The purpose of the study was to investigate how preservice teachers are (mis)representing emerging bilinguals in their written reflections of their teaching practice.

Research Questions:
1) How are preservice teachers representing emerging bilinguals, EBs, in their written reflections?
2) To what degree are preservice teachers conceiving of representing emerging bilinguals as assets in their written reflections?

Theoretical Framework
One of the main aims of education is to help people acquire habits of reflection in order to engage in intelligent thoughts and actions. Reflection should be an act of considering our beliefs (Dewey, 1933). Preservice teachers should engage in equity-based pedagogy through careful consideration of their own beliefs, and not disengage with emerging bilinguals learners in their practice and reflection because of differences in culture, learning or language needs (Zweirs 2007).

Participants:
- 23 preservice teachers at a large urban university in the Midwest.
- Participants were enrolled in a post-baccalaureate program.
- Participants were preparing to be elementary general education teachers.

Data Sources:
- Written reflections of preservice teachers after lesson was taught
- The title of the assignment, the lesson taught, was “Writing in Response to Literature”.
- Preservice teachers taught the lesson and reflected on the lesson by answering these questions:
  1. Was the lesson taught as planned? If not, what changes were made to the lesson and why?
  2. To what extent did the whole class or group learn what you intended them to learn? Cite specific examples and/or evidence.
  3. Who did the lesson work best for? What didn’t work and for whom?
  4. What did you learn about your students as learners?
  5. What will be your next steps instructionally? Are you planning to make changes in the next lesson? If so what are they? Why do you think these changes are appropriate?
  6. What have you learned about yourself as a teacher? What goals do you have for your next lesson?

Emerging Bilinguals in Preservice Teachers Written Reflections

Four themes revealed:
- Participants utilized oral communication through “turn and talk”, brought in diverse books to maintain cultural connection, used sentence stems as a form of language scaffold, and revealed low expectations through their surprise of some emerging bilinguals academic abilities.

Although further research is needed, the findings from this study indicate that EBs were minimally represented in preservice teachers written reflections. Our findings represent preservice teachers written reflections from one semester; we cautiously offer three recommendations.

1. Elementary teacher education programs should provide spaces for methods instructors to co-teach and debrief with English Learner instructors.
2. Teacher-educators should explicitly teach pre-service teachers how to reflect on their pedagogy, by explicitly modeling that process at the end of each course session.
3. Preservice teachers should be required to reflect on groups of students, specifically emerging bilinguals, at the end of each lesson taught.

The enactment of these recommendations will hopefully move preservice teachers to include more EBs in their written reflections.

Bibliography