Connections <i>Link knowledge, belief, and understanding by activating prior knowledge, linking multiple stores of information (visual and verbal), formal and informal knowledge, and the emotional and affective.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Process Points • 5 Individual Product Points
	SLA Premise: Communication–Input <i>Through interaction with others, content that is slightly beyond the learners' current abilities is made more comprehensible.</i>	
	Teaching Strategy: Guided Discussion <i>The teacher uses questioning patterns to match and expand student ability to comprehend and respond to content.</i>	

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Student Position:
Students have watched a video segment about language as problem, right, and resource. They are now asked to discuss with colleagues their beliefs about the difficulties and benefits of language diversity.

Instructions:

1. In small groups, discuss ways in which linguistic diversity can be viewed as a problem, a right, and a resource.
2. As the discussion proceeds, capture the ideas that emerge in the categories on the worksheet provided for language as a problem, right, and resource.
3. Be prepared to share your ideas with the entire class.
4. Add new ideas from your classmates to your worksheet during the class discussion.

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Figure 1. Sample Learning Activity. *Source:* Teemant, Harris, and Pinnegar 2003.

Table 3. Active viewing guide template

[Icon]	ACTIVE VIEWING GUIDE Session Number: Segment Number
<hr/> Video Segment Title <hr/>	
<i>Think about: The questions listed here remind learners that the video segment addresses professional learning and growth through attention to particular characteristics of Inclusive Pedagogy.</i>	
Conceptual Outline	Meaning Making [Icon]
<i>Text in this column is tailored to conceptually represent the content of each video segment. The text may highlight, summarize, or quote materials that can be reviewed at a later time to recapture the video segment's content.</i>	<i>In this column you are invited to extend your own thinking about the content of the video by responding to questions. These questions invite you to connect content to your own real-world experiences as an individual and as a teacher. The white space invites you to make meaning and to own the content through reflection and personal responses.</i>
SAMPLE TEXT: Critical reflection includes critique of personal perspectives, the culture of schools, the culture of teachers and classrooms, as well as the culture of students.	SAMPLE QUESTION: Unwritten rules and expectations?


Source: Teemant, Harris, and Pinnegar 2003.

Books and Other Readings

Readings are an important element in the ProfessorsPlus model, and various reading materials have been incorporated into the BEEDE program. Although the instructional guide serves as the primary textbook, courses typically assign additional readings from other books, online sources, or library electronic reserves.

CD-ROMs

The Professors part of the model also includes video-based case studies on CD-ROM that model the teaching of second language learners in mainstream classes and supplement the field experiences teachers have with their own ESL students. These case studies are supported by text/audio commentary providing multiple research- and experience-based perspec-



Active Viewing Guide

Session Two: Segment Four

Viewing Practice From Another Perspective

Think about:

- How can I learn and grow as a professional?
- How can critical reflection on my own practice lead to professional growth?

Conceptual Outline	Meaning Making
<p>Ramona Cutri (Brigham Young University)</p> <p>"We learn culture, we teach culture, and we modify culture all at once."</p>	<p><i>I teach culture?</i></p>
<p>Our assumptions, beliefs, and values impact who we are as teachers and what gets taught in our classes. By becoming conscious of our attitudinal and cultural dispositions, we make visible what is often invisible.</p>	<p><i>Make visible?</i></p>
<p>When we interact with others in our native culture, our cultural characteristics are taken for granted. No one notices them. For that reason, our unique talents and characteristics seem to stand out.</p> <p>When we operate in a foreign culture, our cultural characteristics are highly noticeable. They are the characteristics that tend to stand out, and our unique individuality is harder to see.</p> <p>We tend to see language diverse students as cultural beings, while we see ourselves as neutral.</p>	<p><i>Unique individuality?</i></p> <p><i>Self as cultural being?</i></p>
<p>Gary Fenstermacher (University of Michigan)</p> <p>"It's important for all of us to think about ideas that are oppositional and contrary to where we are or where we see ourselves because it exposes the medium in which we live. It helps us understand."</p>	<p><i>Oppositional?</i></p>
<p>Critical Pedagogy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examines school and social practices • Attends to power distribution • Addresses equity <p>When we employ a critical pedagogy perspective, it helps us see which school and social practices promote socially just treatment for all people. In turn, we begin to nurture such practices.</p>	<p><i>My practices and power?</i></p> <p><i>Manifests how?</i></p>

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Figure 2. Sample Active Viewing Guide Page. *Source:* Teemant, Harris, and Pinnegar 2003.

tives on the activities shown in the video clips. These CD-ROMs have the capacity to provide copies of artifacts from the classrooms relevant to the scenes in the video clips, along with additional readings or other support

files. Providing these case studies on CD-ROM to each participant accommodates individual use during homework and practicum assignments.

Portfolios

Accountability is one of the guiding principles in the Inclusive Pedagogy framework, and portfolios are an important aspect of the accountability built into the BEEDE program, the ProfessorsPlus model, and their sociocultural approaches to assessment. The complex processes of teaching and learning English can best be demonstrated through portfolios containing authentic examples of teacher and student work. In addition, thoroughly understanding these processes supports teachers' willingness to share responsibility for them.

Facilitator Guide

The last component of the Professors part of the model is a printed facilitator guide that includes training and support materials for the on-site facilitators. Organized by course session, detailed facilitator notes provide suggestions from course authors on things the facilitators might wish to pay particular attention to while preparing, facilitating learning activities, or responding to participants' class work and homework. These facilitator notes are part of the assigned readings during facilitator training.

THE Plus IN THE ProfessorsPlus MODEL

The Plus part of the model consists of an on-site facilitator who has considerable classroom experience, has received an education-related master's degree, and has participated in facilitator training offered by the BEEDE program.

Facilitators

In contrast to some distance education models, ProfessorsPlus recognizes the vital roles that teachers play in creating effective learning environments and in supporting the learning of all students. In this model, the facilitator is responsible for creating a sense of community among learners, increasing interaction, monitoring progress, answering questions, and modeling the five standards for effective pedagogy, with particular emphasis on instructional conversation and joint productive activity. Employing teacher immediacy to foster interaction, the facilitator also shares objectives, uses active learning strategies to promote student engagement, provides opportunities for assisted and unassisted performance, assesses learning, and communicates with professors when problems arise.

Facilitators are prepared for and expected to fulfill multiple roles. First, being experienced teachers, facilitators are concerned with how the content of the course can help them become more effective personally in teaching language minority students. Second, as teacher educators, facilitators are concerned with helping teachers think and teach in ways that will support language minority students. Third, in both of these roles, as teacher and teacher educator, facilitators model the role of advocate for language minority students. To these ends, program materials and training experiences provide facilitators with the tools and guidance they need to be successful in creating an effective sociocultural learning environment and in supporting the learning of course participants.

Facilitator Training and Support

The model for facilitator training follows the same sociocultural perspectives embedded in the ProfessorsPlus model. In this case, the Professors have authored the training materials and have selected the course materials to highlight during training sessions, including video segments, parts of CD-ROM case studies, and activities from the instructional guide. The *Plus* aspect of these training sessions involves the modeling of sociocultural pedagogy by the professor-authors themselves or others who have been specifically prepared as facilitator trainers.

In addition to preparing facilitators to lead program courses, the goals of facilitator training are similar to the aims of the Trainer-of-Trainers model (Brizzi 1978), updated with sociocultural perspectives for the learning and teaching processes and focused on long-term improvements in educational opportunities and outcomes for language minority students. Thus, the aims of facilitator training include (1) increasing the understanding and improving the personal effectiveness of the experienced teachers who serve as facilitators and (2) preparing them to become local resources for continued professional development of other teachers. From a sociocultural perspective, the second of these goals involves preparing *more capable others* who can continue to mentor and apprentice other teachers in their local schools and districts following completion of BEEDE program courses. To the extent that facilitators have multiple experiences leading program courses, they become more capable in this role as local mentor and leader.

ADVANTAGES OF THE ProfessorsPlus Model

The ProfessorsPlus model has been designed to provide the active learning and collective participation needed for successful professional development at the individual school level. As a distance education format, this model

provides advantages over traditional university-centered courses by delivering professional development at multiple school sites so that scheduling can be adjusted to the work schedules of in-service educators and content can be adapted to the individual needs of rural, suburban, and urban teachers in unique local circumstances. This model improves on other distance learning formats by emphasizing the collective participation and sociocultural learning experiences essential to understanding BEEDE program content and by incorporating and modeling the principles of the Inclusive Pedagogy framework and the CREDE standards for effective pedagogy.

Although this model shares some technology with one-way asynchronous distance learning (in which professor and student activities occur at different times), many of the features of the ProfessorsPlus model make it unlike any distance learning delivery method reviewed by Mehrotra, Hollister, and McGahey (2001). These unique features address many of the criticisms of distance education summarized by those authors. The organization of cadres of teachers from individual schools into facilitator-led courses answers the criticism that “distance learning lacks the richness of experience afforded in a classroom milieu of colearners” (11), which could be leveled at other delivery models, including Internet-based approaches intended for individual use. The ProfessorsPlus model fits the description that “some modes of distance education can be structured to facilitate student–student and student–instructor interaction in ways that can equal or exceed the amount of interaction in a traditional classroom” (11).

Several features of the ProfessorsPlus model simultaneously increase student support and minimize technology costs, avoiding two additional criticisms mentioned by Mehrotra, Hollister, and McGahey (2001). Prepared content facilitators, printed instructional guides, individual CD-ROMs, and electronic library reserves increase support for students’ learning. The local use of readily available televisions and videocassette players for large groups and individual use of CD-ROMs on personal computers minimize required equipment and other costs of technology. These features also avoid some of the costs of investing in rapidly changing technologies and providing technical facilitators to keep interactive television, Internet conferencing, or other high-technology, synchronous delivery methods functioning.

Successful distance instruction requires much more extensive planning and collaborative work with other professionals than conventional instruction. The ProfessorsPlus model uses an *extended syllabus* that is broader in scope and more specific in content than those typically prepared for conventional courses (Cyr and Smith 1992) as a foundation for course planning and creation of the interactive instructional guide and video segments. Of course, producing a video-anchored course is a highly collaborative team

process, frequently involving several professionals in developing and delivering the content.

The ProfessorsPlus model introduces new topics in video segments, followed by activity-oriented learning tasks. These video segments provide precisely scripted *lecturettes* (Cyrs and Smith 1992) designed to keep students engaged and alert. Like an interesting television news program, these video segments combine explanations, illustrations, and questions. However, unlike those who listen to the news, students engage in interesting activities after these video segments to continue learning and deepen understandings. For many of these learning activities, students organize themselves into pairs or small learning teams to increase social interaction and discourse.

Carefully selected graphical elements and animations also contribute to clarity and responsiveness in the video segments. With support from instructional designers, graphic artists, and other specialists in visual production, the ProfessorsPlus model takes full advantage of the strengths of video to maximize the clarity and engagement of instruction.

The ProfessorsPlus model introduces novelty in several ways: (1) providing brief start-up activities in which students predict the relationship between prior knowledge and new content; (2) asking students to analyze prior knowledge in new ways; (3) introducing case studies to contribute to making sense of new content; (4) interjecting pair-and-share activities in which students briefly work with partners to answer questions, make predictions, or summarize new information; and (5) ending each class session with a preview of the next session.

Congruence among goals for learning, course content, and students' expectations of success also support intrinsic motivation. The instructional guide assists students in understanding course goals, articulating personal goals for learning, and taking responsibility for achieving those goals. Facilitators provide feedback to students throughout the course so that students continue to be motivated by satisfaction from achievements and visible progress toward personal goals.

This model avoids the complications of trying to connect otherwise isolated students to each other through a listserv or electronic bulletin board or of mandating periodic communications between students and professors. Most of the needed support is provided in these classroom communities between students and on-site facilitators or is self-organized among students between sessions. In addition, students, facilitators, and professors may freely interact through e-mail without creating the avalanche of e-mail to professors that is typical when that is the only interaction provided.

Feedback to students on the quality of their thinking and work is essential for their understanding and progress. Students develop as learners when

appropriate feedback alerts them to their strengths and deters them from inadequate or incorrect thinking that needs to be revised (Angelo 1993; Van Houten 1980). Often students decide whether they will stay with a distance learning course based on the feedback received on initial assignments or

Table 4. Summarized comments on strengths of the foundations course

Course Feature	Summarized Participant Comments
Course	Organized; informative topics and discussions; helpful; learning without knowing it; theory with application; dynamic; exciting; great use of multimedia and variety of activities.
Delivery system	Intense; unique; lots of interaction; hands-on experiences; captured all senses; hearing actual experiences makes it real; different from reading a book; all classes should be taught this way.
Video segments	Ideal; better than lecture and notes; it was human; full of feeling and emotion; great to learn about professors and credentials; thought provoking questions; informational; credible; multiple perspectives; good quality sound; professional; perfect for distance learning.
Active viewing guides	Helpful; used in other settings; appreciated the system that allows learner to listen, underline, and not miss visual component; contained all important information; no additional notes needed; good teaching strategy; valuable to have copy of direct quotes; good resource of information.
Learning activities	Helpful; powerful; everyone involved; well connected to content; integrated; applicable to other contexts; not busy work.
Group work	Eases pressure; builds cooperation over competition; reassuring; useful; will use more in my class; good for teaching.
Readings	<i>Myths and Realities</i> book is excellent; texts helped understand course topics.
Homework	Enjoyed student profile; hands-on; good variety; easy to adapt; handouts helped; meaningful; CD-ROM changed attitudes; demanded accountability; good resource and future reference.
Portfolio component	Helpful; Internet connection good; used peer support; facilitator showed good examples; value increased over time; focused on essential concepts; most practical part of course; springboard to improve the quality of teaching.
Grading	Challenging.
Inclusive pedagogy	Helpful; applicable to any teaching; be a better teacher for knowing it; mastery would mean being a good teacher.
Facilitator	Trustworthy; energetic; knowledgeable; interested in us; powerful example; patient; responded with feedback immediately; involved everyone; flexible; helpful; loves what doing; gives one-on-one help; approachable; makes connections to application; Christ-like.
Role of facilitator	Student centered; perfect for distance learning; guide; support; motivate.
Overall influence	Awesome concepts, changed perspectives; changed attitudes toward English Only; personal change; build confidence in practice; good foundation; helpful in classroom; applied concepts in real contexts with other teachers.

exams. If the feedback is late, not specific enough, or inappropriate to students' current skills or knowledge, they may become discouraged and commit less energy to learning, or they may withdraw from the course entirely (Egan et al. 1993). The ProfessorsPlus model prepares on-site facilitators to provide timely feedback that is meaningful for the specific needs of individual students. Many cooperative learning and peer-review activities provide additional feedback to students on their understanding of course content and achievement of other course learning goals. Feedback is also critical for professors if they want to learn how to improve the quality of their courses.

Features of the ProfessorsPlus model provide several kinds of feedback from both students and facilitators. Students complete evaluations at the end of each course on their reactions to the various components of the course and on the effectiveness of the facilitator. Facilitators collect copies of students' products, particularly their portfolios, to show the progress of learning. Facilitators also provide both informal and formal feedback to the professors about the various components of the course and about their experiences leading the course with their particular group of students.

CONTINUING EVALUATION OF BEEDE PROGRAM COURSES

Implementation and formal evaluation of the BEEDE program courses and the ProfessorsPlus distance education model is continuing with support from a five-year federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education's English Language Acquisition: National Professional Development Program. This grant, which began during 2002, will fund evaluation in three areas: (1) changes in participating teachers' knowledge, (2) changes in teachers' pedagogy, and (3) changes in K-12 student achievement.

However, prior to this summative evaluation of program effectiveness, as individual BEEDE program courses have been written and field-tested, data from many of the ProfessorsPlus design features have provided formative evaluation data and informed course revisions. For example, during the fall semester of 1999, 30 in-service educators participating in an offering of the Foundations of Bilingual Education course attended postcourse focus groups that identified the strengths of the field test version of that course (see Table 4). For example, these strengths suggest that participants valued the sociocultural components of program design, such as increased opportunities for social interaction, co-construction of learning, community building, and the use of an on-site facilitator.

Table 5 summarizes the weaknesses of the field test version of the Foundations course. Participants' comments focused on improving the organization and clarity of the instructional guides, grading documents, and

Table 5. Summarized comments on weaknesses of foundations course

Course feature	Summarized participant comments
Course	Sessions very busy; materials too organized; need more time to reflect; lots of new vocabulary; too much jargon; three-hour block is long.
Delivery system	Overwhelming.
Video segments	Can be tiring; use less video; packed with information and no time to reflect; jingle is annoying; need video check-out system for students who miss sessions.
Active viewing guide	Uncertain of purpose; hard to listen, read, and respond to conjectures at once; did not return to them to review.
Learning activities	Too many; not enough time for reflection.
Group work	Length of group work not specified; more elementary focus than high school
Readings	Too many readings; readings not integrated; weak connections between readings and session content.
Homework	Too much homework.
Portfolio component	Difficult to understand expectations; more examples needed; needed more feedback to work.
Grading	System not specified; lack of grading criteria; no midcourse grades.
Inclusive pedagogy	Difficult terminology.
Facilitator	Facilitator does not do much teaching; driven by materials; rigid.
Role of facilitator	Role unclear.
Overall influence	Too much terminology; three-hour block too long.

integration of reading assignments and video segment content. Table 6 lists specific responses we made to address these course weaknesses and improve future course development.

In addition, student evaluations from this particular course provided an initial indication of students' feelings toward the ProfessorsPlus model. Using BYU's standard seven-point Likert scale evaluation form, the course (i.e., the Professors portion) received a mean rating of 5.34 (between *Very Good* and *Excellent*), indicating the course met the needs and interests of the participants. The Plus portion of the course (i.e., the on-site facilitator) received a mean rating of 6.06 (between *Excellent* and *Outstanding*), indicating that the facilitator was able to ensure consistent, high-quality content delivery. These ratings provided some evidence that a course using the ProfessorsPlus model successfully met the needs of its participants in the context of their busy work schedules.

Some of the individual BEEDE courses have also been submitted to external reviewers for detailed, expert evaluations of course content and

Table 6. Summary of developer responses to stated weaknesses

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- Reduce the number of activities in each session to make room for reflection.
 - Require course survey to be completed before first course session.
 - Spread out and reduce length of video segments in future courses.
 - Build in discussions about video segment content to deepen understanding of content and support student reflection.
 - Build in systematic attention to vocabulary development in course and throughout program.
 - Write additional manuscript explaining and supporting understanding of Inclusive Pedagogy conceptual framework.
 - Provide a preface and explanation of learning activity and active viewing guide templates and explanation of components.
 - Use the active viewing guides in learning activities when feasible to encourage review of video segment content.
 - Reinforce purpose of active viewing guide through facilitator.
 - Reinforce portfolio purpose through facilitator.
 - Collect portfolio exemplars for participants.
 - Fully integrate textbook with course materials.
 - Add time allocations to each activity.
 - Indicate on homework assignments where the assignment will be used in next session.
 - Develop grading system, including assessment components, grading scales, and rubrics.
-

pedagogy. These expert evaluations have affirmed both the soundness of the ProfessorsPlus distance education model and the content and pedagogy of the particular courses. For example, JoAnne Crandall (University of Maryland, Baltimore) made the following comment in her review of the first course using the ProfessorsPlus model: “If the first course is any indication, you will have produced the most innovative, engaging, comprehensive, and theoretically sound program of its kind available in the United States.”

CONCLUSION

In developing the BEEDE program and its ProfessorsPlus distance education model, we endeavored to use research about learners, learning environments, and teaching from the sociocultural perspective. Because we needed to reach active professionals working in a variety of settings, we selected a distance education format with flexible scheduling. Knowing the power of sociocultural models of teaching and learning, we designed the ProfessorsPlus distance education format to provide a more capable other on site, supported by video-anchored instruction featuring students, teachers, families, and university experts in the field. We understood that learn-

ers who are actively engaged in content and are part of a community are likely to learn and to use what they learn. The literature on in-service education reminded us that teachers are likely to try out new methods and strategies for teaching when they collaborate with other professionals in their own setting. This led us to design course materials that anticipate school-based cohorts with a local facilitator.

We knew that teachers' past experiences are one of the biggest difficulties in preparing teachers to work with a diversity of students. We also knew that trying to create a teacher- or student-proof curriculum would be pointless. Therefore, we created materials and teaching tools that would draw out facilitators' best teaching efforts and would require meaningful student-facilitator interaction. Through the use of learning communities, analytical activities, and professional development portfolios that encourage reflective thinking, we created the strongest environment we could imagine for supporting teachers in reconsidering their beliefs and theories for working with diverse students. We also embedded instruction in the Inclusive Pedagogy framework that teachers could use in their pursuit of becoming better teachers for all students.

We believe that the ProfessorsPlus distance education model supports creation of professional development experiences for teachers that model sociocultural pedagogy and help teachers understand learning from a sociocultural perspective. This is an important innovation in today's milieu of increasing cultural and linguistic diversity among students.

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