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Teacher Perceptions of Preparedness to Teach a Diverse Group of English Language Learners With Different Literacy Levels and Languages in the Mainstream Elementary Classroom

by
Jennifer Mehu

An Applied Dissertation Submitted to the
Abraham S. Fischler College of Education
and School of Criminal Justice in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education

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Approval Page

This applied dissertation was submitted by Jennifer Mehu under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Abraham S. Fischler College of Education and School of Criminal Justice and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

Barbara Christina, EdD
Committee Chair

Roslyn Doctorow, EdD
Committee Member

Kimberly Durham, PsyD
Dean

Statement of Original Work

I declare the following:

I have read the Code of Student Conduct and Academic Responsibility as described in the *Student Handbook* of Nova Southeastern University. This applied dissertation represents my original work, except where I have acknowledged the ideas, words, or material of other authors.

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Jennifer Mehu
Name

July 18, 2023
Date

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This dissertation took a very long time to complete, but it is finally done and the first person that I need to thank is God for keeping me when I wanted to quit. With you all things are possible, and this is the evidence of that. Next, I want to thank my mother, Solange Mehu, who is now in heaven but the total inspiration behind this. I know she is up in heaven smiling down because her baby girl did it! She was here when this dissertation was just a small thought, and I'm so blessed to have been able to see it through.

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Abstract

Teacher Perceptions of Preparedness to Teach a Diverse Group of English Language Learners With Different Literacy Levels and Languages in the Mainstream Elementary Classroom. Jennifer Mehu, 2023: Applied Dissertation, Nova Southeastern University, Abraham S. Fischler College of Education and School of Criminal Justice. Keywords: English language learners, second language learners, self-efficacy, language acquisition, instructional strategies

All across the United States, increased numbers of English language learners (ELL) are entering schools with limited formal education or proficiency in the English language at alarming rates. This new shift has affected school districts that are not prepared to address the needs of these ELL students due to the lack of preparation of mainstream teachers in their districts and schools. The problem addressed in this study was that many ELLs were not making adequate progress academically in mainstream classes. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore teachers' perceived preparedness to teach ELLs in mainstream classes in the researcher's work setting.

Throughout this research, the researcher aimed to explore connections between teacher perceptions of preparedness for teaching ELLs and their current pedagogical practices. This study sought to provide educators with insights on improving instruction for ELL students in mainstream classroom instruction. The researcher recommends further studies on ELL preparation programs for teachers and the impact of the training on student achievement.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

English language learners (ELL) represent a sizeable percentage of U.S. students. According to Short (2013), this group is one of the fastest growing groups from prekindergarten to Grade 12. All students have different educational backgrounds, and ELLs are no different. When they come to school, they are not a blank slate; they bring their own unique strengths and qualities about language as well as their educational background, and those strengths and weaknesses will have a strong impact on the way they learn and process the English language. When students enter school for the first time, they come with different abilities and knowledge about language due to what they have been exposed to in their homes. Like native-speaking students, ELLs also vary in their proficiency with the English language. Some of them speak little to no English, whereas others may carry on a conversation with native speakers (Turgut et al., 2016).

When ELLs come to the United States, they experience the challenge of trying to learn a second language and mastering new academic content. It is extremely important for all parents, and not just ELL parents, to talk daily to their children in their native language to help them develop their native language linguistic skills, which will ultimately lead to the acquisition of the English language. According to Mathis (2017), by the age of 3, native English-speaking students who come from middle class homes have been exposed to at least 30 million words. However, ELLs, depending on their socioeconomic status and parental education level, enter the mainstream classroom knowing significantly fewer English words than their peers who speak English. These challenges may cause ELLs to trail behind their peers academically (Kim, 2011).

Murnane et al. (2012) pointed out that the linguistic success of ELL children is determined by their competency in English-language skills. In the early years, ELL

children who develop basic skills in the English language and literacy will enter school ready to read and write the English language (Dussling, 2020). According to Turgut et al. (2016), ELL students also lag behind their peers on state and national assessments. The gap widens at the higher grades, and research conducted by Turgut et al. indicated that ELLs are more than likely to drop out at the secondary level or high school, with the dropout rate being up to four times that of their native speaking English peers.

The English-speaking student population in U.S. schools has remained the same, and the population of ELLs has nearly doubled (Dussling, 2020; Jones et al., 2014). Chen (2015) estimated that, by 2025, one of every four students in U.S. public schools will be an ELL. Champion (2015) indicated that 50% of all students in U.S. public schools will be classified as ELLs by 2030. The U.S. Department of Education defined an ELL as a child not born in the United States and whose first language is not English (Berner, 2019). An ELL can also be Native Americans, Native Alaskans, or migrant students from regions where the primary language is not English (Asbeck, 2012; Berner, 2019). Although many ELL students are not born in the United States, some ELLs are born in this country but have a parent who was born in another country. As a result, the ELL student may be considered for ELL or services for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) if their skills in English are deficient.

Kim (2011) asserted that ELL students are also identified as students who demonstrate limited English proficiency. ELLs are one of the largest growing groups of school children in the U.S. public school system (Dussling, 2020). Although the numbers of ELLs in schools have increased immensely, the quality of education that the ELLs receive has not (Fu & Wang, 2021). ELL education and policies in the United States vary

from state to state. Some states train teachers effectively to work with ELLs, whereas other states do not provide formal training or the training received is inadequate (Franco-Fuenmeyor et al., 2015). This disparity makes it difficult for many ELLs to catch up to their Native English-speaking peers.

Results from national assessments show that many ELLs are struggling readers according to Knight-Teague et al. (2014). Part of the concern is related to the idea that some ELLs can read fluently but do not comprehend what they are reading. Austin-Archil (2019) pointed out that good reading comprehension skills are essential for participation in society and lifelong learning. If students are correctly decoding words but not comprehending them, they are just word calling, meaning that they have a good grasp of phonics and phonemic awareness but need to learn and understand vocabulary. Researchers have found that ELLs are less able to comprehend grade-level text than their native English-speaking peers, and this may cause a serious delay in their vocabulary development (Chen et al., 2011). Word calling is also indicative of students who are good at memorizing words or can sound out words that they read without understanding their meaning (Austin-Archil, 2019). This may explain some of their deficiencies in being able to understand what the speaker is articulating.

A possible explanation for this deficit is that some classroom teachers mistakenly believe that ELL students will instinctively pick up English by being immersed in the English language in the mainstream class. When ELL students are immersed in the new language, they quickly learn conversational English and can communicate and converse with their peers. Although they can converse with their peers, this does not mean they have learned different content and academic language required to succeed in the mainstream world. An improperly trained educator may hear the ELLs utilizing

conversational English and assume that they are proficient when in reality they are not (Mathis, 2017). According to Cummins (1979), the educator may have the students' basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) confused with their cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP).

Jim Cummins (1979) first introduced the terms BICS and CALP to show a distinction between conversational English and content-academic knowledge. These terms are used to describe the way ELLs learn a new language. BICS is known as the basic language used in social settings, and CALP is the more advanced, academic-driven, abstract language. BICS and CALP explain different aspects and levels of language proficiency (Cummins, 1979). Schulz (2017) utilized the research of Cummins to explain that BICS allows ELL students to communicate concrete concepts and have conversations with peers and adults about everyday things. BICS involves foundational language skills and vocabulary knowledge to prepare ELLs to achieve CALP. CALP requires more abstract-level information processing to learn the meanings of the academic vocabulary and concepts (Cummins, 1979). Uchikoshi and Marinova-Todd (2012) pointed out that the gaps in achievement between ELL students and their peers who are native speakers of English have already begun to widen in the first grade. ELLs are already beginning to show deficiencies in vocabulary and emergent literacy skills, which can ultimately lead to reading difficulties in the future. Due to this deficiency so early on, many ELLs are not progressing academically when measured against their native English-speaking peers in mainstream classes (Calderón et al., 2011).

In Florida, students are classified as an ELL when their parent or guardian registers them in school and checks a box on the registration form that states their child speaks another language at home. Once that box is checked, the student will be tested to

obtain their language classification. In kindergarten through 12th grade, the child will be administered the aural-oral language proficiency test. In addition, students in Grades 3 through 12 will be administered the reading and writing World Class Instructional Design and Assessment exam. If they score below a 32%, they will enter the ESOL-ELL program. To exit the program, the student must exhibit the criteria set forth by the state or an ELL committee indicating that that the child no longer needs the services provided by the ELL program (Broward County Schools, 2020).

Regardless of their classification, the ELL student should receive certain modifications during the school day. According to the ESOL handbook for Broward County Schools in South Florida, these modifications include but are not limited to flexible settings, flexible scheduling, and flexible timing during testing (Broward County Schools, 2020). Often, ELL students who do not speak or understand the language (Li, 2013) are placed into mainstream or general education classes, and they have difficulty understanding the language because everything is new and foreign to them. The teacher makes a huge difference in the beginning stages (Spoor, 2019).

An experienced ELL teacher will practice strategies that will help the students to feel comfortable regardless of whether they speak the child's home language. Some strategies include (a) using realia, (real life artifacts that the child can visually see and relate to), (b) movement to help the child understand what is expected of them (motioning with their hands to get up or sit down), and (c) the use of a print-rich environment with things labeled in the ELL's first language and in English. Typically, when children enter the school system in kindergarten and are classified as an ELL, they have up to 3 years to exit the program. If the ELLs fail the required state tests for promotion to kindergarten through second grade, they can still be promoted to the next

grade for good cause because they are an ELL.

In 2002, the Florida legislature established a requirement that third-grade students who scored below Level 2 in reading on the state-mandated test, with Level 5 being the highest score, could be retained in third grade. While the ELL students can be retained in third grade, they must receive intense remediation according to Florida Statute S.B. 20E. The policy also mandated that the school must provide the following services to retained students: summer reading camp, an academic improvement plan, a 90-minute reading instruction segment, as well as high-performing teachers and annual reports of academic progress for the parents of the retained child (Miller, 2021). These procedures were designed to ensure that the ELLs have a chance to be successful in the mainstream classroom. While these programs and procedures seek to assist the ELL with competency in social and academic English in the school system, none of the programs will be effective if the teacher is unprepared to teach those ELL students in their class.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed by this study was that many ELLs were not making adequate progress academically in mainstream classes (Fu, 2017). General education teachers, who previously had little or no training for teaching ELL students, have had ELL students placed in these classrooms in increasing numbers. They have been placed into these general education classrooms with the belief that more exposure to the English language will improve their scores on standardized tests and help to improve their English (Mills et al., 2020). ELLs are usually lumped together in mainstream classes even though they have varying linguistic backgrounds and abilities. These disparities contribute to the educational lag between ELLs and their peers (Calderón et al., 2011).

At the researcher's work setting, there was a large percentage of ELL students. At

the time of this study, there were over 1,000 students at the researcher's site, and 43% of those students were ELLs. Every year, the students identified as ELLs take an English language for proficiency assessment called Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State for English Language Learners (ACCESS), which is an English language proficiency assessment that is administered to ELL students in kindergarten through Grade 12 and is given every year to monitor student progress in learning academic English. The ACCESS test assesses the four language domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Educators use the ACCESS results to make informed decisions about ELLs' academic language and to improve their language development. The ACCESS test is usually administered to ELL students in the spring term, and the official scores do not come back until the end of the school year. Test coordinators at the school site can review their scores before scores are officially printed. This gives them a chance to find errors and make corrections. The ACCESS test delivery partner company will then ship the corrected test results directly to the schools. The tests results range from Level 1, entering, to Level 6, reaching (Florida Department of Education, 2019). Since official scores do not come back until the end of the year, schools must utilize other assessments to measure ELLs' academic progress throughout the year. One of the assessments used by at the researcher's site is called the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS), which was developed by Fountas and Pinnell (2022).

The BAS is used to determine a student's informational, instructional, and frustration reading levels (Fountas & Pinnell, 2022). In the primary grades, students must be at a certain instructional reading level at the end of the year to be promoted to the next grade level. In kindergarten, they must leave reading on a Level B. In first grade, they must leave reading on a Level I. In second grade, they must be reading on a Level M

(Broward County Schools, 2022). If students do not meet the promotion criteria for their grade level, there is a possibility that they can be retained, unless they are ELL or they can be promoted by good cause according to Policy 6000, which is a Broward County School Board mission. Policy 6000 is a student progression plan created to maintain the standards for quality instruction, outline promotion criteria, and provide equally balanced educational opportunities for all students, thus ensuring that no child would be left behind (Broward County Schools, 2022).

The reading levels for the BAS begin at Level -A and then continue until Level Z. Testing the students on the BAS allows teachers to accomplish the following objectives:

> Identify the individual reading behaviors, make informed decisions that will drive their instruction, recommend placement level for reading instruction, form initial groups for reading instruction, identify students who need intervention, monitor student progress across grade levels, and inform parent conferences. (Fountas & Pinnell, 2022, para. 2)

The assessment consists of student-friendly picture books that the students read to the teacher. As the students read the book, the teacher records the word read correctly and incorrectly and records reading behaviors. After the students have read the book, the teacher will then ask comprehension questions to determine if the students understand what they have just read. The score is a combination of the accuracy of words read and the correct number of comprehension questions (Fountas & Pinnell, 2022).

Typically, ELL students who have not received formal instruction in English will score a Level -A on the BAS assessment because they are unable to read any of the words or comprehend what they read. At the time of this study, the researcher was an intervention specialist at the research site and did pull-outs with small groups of students

who were reading below level. The researcher was also responsible for testing students using the BAS to record growth. In the first-grade group, the researcher had 35 students who were seen daily Monday through Thursday for reading intervention. Of the 35 students seen, 20 were ELL students. When testing the students initially, more than half of them tested on at Level A or -A, meaning they left kindergarten reading below level and entered first grade reading below level. They were not retained because they were ELL students. The same students were tested in the spring semester; some moved reading levels, but none of the students were currently at Level I, which is considered grade level. Most of the ELL students were on Levels E and F, which are just below first grade promotion criteria.

Phenomenon of Interest

Many teachers are skilled in supporting ELLs, but there are also many teachers who are not properly trained to teach ELLs in the mainstream classroom (Turgut et al., 2016). ELLs are not all the same, and this diverse group exhibits diverse learning needs and abilities; however, some schools lack the necessary resources to properly support them (Dussling, 2020). The aim of the current study was to explore teachers' perceived preparedness to teach ELLs in mainstream classes especially when the students come to the classroom with different literacy levels and languages.

Background and Justification

Although ELLs sometimes struggle in the academic setting, they can also surpass native speakers if they are given appropriate instruction and intervention (Kim, 2011). In order to effectively teach ELLs, teachers must possess content knowledge and the ability to support ELLs academically. If ELL students do not receive the proper instruction and intervention, they are more likely to drop out of high school, score lower than average on

standardized tests, be referred to special education, and be more than two or three levels behind their peers (Fu, 2017).

According to Walker (2014), while the numbers of ELLs continues to increase, the number of teachers properly trained to support them academically remains unchanged. Chen (2015) asserted that the biggest hurdle for ELL students is the paucity of effective instruction provided to them by their mainstream teachers. The teachers who are hired to teach ELLs should match the diverse population of ELLs entering America's schools in large numbers (Correll, 2016) Although it would be beneficial if ELL educators came from the same backgrounds or even spoke the same language as the students they teach, this is not always possible; however, all educators should possess a range of knowledge and skills to meet the diverse needs of their students (Samson & Collins, 2012). All teachers, regardless of title or grade level, should be effectively trained to teach ELL students and to narrow the academic achievement gap between ELLs and their native English-speaking peers (Correll, 2016).

Maltese (2014) affirmed that many mainstream U.S. teachers are not properly trained to support ELL students who are placed in mainstream classrooms. This is problematic because some ELL students are not receiving specialized instruction needed to close the achievement gap. Although teachers have earned a degree and teaching certificate in their respective fields in instruction for both elementary and middle school, many are not required to take classes geared toward teaching ELLs, which may be a possible cause of the problem of teachers not being prepared to teach ELLs in their classes (Kim, 2011).

Franco-Fuenmayor et al. (2015) provided evidence to show that, although 42% of teachers in public school have at least one ELL enrolled in their class, less than 3% of

those teachers are certified teachers in ESOL. While the teachers may have knowledge about the content and pedagogy needed to teach the appropriate grade-level standards to general education students, when it comes to ELLs, they do not have the specialized knowledge to help ELL students achieve (Negron, 2012). Short (2013) contended that many teachers do not receive proper training and are usually left to figure it out on the job. This is a disservice to many ELLs because they are not learning the academic content needed to achieve academic success (Teng, 2018). Rizzuto (2017) posited that poor training has caused some mainstream teachers to develop negative theories about the abilities of ELLs, which may shape the way they instruct their ELL students.

Trained teachers can effectively support their students' academic development. According to Short (2013), there were only six states (Alaska, Arizona, California, Florida, Pennsylvania, and New York) that require preservice teachers to take specialized classwork geared toward teaching ELLs. By 2020, that number doubled to 12 states requiring programs that would prepare preservice teachers to instruct ELLS effectively, even though the federal government requires all school districts in the United States to provide professional learning opportunities for mainstream teachers (Mills et al., 2020). Even though the course work was required in those states, none of the course work was uniform throughout the states. In 2014, the Education Commission of the States conducted a 50-state comparison of the states, and the number of states required to have specialized training to teach ELLs rose from six to approximately 32 states. Still, many of those states only require the bare minimum federal requirements.

According to the Education Commission of the States, federal law decrees that school districts must provide research-based professional development to teachers, administrators, and staff who work with ELLs in a school setting. Furthermore, the

professional development must focus on effective methods used for working with ELLs, and the professional development training should be offered frequently enough to have a lasting effect on ELLs academically and linguistically. A majority of the federally mandated teacher training programs offered teachers the basic knowledge needed to effectively support and teach the ELLs placed into their general mainstream classes. Walker (2014) asserted that this research shows the need for teachers to be introduced to research-based practices and knowledge that will help them to meet the needs of English language learners in the mainstream classroom.

Negron (2012) asserted that large percentages of U.S. public school teachers have had little or no professional development for teaching ELLs. Correll's (2016) research findings corroborated the assertion that many teachers felt unprepared to teach ELLs due to poor preparatory course work or actual experience in the classroom during their student teaching experience. This lack of training directly correlates with students not learning the appropriate academic content and skills while simultaneously trying to learn how to speak English (Berner, 2019). Research conducted by Walker (2014) indicated that the lack of preparation to teach these students leads to academic gaps for ELL students, and these gaps do not help the students become successful in the classroom.

The paucity of proper instructional background and professional knowledge will ultimately interfere with the ability of some regular content-area teachers to design relevant instruction for ELLs (Walker, 2014). More often than not, if teachers feel unprepared or improperly trained to support ELLs academically or linguistically, it may be an indication that the curriculum for ELLs is secondary to that of their English-speaking peers (Waxman et al., 2012). According to Fu (2017), ELLs already experience triple segregation, such as race, poverty, and language deficiency, and teachers who teach

in these schools struggle with supporting ELLs academically. Therefore, the gap of achievement between ELLs and their peers who speak English becomes wider.

Deficiencies in the Evidence

A gap exists between the existing research on the success of ELLs in mainstream classrooms and the perceived preparedness of the teachers who teach these ELLS. There are many research articles on ELLs centered on their lack of academic success, but there needs to be more research centered on interventions that have been effective for ELLs as well as instruction (Dussling, 2020). A study conducted by Mojica (2014) compared the relationship between eighth-grade English-language proficiency, as measured by the ACCESS test, and the achievement test outcomes on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, which is a test mandated by the state. Mojica found that, although a majority of students scored advanced and proficient in math and reading, ELL students' scores did not increase. In fact, the percentage of ELLs scoring below basic increased in both reading and math.

Rios (2018) conducted a study to examine if English proficiency scores in reading, writing, listening, and speaking on the ACCESS assessment would predict semester grades in English courses for a group of ninth-grade ELL students. The author asserted that educators presume that ELLs' oral fluency on the ACCESS test will predict their ability to comprehend course content and do well in mainstream classroom tasks. The research indicated that, although the ELL cohort of students possessed well-developed conversational English skills that enabled them to perform at high levels in social interactions, that does not mean these students can apply academic language well enough to be successful in English courses (Rios, 2018).

In some instances, ELL students can perform as well as native English-speaking

students in the mainstream classroom if the educator has the needed information and skills to teach the student, such as explicit vocabulary, text structures, and scaffolding language within a content area (Hamann & Reeves, 2013). ELLs have often been referred to special education and labeled as such merely due to the educator's inability to distinguish between a learning disability and lack of language proficiency (Dussling (2020). In order to teach ELL students to master the English language as well as academic content, it is imperative that teachers be professionally competent to teach these students. When newly hired, it is an expectation that the teachers are qualified to teach whatever they were hired for at the time of their recruitment. The profession is constantly changing, and there is a need for teachers to participate in ongoing professional development to keep up with the changes and trends in education (Jimerson et al., 2013; Sadeghi & Richards, 2021).

Furthermore, mainstream educators who become ELL-certified instructors through add-on endorsements from professional learning through their state or district can help to lessen the divide between ELLs and their native English-speaking counterparts (Hamann & Reeves, 2013). Professional development should be relevant to the specific needs of teachers and their students in order for it to be successful (Sadeghi & Richards, 2021). Hamann and Reeves (2013) contended that providing professional development to educators will help ELLs to become more successful in school. The authors argued that the numbers of teachers unprepared to teach ELLs were decreasing as the numbers of states requiring teacher preparation training for these educators were increasing (Hamann & Reeves, 2013).

ELLs often enter the classroom with limited English proficiency and frequently demonstrate low academic achievement; as a result, they may experience psychological

distress. Parra et al. (2014) described some of the psychological abuse ELL students face in schools, such as being segregated into remedial first-grade classes and retained until they learned how to speak English or not being allowed to speak their native language of Spanish even on the playground and, if caught, were punished. Although these occurred while the ELLs were at school, schools were not held accountable for the emotional or physical symptoms these children faced as a result of this treatment. Also, when some ELLs discover that not much is expected from them due to their language classification, they will tend to perform at lower academic levels. The opposite is also true because an ELLs who discover more is expected from them will rise to the occasion and perform at higher academic levels (Diaz et al., 2016). ELLs who have literacy skills in their native languages can often translate these skills into English. Teachers can engage ELL students by building upon their prior knowledge and increase understanding and create a rich learning experience and actively engage students (Dong, 2013).

Audience

The intended audiences for this study include preservice teachers, veteran teachers, administrators, and stakeholders of the public school system, specifically at the elementary school level. By highlighting the perceived preparedness of teachers to teach ELLs in mainstream classes, the researcher can help bring awareness to the problem and perhaps prompt further research to be conducted in the area of adequately and effectively preparing teachers to work with ELLs.

Purpose of the Study

The problem addressed by this study was that many ELLs were not making adequate progress academically in mainstream classes. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to explore teachers’ perceptions of their preparedness to teach ELLs in

mainstream classes at the research site. Throughout this research, the researcher aimed to explore connections between teacher perceptions of preparedness for teaching ELLs and their current pedagogical practices. With the increased numbers of ELL students being placed in mainstream classes, teachers are responsible for teaching the same academic content to ELLs and their native -peaking counterparts in the same room (Turgut et al., 2016).

Although there is a plethora of high-quality courses available for preservice and veteran teachers alike that purport to effectively train teachers to teach ELLs, those trainings will not hold value to a teacher who perceives that the information is not pertinent to their current or future teaching experience (Correll, 2016). They may believe that the information is not pertinent because the biases they have hold more weight than the information they have learned. According to Kelly (2017), it is important to train highly qualified preservice educators on how to be culturally responsive to teach successfully in a linguistically diverse public school setting. Researchers have highlighted the importance of restructuring the knowledge and skill base for general education teachers to ensure that they are competent to work with students from diverse backgrounds. (Fu & Wang, 2021). It is critically important to empower ELL teachers with appropriate knowledge and training needed to help ELLs and increase student learning in their mainstream classrooms (Franco-Fuenmayor et al., 2015).

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this applied dissertation, the following terms are defined.

Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS)

This is a term used to describe the language used by ELLs when interacting with fellow students on a day-to-day basis. Some ELLs may take up to 3 years to acquire these

English skills (Cummins, 1979; McNeil, 2011).

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)

This term refers to language utilized by students for academic content purposes. CALP is a formal language skill developed by ELLs to help them master subject content learning in school and can take between 5 and 7 years to fully develop (Cummins, 1979).

English Language Learner (ELL)

This term refers to a person whose first language is not English but who is becoming proficient in the English language. An ELL is a student who generally comes from a country outside of the United States. ELLs can also be born within the United States, but their parent was born in another country. ELLs are tasked with learning a new language and culture while also attempting to master the academic content area material (Brown, 2011; Burke, 2012; Harris, 2011; Jackson et al., 2014; Moyer, 2011; Orozco, 2012; Rivas, 2012).

Mainstream Class

This term refers to a general education class that includes both ELLs and native English-speaking students. When ELLs are mainstreamed, they have been taken out of a sheltered class and placed into a class with a general education teacher. According to Carney (2012), mainstream teachers of ELL students should develop proficiency, expertise, and perception to help assist ELLs with second language learning.

Self-Efficacy

This term, first conceived by Albert Bandura (1977), refers to individuals' internal beliefs in their ability to effectively execute a task. Bandura's model of self-efficacy speculates that perceived self-efficacy will influence an individual's actions via conduct, perseverance, and personal choice to carry out or abstain from a task (Carney,

2012).

Sheltered Instruction

This term refers to a pedagogical approach used by teachers to instruct ELLs in the English language. A sheltered instruction classroom is a classroom that has only ELLs who are taught by a teacher with extensive expertise in teaching and supporting English language learners. A teacher provides extra linguistic cues such as visuals, props, and gestures to make the content more understandable in a sheltered English lesson. Sheltered instruction allows teachers to organize and execute effective instruction for ELLs learning English as a second language as they participate in academic content learning (Freberg, 2014).

Teacher Perceptions

Perceptions are what individuals believe they know and understand about a subject. Teachers' perceptions of language teaching for ELL students are their beliefs related to the understanding of appropriate academic language instruction that benefits ELL students' academic learning and how to support their learning (Schulz, 2017).

Teacher Self-Efficacy

Teacher self-efficacy is how a teacher responds to challenges. This will alternate based upon teachers' personal beliefs regarding their ability to perform said tasks effectively (i.e., their efficacy about teaching). These beliefs are identified as a teacher's self-efficacy (Carney, 2012).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In the past, there were no set guidelines on how to handle ELL education in schools (Cummings, 2015). ELLs have always been present in schools, but the lack of teacher training meant that teachers were allowed to decide how to educate these children. Between the 1920s and 1960s, there were very few remedial programs aimed at teaching ELLs (Foster, 2013). These children were often left to fend for themselves in the school systems, or they were immersed in the English language with the hopes that they would catch on to the language. Two major pieces of legislation, the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, appropriated funds to states to improve the education of ELLs in the school system. Between 1974 and 1987, there were several court rulings that impacted ELL education in the nation's schools. The federal government continues to refine its laws regarding ELL education in schools (Colorín Colorado, 2021).

The federal government mandates school districts to administer educational services to ELLs but leaves it up to the districts to determine what type of services ELLs receive (Chen, 2015). This means that the training that teachers receive will vary from state to state or district to district. When teachers receive proper training, they will naturally be better at their craft. They will also be more confident and successful at teaching English learners, and their teacher self-efficacy will be higher (Mathis, 2017). More and more ELLs are enrolling into schools each day, and it is important that all teachers receive uniform training so when a child moves to a different district or state, they can continue where they left off. A lack of teacher preparation means that the ELLs

can potentially be improperly supported, academically and linguistically, due to lack of teacher experience (Carney, 2012). Walker (2014) asserted that student achievement improves when teachers are engaged in continuous professional development that focuses on developing teachers' subject area knowledge and instructional practices.

Freberg (2014) cited a study in which most of the teachers surveyed felt as if they did not receive satisfactory training to work with ELL students, and only half of the teachers indicated interest in obtaining specialized ELL training. If this ELL training is mandated by all states, then more ELL students could achieve academic success in the classroom (Waxman et al., 2012). Short (2013) highlighted a very successful approach called sheltered instruction that is utilized in many places in the United States. Sheltered instruction integrates language development and specialized techniques to make academic content easier to grasp for ELLs (McGee, 2012).

Sheltered instruction allows ELLs to access core curriculum and to progress in their academic English knowledge. Freberg (2014) asserted the following:

> It is imperative for teacher education programs to incorporate courses that specifically address the learning needs of ELL students. Not only does this increase teachers' overall knowledge and awareness, but these types of courses also appear to have a positive impact on how teachers perceive ELL students. (p. 14)

In order to achieve academic equality and narrow the gap of academic achievement between ELL students and their English-speaking peers, educational interventions should be made in mainstream classrooms so that diverse learners, regardless of gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or language, can be successful (Waxman et al., 2012). Highly effective teachers use the professional knowledge they

have learned in their professional development courses, whereas low self-efficacy educators show their incompetent use of the knowledge and skills in the mainstream classroom (Carney, 2012). ELLs are a diverse group of learners who come from different backgrounds, with different languages, academic and social emotional needs. Even students who speak the same language need different levels of academic support in the mainstream classroom. ELL students require specialized learning and/or modified instruction in their academic instruction and English language learning.

ELLs Defined

An ELL can be defined in many ways. An ELL can be a student who speaks another language at home, was not born in the United States, or was born in the United States but has a parent who was not. They often come from homes where their first language is not English, and, at school, the ELLs need some type of modified instruction in their content academic area classes (Foster, 2013). The population of ELLs in U.S. schools continues to grow steadily every year. The U.S. Department of Education describes an ELL as having limited proficiency in the English language (Fu & Wang, 2021).

The ELLs usually have language-related difficulties in school because their primary language is not English. ELLs who were not born in the United States but attend a U.S. school have a twofold problem. They are charged with learning a new language while trying to master the content area material. Many of these ELLs encounter significant academic difficulties while trying to master the academic language and content material that they need to be successful (Burke, 2012). Moving to a new country where instruction is delivered in a language other than the one they primarily speak can prove to be a difficult task for these students. Having to assimilate into a new country

takes time before they can fully participate in the U.S. culture or become proficient academically (Watts, 2021).

ELLs are often placed into mainstream classrooms where they do not speak or understand the language and they encounter difficulty understanding the language. The teacher makes a huge difference in the beginning stages. If the teacher is an experienced ELL teacher who does or does not speak the child's language, he or she will practice strategies that will help the student to feel comfortable (Li, 2013). Some strategies include but are not limited to (a) using real-life artifacts that the child can visually see and relate to, (b) using hand gestures to help the child understand what is expected of them (motioning with their hands to get up or sit down, and (c) employing a print-rich environment with things labeled in the child's first language and also in English (Govoni & Artecona-Pelaez, 2011).

In Florida, when children enter the school system in kindergarten and are classified as an ELL, they may have up to 3 full years to exit the program, meaning that even if they fail the required state tests for promotion in kindergarten to second grade, they will be promoted to the next grade because they are ELL. During these 2 years, they can only be retained if it has been determined that there is another factor besides language that is preventing them from being successful in that grade level (Govoni & Artecona-Pelaez, 2011). This may or may not occur everywhere, but it is policy in the state of Florida.

ELLs and Home Life

ELLs constitute a large percentage of the population in U.S. schools. In fact, this group is one of the subgroups in the prekindergarten to Grade 12 student population that continues to grow steadily (Short, 2013). ELL students bring a unique language and

educational background that has an impact on their English learning process. ELLs live in two starkly different worlds: at home and then at school. When they are home, they are engulfed in their culture, traditions, and language. At school, the atmosphere is completely foreign to them. They are thrown into an environment that is alien and are often unprepared and confused about the new routines they must learn (Jones et al., 2014). Although they have trouble assimilating at first, ELLs usually adapt to their new culture more quickly than their parents and commonly master both cultures, easily flowing between both worlds. In fact, these ELL children often become the bridge between the teacher and the parent, sometimes having to translate conversations and even important documents.

Murnane et al. (2012) pointed out that the early education of ELLs is heavily influenced by the fact that their primary language is most likely spoken in the home and that they have not mastered the English language yet. Knowing that these children do not get the chance to practice speaking English at home, it is the teacher's job to help the ELL to become proficient in English, attaining the same standards as their native English-speaking peers (Negron, 2012). Freberg (2014) suggested that teacher perception for ELL students can positively or negatively influence academic outcomes in the classroom. As the number of ELLs steadily increases, so should the programs dedicated to servicing the needs of ELLs and supporting them in the mainstream classroom. The current study sought to demonstrate that effective teacher preparedness and teacher efficacy are assets to any classroom but especially classrooms that contain ELLs.

Identifying ELL Students in the School System

In Florida, students are initially classified as ELL when their caregiver registers them in school and checks a box on the registration form indicating that their child speaks

another language at home. Once that box is checked, the students are administered a formal test to see if they are proficient in English. This test also assesses their language classification. Regardless of classification, they receive certain modifications such as a linguistic modification, which is a manipulation of language that is direct and can be integrated into classroom practice (Pappamihiel & Lynn, 2016). An example of a linguistic modification would be to read directions out loud to benefit ELL students with better listening skills than reading skills. The use of modifications in a classroom is simply to level the playing field but not to give ELL students an advantage over their peers.

In many states, students are identified as ELL only after they have been formally tested in reading, writing, speaking, and listening comprehension (Govoni & Artecona-Pelaez, 2011). If the results from the ELL testing indicate that the student may have difficulty in regular academic courses, the ELL student is then placed into one of the following programs or classes: (a) a dual language course, (b) an ESOL program, (c) a mainstream class with a general education teacher who has taken specialized courses, or (d) a sheltered classes where all the students are ELL and are taught in a modified version (Burke, 2012).

Due to the mandate from the federal government, many districts require teachers to take some form of professional development, college class, or training to educate ELLs (Mills et al., 2020). Districts that have a significant number of ELLs with limited staff who are certified to teach ELLs and limited funds usually utilize some form of sheltered instruction, as well as modified classroom assignments, materials, and instructional methods that fall within their budgets (Delgado, 2014). This may prove to be a challenge for ELLs when the school district has limited resources to help ELL students.

ELLs encounter many other challenges when they enter schools in the United States. Limited English proficiency is the biggest challenge that they face. If they struggle with literacy, as well as academic and subject knowledge in their first language, then attempting to learn it in another language will further exacerbate their lack of English proficiency (Austin-Archil, 2019). Many times, ELLs may feel the pressure to become proficient in English in a short amount of time because they are required to take state-mandated achievement tests. The state-mandated tests are given to all students, native speaking and ELLs alike (Franceschini-Kern, 2016). If ELL students are classified, they will be given extra time to test in another setting away from their peers.

The ELL students engage in assessments to determine if they have made sufficient progress to close the achievement gap (Mathis, 2017). This proves to be an unfair practice for ELLs because they must simultaneously learn content material and language. In addition, vocabulary deficits negatively affect reading comprehension, contributing to educational challenges (Burke, 2012). Teachers have an urgent need to know what instruction to provide and in which manner to deliver it most effectively to students. They must know enough about ELL instruction to have the knowledge to reflect on their practices to request the appropriate level of support needed from administrators, parents, and students (Correll, 2016).

Schools develop curriculum and instruction based on the assumption that students know some English when they enter school. This assumption puts ELLs who may not have acquired even BICS at a distinct disadvantage (Cummins, 1979). Furthermore, schools depend heavily on oral language proficiency; therefore, when students lack oral and written communication skills in English, they have limited access to content and cannot demonstrate the learning they do possess (Kim, 2011). Although some ELL

students may have acquired BICS, they might not have developed academic competence in either their home language or in English (Burke, 2012). Because larger numbers of ELL students have been entering mainstream classrooms, educators must understand how to address the challenges of these students and educate all learners. It is compulsory for teachers to comprehend the steps involved in language acquisition, build relationships with ELL students and their families, and exhibit high teacher self-efficacy and cultural proficiency (Mathis, 2017).

The Florida Department of Education uses the ACCESS assessment for ELLs, which measures the proficiency of ELLs in the English language and determines the skills that students must acquire to excel academically. The ACCESS tests are paper-based assessments for ELLs in Grades 1 to 12. There are four parts to the test: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The speaking part of the test is administered one on one with a teacher (Florida Department of Education, 2019). The listening, reading, and writing portions of the test are administered in a group setting with other ELLs. The kindergarten ACCESS assessment is an assessment that is also paper based for ELL kindergarten students. All parts of the kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs are administered one on one with a teacher (Florida Department of Education, 2019). The alternate ACCESS for ELLs is another paper-based assessment for students in Grades 1 to 12 with significant intellectual disabilities. These students are also given all sections of the test in a one-on-one setting with a teacher (Florida Department of Education, 2019).

Instruction Program Models for ELLs

In the United States, schools are charged with addressing the needs of diverse ELLs due to the expanding numbers who have enrolled in their schools and are limited English speakers (Delgado, 2014). The various ELL programs are more than likely used

in districts where the ELL population is substantial and where these students come from a myriad of countries and speak various languages (Sugarman, 2018). Effective ELL programs are set up to accommodate students who speak a variety of languages and are housed in the same class (Delgado, 2014). Some researchers argue that it would be beneficial if the teachers in the mainstream classrooms spoke the language of the ELL students in their classes. According to Fu (2017), this is not necessary because the comprehensive training received in effective ELL programs taught them the proper strategies to reach all learners in the mainstream classroom.

Districts utilize a variety of instructional models to instruct the ELL students at their schools (Sugarman, 2018). The models that are most effective promote academic success for ELLs while they are simultaneously learning the English language (Delgado, 2014). An ELL program that is customized to address the linguistic, academic, and affective needs of students is likely to bridge the education lag between an ELL and their native English-speaking peers (Burke, 2012). The ELL instructional model should allow them to navigate through the educational system at a rate that is comparable to their native English-speaking peers. Finally, the ELL instructional model should utilize district and community resources and make sure to include the ELL parents in the educational process (Colorín Colorado, 2019). The next few paragraphs outline and explain some of the instructional models utilized for ELLs in a variety of districts all around the United States. All variations of models used across the United States indicate that schools utilize different approaches to instruct and educate ELLs in order to bridge the gap between ELL students and their native English-speaking peers.

The Pull-Out Model

The pull-out program model is an instructional model that is more commonly

used at the elementary level than at the secondary level (Sugarman, 2018). In the pull-out model, ELLs spend most of the day in a mainstream classroom but get pulled out during the day to get English instruction from an ELL specialist teacher. In the pull-out model, students meet with an ELL specialist outside of the classroom for a portion of their academic day. The pull-out program model organizes students across grade levels and English proficiency level. This method proves to be especially effective for beginning English language learners who need more help with their English skills. As the ELL students begin to advance in learning the English language, the ELL specialist may teach a specific subject area, activate student prior knowledge about lessons and/or review content that the students learned previously (Penke, 2011).

The Push-In Model

With the instructional push-in model, students remain in a mainstream classroom throughout the day, but an ELL teacher or other specialist in the school pushes in to the classroom at different intervals throughout the day to assist the ELL students (Sugarman, 2018). The push-in model is opposite of the pull-out model because the teacher comes into the room to assist the classroom teacher instead of pulling students out of the mainstream classroom. In this model, the specialist finds an area in the classroom to work with individual students or a small group of children. The ELL specialist may modify the lesson that the ELL needs assistance with or help the ELL with a difficult lesson. The role of the specialist is to help the classroom teacher by displaying realia, keywords or other visual aids that will assist the students with comprehension of the subject matter (Whiting, 2017).

Structured Immersion Programs

In a structured immersion model, the ELLs receive instruction completely in

English whether their proficiency is beginning or advanced (Penke, 2011). This intensive English immersive program seeks to accelerate the rate of English language acquisition for ELLs (Penke, 2011). This program model does not include ELL instruction mainly because educators believe that complete immersion into the language will facilitate the learning of the English language (Penke, 2011). Teachers who teach while utilizing this model have an ELL teaching credential or they must know how to say certain phrases in the students' primary language, which is restricted to clarifying instructions. This model is also temporary because many of the ELLs enrolled are mainstreamed after a few years (Esquibel, 2019).

Sheltered Classes

Sheltered English immersion, or structured English immersion, is a program model where the curriculum is specifically designed for students learning the English language and a majority of all the classroom instruction is in English (Delgado, 2014). In a sheltered class, the books, instructional materials, and the content-area material resources are all written in English (Sugarman, 2018). The teacher utilizes sheltering strategies to support ELL students as they learn a new language. This program model offers content-based educational instruction that teaches the students how to speak English while learning the academic content at the same time (Delgado, 2014). Burke (2012) asserted that ELLs whose teachers use sheltering strategies demonstrate better academic and social outcomes. Sheltered instruction classroom teachers have undergone extensive training that has prepared them to teach ELL students (Delgado, 2014).

In this program, sheltered teachers use a small amount of the ELLs' primary language when needed, but the bulk of instruction occurs in English. Children in a sheltered instruction classroom learn to write and read in English. In this program model,

the teacher provides extra linguistic cues such as visuals, realia, and gestures or total physical response to make the content understandable (Delgado, 2014). The teacher fosters the accessing of prior knowledge by students as well as teaching to the individual student's abilities. Some common strategies of the sheltered instruction model include hands-on applications, social interactions with peers, cooperative learning, visual learning aids, and guided vocabulary (Negron, 2012).

Mainstream Integration

Many schools utilize the mainstream model in order to combine resources, save space in a particular classroom, and save monies. These districts rely on teachers to provide language development support to ELLs, many times with little training for the educator (Johnston, 2013). In this instructional model, ELL students remain in the general education or mainstream classroom for the whole day and receive instruction in English from teachers who have not received specialized training to teach ELL students (Augustin, 2016). In certain schools, the mainstream teacher may have to collaborate with an ELL teacher to lesson plan. This model can place undue stress on the collaborating general education and the ELL teacher, such as personality clashes and issues of ownership and control (Sicignano, 2013).

The mainstream classroom can also cause unnecessary stress on the ELL student. The language barrier may cause the ELL student to withdraw and shut down when forced to compete with native English-speaking students in a mainstream classroom setting (Johnston, 2013). This language barrier may also cause the ELL to feel alone and isolated, and this can result in academic challenges in the mainstream classroom (Augustin, 2016). In the mainstream classroom, the ELL must develop academic language skills and become proficient in the English language in order to meet state-

mandated standards. The ELLs are tasked with the issue of learning academic language in the language that they are learning (Turgut et al., 2016).

Teachers Not Sufficiently Prepared to Teach ELLs

Carney (2012) pointed out that the states with a large population of ELL students are not synonymous with the states that have an increasing population of ELLs. What this essentially means is that ELL families are moving to states in the United States where the teachers are not prepared to teach them effectively. Although the number of ELLs continues to increase, the number of preservice and current teachers who feel sufficiently prepared to teach ELLs is limited. Some districts throughout the United States rely solely on the teacher to serve the needs of this growing population but fail to provide the teachers with adequate training to do so (Mills et al., 2020).

While some districts fail to provide adequate training for teachers, Delgado (2014) asserted that other districts are working diligently to create rigorous training for teachers to help advance ELLs academically as well as socially and emotionally. Johnston (2013) pointed out that, even though Title III of No Child Left Behind requires mandatory training for classroom teachers and staff working with ELLs in the classroom, the training provided lacks in quality and accessibility. Not much had changed by 2020, according to Mills et al. (2020), who contended that, even though schools continue to mainstream ELLs into the general education classroom, many districts struggle with how to prepare teachers to teach these linguistically diverse ELLs.

General education or mainstream teachers play an integral role in the education of ELL students. Many of these teachers are accustomed to working with native speakers but lack sufficient training to assist this population effectively (Turgut et al., 2016). Waxman et al. (2012) pointed out that many ELLs attend schools where the teaching and

curriculum are inferior to schools to that of their English-speaking peers. Unfortunately, large percentages of those classroom teachers have not been adequately prepared to teach ELLs the necessary academic content and skills while helping them develop proficiency in English. Many of the teachers who teach ELL students speak only English and have no knowledge or experience in teaching someone how to learn a new language (Turgut et al., 2016). There is a misconception that general education teachers can reach all learners by simply using good teaching strategies, but ELLs have diverse linguistic needs, and teachers need to go beyond those strategies to reach the ELL (Kim, 2011).

Teachers who do not have specialized knowledge to effectively teach ELLs in their classrooms may cause them more harm than good. According to Turgut et al. (2016), they may subconsciously isolate or ignore the ELLs or teach them in ineffective ways. Negron (2012) pointed out that teachers who are unable to help ELLs academically and linguistically may have had little or no professional development for teaching ELLs. According to Fu and Wang (2021), very few teachers in the nation have been properly trained to teach ELLs, and, as a result, these teachers have not learned the proper strategies to combine language and content instruction. These teachers must teach students to speak English as well as core subjects such as mathematics, science, and social studies (Short, 2013).

Freberg (2014) emphasized that the expectations or perceptions of teachers can influence their students' academic outcomes. If the teacher has low expectations for the student, then the student will not perform well. However, if the teacher has high expectations for the students and demonstrates that, the students will rise to meet those expectations and challenges. This belief is called self-efficacy, and Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy as a person's internalized belief, feelings, thoughts and motivations.

The higher a teacher's self-efficacy, the more likely the ELL students will perform well academically. Often, teacher expectations about their students' abilities can influence the way they teach their students and can impact the students' academic performance.

Teachers who believe their students can succeed will participate in behaviors to help them to succeed. If teachers do not think that their students can succeed, they will behave in ways that will not facilitate student success (Walker, 2014). Teacher perceptions and attitudes may affect the instruction that they provide to ELLs. Walker (2014) contended that teachers who do not have confidence in the effectiveness of their instructional strategies or have feelings of doubt due to lack of knowledge will not perform accordingly, and the outcome for academic achievement for ELLs will be bleak. Teachers who experience this sense of apprehension regarding instructional pedagogy are experiencing low self-efficacy.

Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy as the belief and the capability of performing certain tasks in a manner that will effectively allow an individual to attain certain goals. Self-efficacy, a concept initially developed by Bandura, influences thought patterns and emotions and can enable or inhibit actions. Bandura proposed that self-efficacy was the key to behavior initiation. Self-efficacy can determine feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and motivations. In a classroom setting, self-efficacy determines the beliefs and expectations a teacher will set to accomplish a goal. If teachers possess a strong self-efficacy, they will often apply previously unused teaching methods, research various processes to educate ELL students in the general education classroom, and find ways to differentiate curriculum (Mathis, 2017).

Cummings (2015) argued that efficacy and self-efficacy should not be utilized reciprocally. Efficacy is the capability to achieve a desired outcome by completing a

certain task, whereas self-efficacy refers to one’s credence about the ability to produce a desired effect. Those terms are related and need each other to exist. For example, individuals may have the ability to lift a 50-pound weight, but their belief in whether or not they can lift the weight may hinder them from even attempting the task. Therefore, self-efficacy is the belief of individuals in their own efficacy. Another term related to this term is teacher self-efficacy, which is when teachers have confidence in their own capability to help students achieve academic success (Walker, 2014). A teacher with high self-efficacy will more than likely have a great impact on student success in the mainstream classroom, whereas a teacher with a lower self-efficacy may not produce student success in the classroom. Walker (2014) described a teacher with low self-efficacy as one who is going through the motions of teaching but not challenging the students or trying new instructional methods to help students academically.

When teachers are confident in their ability, persist through challenges, and are innovative in their practices, their students will more than likely excel academically. Teacher self-efficacy is an essential component that affects teaching practice in a positive or negative manner. Teachers with higher self-efficacy are inclined to display more inventive and higher quality teaching methods when compared to teachers with lower teacher self-efficacy. Carney (2012) asserted that teacher experiences, good or bad, will have an impact on teacher self-efficacy as it relates to teaching ELL students. The type of training that they have, their inner biases, and what they know about teaching ELLs play a significant part in their teacher self-efficacy. Teachers will always choose the instructional methods that they believe or know from their experience are effective and suitable for certain topics, knowledge, and skills lessons (Schulz, 2017). In other words, they will teach what they are comfortable teaching in the manner they are comfortable

teaching it. Teacher self-efficacy is an inherent trait that allows teachers to utilize expertise and knowledge to increase student learning and ultimately close the achievement gap.

Pedagogical content knowledge requires the mastery of various teaching methods and adequate teaching knowledge and is essential for teacher efficacy when working with ELLs. Pedagogical content knowledge also demands that teachers integrate the methods into their daily teaching practices for all student learners (Fu & Wang, 2021). The greater the diligence of the teacher, the greater the probability that the teacher will practice successful teaching behaviors. Cummings (2015) delineated the positive correlation between high self-efficacy and high motivation to improve teaching, which will ultimately increase student academic achievement in the classroom. Teachers with higher self-efficacy set high expectations, pursue specific professional development and higher education, and are not afraid to be strong during challenging times (Cummings, 2015). However, teachers with low self-efficacy often exhibit low competencies or will overcompensate to cover deficiencies (Mathis, 2017). If a teacher is exhibiting low teacher self-efficacy, the ELLs' cultural norms and learning style may be overlooked in the mainstream classroom.

To promote ELL student achievement, mainstream teachers must develop cultural proficiency and the capability to achieve and foster relationships with students and their families (Niehaus, 2012). Getting familiar with the countries, attitudes, traditions, and beliefs of the students who are represented in their classroom is a positive step toward cultural proficiency. When educators use cultural proficiency in the classroom, they seek to educate all students by including their cultural backgrounds, languages, and learning styles throughout their teaching. Teachers must recognize their biases and then change

those biases to help facilitate culturally proficient actions. Kelly (2017) pointed out that improving the cultural competency of preservice teachers will improve the new teachers' perceptions regarding students of color, and it will allow the understanding and acknowledgment focus on culturally responsive teaching in diverse classroom settings. There is much research that highlights the educational gap between ELLs and their peers in academic content areas due to language deficiency; thus, it is important to place the focus and attention on examining teacher perceptions of ELLs (Walker, 2014).

Theoretical Frameworks

In this study, the researcher addressed the impact of academic education on ELLs as well as the obstacles hindering their academic success. Although research studies show that ELLs often struggle in academic settings, they can sometimes surpass native speakers in some areas of English, given appropriate instruction and intervention by adequately trained teachers (Kim, 2011). The researcher examined the relationship between theoretical foundations of teacher preparedness and teacher self-efficacy while considering the available literature that relates to instructional models for ELLs. There is a conceptual framework for the study as well as a review of the literature about language acquisition for ELLs and teacher preparedness. The researcher discusses Bandura's self-efficacy theory as it relates to teacher efficacy while teaching ELLs in mainstream classrooms. The researcher also discusses BICS and CALP as they relate to ELLs acclimatizing to their new surroundings (Kovar, 2018).

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to the belief of individuals that they can achieve different outcomes according to their actions. This concept was pioneered by the psychologist, Albert Bandura. Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory states that the belief of individuals

will impact their behavior, actions, and performance in a negative or a positive way. Bandura defined self-efficacy as the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the actions needed to produce given attainments. Bandura also identified self-efficacy as a predictor of a person's actual performance in a given attainment. In other words, an individual who possesses a high level of self-efficacy can accomplish a task in a given amount of time, whereas an individual with a lower self-efficacy may have great difficulty accomplishing the same task or an easier task within the same amount of time (Fu, 2017). Individuals' self-efficacy beliefs determine the way they perform in any area, as they reflect the way people feel capable of achieving certain accomplishments (García Gutiérrez, 2017). A strong sense of self efficacy will cause a person to stick to and complete a task despite the obstacles that present themselves. On the other end of the spectrum, people with a weaker self-efficacy belief will most likely be intimidated by adversity and tend to give up on tasks more easily (Fu, 2017).

Self-efficacy can determine the motivation level of individuals, their expressed interest in a subject, and their task effort and level of performance as well as goal setting (Sehgal, 2017). To an extent, the concept of self-efficacy entails what individuals believe they are capable of accomplishing under several circumstances and conditions (García Gutiérrez, 2017). According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy is related to how capable individuals believe they are at the moment they carry out a specific task in an area. High self-efficacy occurs when individuals believe they are capable of performing a certain behavior and that it will yield them positive results. This behavior occurs in all walks of life, including personal and private sectors. Bandura defined self-efficacy as beliefs, thoughts, motivations, and behaviors that people possess and internalize. The aforementioned factors drive how people feel, think, motivate others, and behave.

Perceived self-efficacy describes the belief that people will produce a desirable result (Bandura, 1977).

In Bandura's research concerning self-efficacy, the author defined it as the belief about one's capabilities to construct and carry out a task. According to Bandura's theory, self-efficacy is divided into two categories: efficacy expectation and outcome expectancy (Bandura, 1977). The assurance of individuals in their ability, proficiency, and skills to successfully implement behaviors or actions needed to produce a favorable outcome is called efficacy expectation. The belief that a certain behavior or action will lead to an expected outcome is called outcome expectancy (Bandura, 1977). In order to have favorable results in the classroom, a teacher needs to have high efficacy expectations and high outcome expectancy. If the teacher has one and not the other, then that teacher will most likely be unsuccessful even if the teacher has been trained and is qualified (Bandura, 1977).

Teachers with high self-efficacy usually grasp new concepts readily and are more inclined to try new things than teachers with lower self-efficacy. They are also less likely to experience burnout, allow their students to think critically, and find innovative ways to support low-ability students. Teachers with high self-efficacy have an eagerness for teaching students, exhibit an outstanding responsibility for the teaching profession, and are more likely to stay in the teaching profession for more years than low-efficacy teachers (Bandura 1977). Cummings (2015) asserted that self-efficacy can vary according to the teachers' personal beliefs about language acquirement and academic instruction, or there may be a relationship between self-efficacy and other things, such as the setting of the school where the teacher teaches.

According to Fu (2017), all teacher preparation programs should include the

development of self-efficacy to boost preservice teaching competence in instructing ELLs. Even brief professional development and intervention has been shown to boost self-efficacy of teachers who teach ELLs (Fu, 2017). Carney (2012) asserted that taking an accurate measurement of self-efficacy in teachers can help to find the best way to increase self-efficacy beliefs in teachers as well as increase student and teacher outcomes. Effective professional development as well as follow-up opportunities that seek to increase self-efficacy in teachers will yield better outcomes for ELL teachers (Cummings, 2015).

Teacher Self-Efficacy

Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory has been widely recognized and applied as the construct of teacher efficacy. The construct of teacher self-efficacy was birthed out of Bandura's social-cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977). Teacher self-efficacy is a term that describes a teacher's personal beliefs and ability to plan classroom instruction and attain instructional objectives. Fu (2017) asserted that teacher self-efficacy is the extent to which teachers perceive that they can exert power over the reinforcement of their actions in the classroom. The beliefs of teachers in their ability to effectively teach a subject or lesson in the classroom is an important factor to the effectiveness of the teacher in the classroom (Sehgal, 2017). For instance, teachers with high levels of teacher self-efficacy believe that they have internal control to reinforce their actions, such as improving student academic performances and student motivation levels through effective instruction. On the opposite side of the spectrum, teachers with low levels of self-efficacy attribute reinforcement to the environment, which is out of the teacher's control. In other words, they believe students who perform lower academically or are unmotivated to learn are unteachable due to their home environment (Fu, 2017).

Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy as the beliefs of individuals to organize and execute the needed action required to produce a certain effect. Therefore, teacher self-efficacy can be defined as the confidence that teachers possess about their ability to teach students accurately and efficaciously. This confidence allows them to deliver instruction in an effective manner that will reach the majority of the students in the classroom (Sehgal, 2017). Teacher self-efficacy is a more expansive concept than self-efficacy by itself because it empowers the teachers to utilize their professional expertise and competencies, whereas low teacher self-efficacy obstructs the use of professional expertise and competencies. Students tend to learn more from teachers with high self-efficacy because they use open-ended questions, analysis and questioning methods, and employ small-group activities for students. Therefore, higher teacher self-efficacy is associated with effective teaching and academic achievement (Mathis, 2017).

Teacher self-efficacy is developed and fostered by professional development for teachers and by the efficient use of resources that support the implementation of new programs and practices (Fu, 2017). School-wide professional development, including ongoing professional learning communities, helps to improve teacher self-efficacy with ELLs and results in greater positive outcomes for students than what individual teachers could achieve (Sehgal, 2017). Studies have shown that collaboration with teachers helps to guard against uncertainty and other challenges that a teacher may encounter in the classroom related to technical or instructional practice, and it can also enhance teaching quality (Sehgal, 2017). Teachers with different knowledge, skills, and experience can further their capacity of language teaching by supporting each other to achieve higher level of professionalism and collective teacher self-efficacy through activities that take place in professional learning communities (Schulz, 2017).

It is important for schools to identify opportunities for teachers to collaborate and then encourage it. Collaboration among teachers and administration has the potential to positively influence teacher self-efficacy (Sehgal, 2017). The role of the principal also assumes significance in enhancing the self-efficacy beliefs of teachers and assisting with burnout and job satisfaction (Sehgal, 2017). Teachers who possess lower self-efficacy are more likely to suffer from burnout than teachers with a higher self-efficacy (Fu, 2017). According to Fu (2017) kindergarten to Grade 12 educators who reported higher levels of teacher self-efficacy seemed to be more satisfied with their jobs. Teachers who had lower self-efficacy were more dissatisfied with their current job and indicated they might leave the profession.

Fu (2017) explained that teacher attitudes and beliefs toward ELL students in mainstream classes are significant to research, as they help to understand teacher self-efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy is sometimes explored as a thought process that teachers conceptualize, such as how they will handle students' different backgrounds. It can present a challenge for educators to develop appropriate and adequate knowledge and skill in teaching ELLs (Fu, 2017). Fu added the following:

> Self-efficacy can shift during different moments in a teacher's career. A novice teacher's self-efficacy may not be as strong as the self-efficacy of a veteran teacher. Self-efficacies can be strengthened through increased experience and different professional development opportunities. However, teacher self-efficacy can also change for veteran teachers, over the course of years, with changes in student populations. (p. 22)

Academic qualifications, age, and work experience have also been positively linked to teacher efficacy (Sehgal, 2017).

Teacher efficacy has been linked to academic, effective, and motivational aspects of learning and has been attributed to the contribution of high teacher efficacy and student academic achievement (Fu, 2017). Instructional quality may also be impacted due to teacher self-efficacy (Mathis, 2017). Teacher perceptions about their own teaching competence can influence their uses of teaching strategies as well as their capabilities in managing classrooms and engaging students (Fu, 2017). Teachers with high self-efficacy usually choose to pursue additional professional development and training apart from the training that is mandated by their state or district (Mathis (2017). They are also more likely to employ instructional strategies that will motivate and inspire students to learn (Fu, 2017). Mathis (2017) argued that these high self-efficacy teachers see a need to differentiate instruction and cultural competence to provide proper teaching techniques for ELL students in mainstream classrooms.

Due to federal regulations in the United States, most ELLs spend the majority of their academic day in a mainstream classroom with a general education teacher as their primary instructional provider (Pappamihiel & Lyn, 2016). In a study conducted by Pappamihiel and Lyn (2016), the researchers found that preservice teachers' perceived preparedness was positively related to their levels of self-efficacy in ELL instruction. The more preservice teachers felt that they were prepared by the teacher education that they received, the higher self-efficacy they would demonstrate with ELLs in their classrooms (Pappamihiel & Lyn, 2016). In order to cultivate more teachers with high teacher self-efficacy, preservice teachers need to receive effective training to help prepare them to teach linguistically diverse students in these mainstream classrooms (Cummings, 2015). Unfortunately, many of these teachers are not prepared or they are underprepared to work with this population of students (Pappamihiel & Lyn, 2016).

In addition, the initial teaching experience of many preservice teachers does not usually occur in areas where there are a high number of ELL families (Cummings, 2015). The field experience of these preservice teachers takes place in areas where there are many students from White and middle-class socioeconomic status (Cummings, 2015). According to Cummings (2015), the self-efficacy of these teachers will probably be low because they did not achieve the same success with ELLs in an ELL classroom as they did in the mostly White and middle class one. Due to this inadequate emphasis on and the preparation for ELL instruction in teacher education programs, many preservice teachers who teach in regular classrooms reported lower levels of teaching efficacy in handling students with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Pappamihiel & Lyn, 2016).

Development of Self-Efficacy of Teachers

Based on the level of teacher self-efficacy that educators possess, they will perform differently in the classroom (Carney, 2012). Bandura's theory of self-efficacy postulates that teachers will either accept or back down from a challenge according to what they believe they have the capabilities to do. Teacher efficacy and the use of pedagogically relevant training influence student achievement and performance expectations (Walker, 2014). One way teacher efficacy is developed and fostered is by professional development for teachers. Another way teacher efficacy is developed is by the efficient use of resources that support the implementation of new programs and practices (Walker, 2014). The development of self-efficacy is a very important piece of teacher professional development programs. Research has shown that even a cursory training and intervention can increase teachers' self-efficacy for ELL students (Cummings, 2015).

Developing a precise measurement of the self-efficacy will help teachers establish

the value of interventions utilized (Carney, 2012). Teacher self-efficacy with ELLs and other disadvantaged students via school-wide professional development results in greater positive academic outcomes for students. Teachers with high self-efficacy have a keen understanding of the difference between social language and academic language acquisition, which is a critical concept when teaching ELL students language proficiency (Carney 2012). BICS and CALP are two examples of language acquisition of ELLs and will be discussed in the next sections.

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

BICS is the introductory language level acquired by ELLs. BICS represents the skills that ELLs utilize to interact with peers and other individuals in a social setting (Kovar, 2018). The concept of BICS was first coined by Jim Cummins (1979), and one would typically see BICS conversations happening at recess, on the school bus, at social gatherings, or on the telephone. Those social interactions are usually embedded based on environment and will happen in a purposeful social situation. The skills needed to participate in BICS are not cognitively taxing because the language used is not on an expert level. The attainment of BICS usually culminates between 6 months and 2 years after the ELL has arrived in the United States and usually when in school (Cummins, 1979).

Administrators, teachers, and other individuals at the school who are not properly trained to recognize BICS may think that the ELLs have acquired academic proficiency in English because they are speaking the language well in social conversations (McGee, 2012). The acquisition of BICS may lead the improperly trained teacher to think that the child does not need any extra ELL services. The teacher may think that the ELLs are able to work at grade level in the mainstream classroom when they have not achieved CALP,

which is another level of language proficiency to be achieved by ELL students (Cummins, 1979). An improperly trained teacher will mistakenly presume that the ELL students are able to grasp theoretical concepts and ideas because they appear to be speaking English proficiently (Sicignano, 2013). When this happens, and the students are expected to perform at a level for which they are not cognitively ready, the teachers' self-efficacy can decline when the student does not excel academically. The student may also begin to feel like a failure because the teacher assumed that the student was in the CALP stage when the student was actually in the BICS stage of acquiring the English language (McGee, 2012).

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

CALP contributes to a student's ability to engage in classroom talk as well as write and read academic texts. Cummins (1979) differentiated BICS from CALP because, although the use of BICS occurs in social settings, CALP involves the language skills that ELLs utilize for formal learning, such as reading, writing, speaking and listening. Students require CALP to achieve academically, and it can take anywhere from 5 to 7 years to master because it utilizes more time and effort (Cummins, 1979). Many of the characteristics needed to achieve CALP are similar to Bloom's (1956) taxonomy, which is a framework for categorizing educational goals. The framework created by Bloom contains six categories: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The older the student gets, the harder the task of acquiring academic language becomes. Students must grasp new ideas presented to them as they are reading the cognitively demanding textbooks.

It is imperative that training for teachers of ELLs illustrate the difference between BICS and CALP. Successfully teaching ELLs encompasses many tasks: students

achieving CALP, students becoming proficient in the English language, teachers being trained properly to teach ELLs and having the ability to teach those students, and teachers possessing a high teacher self-efficacy (McGee, 2012).

Research Questions

Many ELLs are not making adequate progress academically in mainstream classes. The researcher aimed to dissect the problem by determining if there was a correlation between the problem and the purpose of this dissertation. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore teachers' perceived preparedness to teach ELLs in mainstream classes in the researcher's work setting. The main research question was as follows: What are mainstream teachers' perceptions as they make meaning of their preparedness to academically support ELL students in their integrated classrooms? There were two supporting questions:

1. What are teachers' experiences in the education of ELLs in the mainstream classroom?

2. What current pedagogical practices are teachers employing to teach ELL students?

Chapter 3: Methodology

Aim of the Study

The aim of this qualitative study was to explore teachers' perceived preparedness to teach ELLs in mainstream classes in the researcher's work setting. This aim may support the problem statement, which asserted that many ELLs in the researcher's setting were not making adequate progress academically in mainstream classes. Through this research, the researcher aimed to explore the connections between teachers' perceptions of preparation for teaching ELLs and their current pedagogical practices. The U.S. government mandates that school districts provide educational services to ELLs, but the training that teachers receive varies from district to district and state to state (Govoni & Artecona-Pelaez, 2011).

According to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (2021), all U.S. schools are obligated to ensure that ELLs receive access to education that is equal according to Civil Rights Law. Although school districts are mandated to provide services to ELLs, the federal government leaves it up to them to decide what those services are. The only guidelines that must be followed are as follows: (a) students must be identified as ELLs; (b) student needs for ELL services must be assessed; (c) the program utilized with the ELLs must have a reasonable chance for success; (d) staff, material, and facilities must be in place and used properly; (e) the program must have appropriate evaluation standards and exit criteria to measure student progress; and (f) assess the success of the program and modify it where needed (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2021). The expected contribution of the current study was to provide results that teachers could use to help ELLs achieve academic equality and close the achievement gap as explained in this chapter.

Qualitative Research Approach

Qualitative research is the study of things in their natural settings (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). Researchers utilize this approach to find meaning of and to decode phenomena and the meanings that people assign to them. According to Creswell and Creswell (2022), qualitative researchers need to find a way to exhibit the reasoning for their conclusions and should be cognizant that all parts of the argument involve opinions from the research community and these opinions will be given objectively. Researchers bring their experience frames and background knowledge to their research and need to be culturally cognizant of the things they observe and bring with them to the setting. The authors encouraged researchers to be careful of the frames they include in their studies and pointed out that the construction lenses and assumptions used by the writers are more important than the procedures utilized by qualitative research writers. Within the scope of qualitative research, there are different designs or approaches, such as narrative, phenomenology, case study, ethnography, historical studies, or grounded theory.

The qualitative research approach chosen for this dissertation involved the phenomenological research design (Neubauer et al., 2019). Phenomenological research seeks to understand and describe the universal essence of a phenomenon; investigates everyday experiences of individuals and gain deeper insights into how people understand those experiences (Neubauer et al., 2019). This type of research focuses on studying the phenomena that has impacted those individuals. It highlights the phenomena from that individual's point of view and the commonality in the behaviors of a group of people (Neubauer et al., 2019). This method of research allows researchers to understand the participants' situation in detail and is a powerful too to help the researcher understand personal experiences. To gather this information, a researcher must show empathy and

establish a friendly rapport with the participants in the study by focusing on the subject and not being influenced. This type of research demands that researchers set aside their own personal biases and focus on the immediate experience (Neubauer et al., 2019). Phenomenological research provides insights into the actions of the individuals by examining assumptions. As a result of this research, new theories, policies, and responses can be developed (Neubauer et al., 2019). Researchers using phenomenological research can include the following methods to collect data: participant observations, interviews, conversations with participants, analysis of personal text, action research, and focus meetings (Alhazmi & Kaufmann, 2022; Champion, 2015; Neubauer et al., 2019).

The researcher chose the phenomenological research design to study the perceptions of teachers about their preparation to teach and support ELLs in the mainstream classroom. A phenomenological research design was appropriate because the researcher could study a group of 12 veteran and nonveteran teachers who taught ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. The research was conducted with 12 classes that were taught by mainstream teachers who participated in the study. The teachers in this study discussed the preservice or professional training that they received and how they perceived it prepared them to support ELLs in their mainstream classrooms.

Phenomenological case studies contain a great amount of detail and involve copious amounts of detail from various sources (Neubauer et al., 2019). The sources of data collection need to be assembled and evaluated, and then the researcher can draw conclusions. The research topic dictated the kinds of data collection that was needed for this dissertation. As a teacher of ELL students, the researcher drew upon her wealth of knowledge of the teacher preparedness in mainstream classrooms to determine the kind of data needed to help answer the research questions. For this dissertation, the primary

sources of data involved surveys and one-on-one teacher interviews.

Participants

The participants for this study involved 12 teachers selected from the researcher's school network. The participants selected were from an elementary school located in Florida. The research site was a kindergarten through fifth grade public school. The teachers targeted to participate in this study were mainstream classroom teachers with ELL students in their classrooms. The researcher attempted to recruit primary classroom teachers. The researcher preferred to work with primary teachers who taught kindergarten, first grade, and second grade because primary students in kindergarten through second grade are not required to take the same statewide test that is mandated in the intermediate grades. In the intermediate grades, the students are mandated to take the Florida Standards Assessment that measures the students' educational gains and progress throughout the year. In the primary grades, the students take the end-of-year assessment that is mandated by the district.

The researcher used nonprobability sampling to select the participants. Nonprobability sampling is a sampling technique where the researcher selects samples based on the subjective judgment of the researcher rather than by random selection (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). This less stringent method depends heavily on the expertise of the researchers involved and is carried out by observation and used widely for qualitative research.

Data Collection and Instruments

The survey (see Appendix A) was created by the researcher using research conducted by Correll (2016). The first section consists of questions that pertain to the participants' demographic information, such as age, gender, how many years they have

been teaching and other information pertinent to this study. The remaining questions pertain to the participants' perceptions of preparedness to teach ELL students with varying literacy levels and languages in a mainstream elementary classroom. These sections helped the researcher to obtain insight on their perceptions regarding the instruction of ELL students.

The researcher also conducted individual interviews (see Appendix B) using an interview protocol developed by Sicignano (2013). Each interview was conducted face to face and lasted approximately 30 minutes. During the interview, the participants were asked open-ended questions to discuss their perceptions of preparedness to teach ELL students with different literacy levels in a mainstream elementary classroom. Open-ended questions allowed the participants to respond in an open text format so that they can respond without restricting their thoughts and their responses are not limited to a set of options. Because options for open-ended questions are not provided, participants can include details about their feelings, attitudes, and views that they usually would not get to submit in closed-ended questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2022; Fauvelle, 2019). Closed-ended questions limit the participant to a narrow set of predefined responses such as yes or no or a set of multiple-choice options and are typically used to gather quantitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2022; Fauvelle, 2019). Most questions were open ended, but some closed-ended questions were used to gather demographic information about the participants.

Procedures

The researcher obtained approval from the principal of the research site and then the school board for the district in which the research took place. The researcher obtained approval from the district in which the school was located because doctoral students who

teach in a public school are not able to conduct research on site unless they apply for and obtain approval from the School Board of Broward County. Once approval was granted, the researcher received approval from Nova Southeastern University's Institutional Review Board. After approval was received, the researcher contacted potential teacher participants via email or telephone to schedule one-on-one interviews with the potential participants at the research site to determine if they were interested in participating in the study. The participants had approximately 1 week to decide if they wanted to be part of the study. The researcher then explained the details of the study to those who were interested to give them more details about the dissertation. The researcher contacted each teacher who agreed to be part of the study, thanking them for their willingness to participate in the study, and sent each of them a copy of the purpose of the study, consent form, and a confidentiality agreement by email. Once the researcher secured 12 participants, the researcher contacted them to set up a time in which to interview them one on one. Prior to conducting interviews, the researcher sent each of the participants an additional copy of the consent form by email.

The researcher recorded the interview on paper so as not to violate the participants' confidentiality. While collecting notes about the participants' responses the researcher did not use names; instead, the researcher used Teacher 1, 2, 3, 4, and so forth to maintain the confidentiality of the participants. After each interview, the researcher transcribed the interview and sent the transcription to each teacher for validation of accuracy as a way of member checking. The researcher made needed changes until the teachers deemed them to be accurate. Member checking is a technique often utilized in qualitative research to establish credibility in trustworthiness (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). It is imperative to utilize member checking to establish the truth of the

researcher's findings and to ensure that the findings are honest and accurate. Member checking can be described as sharing the findings of the study with the participants of the study.

Data Analysis

Creswell and Creswell (2022) pointed out that qualitative data analysis includes the organization of data by reading through the information initially, finding themes present in the data, and including the researcher's interpretation of the data. The researcher transcribed the one-on-one teacher interviews prior to analyzing the data within 24 to 48 hours. Creswell and Creswell endorsed the use of graphic organizers to organize the data collected for the process of data analysis. Therefore, the researcher copied each one-on-one teacher interview transcript into a chart. Then the researcher read each interview transcript while memoing, which is an essential part of data analysis, according to Creswell and Creswell. Memoing involves the researcher keeping a log of all activities during the research process. Memoing also involves recording the data in sequence and recording the data analysis from the research comprehensibly. According to Creswell and Creswell, memoing helps to establish an audit trail during the inquiry process. Auditors are readers who are external to the research who examine the narrative account and vouch for its credibility. After reading and rereading the one-on-one teacher interview several times, the researcher coded the data, catalogued the sections, and assigned names for each section.

Coding qualitative data involves labeling and organizing the data to identify different themes and the relationships between them (Elliot, 2018). The researcher assigned labels to words or phrases that represented important and recurring themes in participant responses. These labels may be words or short phrases to help the researcher

quickly skim and organize data. The process of examining and interpreting qualitative data to understand what it represents is called qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data analysis methods are needed in qualitative research to understand the data from the teacher interviews.

The researcher used an inductive approach called thematic content analysis to analyze the interview data (Shaw et al., 2021). This approach weeds out biases and establishes impressions of the data, rather than approaching the data with a predetermined framework. This helps to identify common themes and patterns across the data set. Transcripts allowed the researcher to capture original, subtle distinctions in the responses from participants. The respondents used their own words and not a summarized version. The researcher began the interview analysis by examining the qualitative data collected from the interviews. After analyzing the data, the researcher segmented the data based on key demographic or characteristic information. Since the researcher was working with unstructured qualitative data, which is often found when there are open text responses, the researcher manually coded the open text responses to analyze them. Some of the data recorded may be semistructured, which means that there are labels or identifiers already attached to them, and the researcher can then group the qualitative responses using those labels and save time on hand coding individual responses (Shaw et al., 2021).

The data from the interviews were triangulated. Triangulation is a validity procedure in which the researcher seeks convergence amid different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The researcher sorted through the data to find common themes and categories by removing any overlapping areas in the research. Using the evidence collected in the surveys and themes, the researcher located major and minor themes apparent in the instruments. The

information found was analyzed on a case-by-case basis to look for similarities and differences among the participants in the study.

Ethical Considerations

When conducting a research study, participants should be aware of the purpose of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The researcher disclosed the purpose of the study to the participating teachers when they were asked to be involved in this research study. When the participants gave consent to participate, the researcher emailed them the consent forms. During every phase of the research study process, the researcher was careful to be sensitive to the privacy needs of the participants due to the nature of the information that they would need to provide. The researcher kept the information in a safe and secure place, such as a cabinet that locks, to keep their information confidential and secure. Participants were made aware that they had the choice to withdraw from the study during any part of the process. Creswell and Creswell (2022) explained that ethical issues may pop up during all stages of the process, so it is important to be cognizant of the ethical considerations.

During all stages of the process, the researcher ensured that the proper safeguards to protect the privacy of all participants and their information from unauthorized use and access is in place. Information from each participant was stripped of all direct identifiers and each participant's name was replaced with a letter identifier such as Teacher 1, 2, 3, 4, and so on. All responses to the one-on-one interviews and surveys were stored in a password-protected computer. Finally, all the materials and documentation were destroyed after 3 years.

Trustworthiness

When conducting qualitative research, it is important to institute trustworthiness

(Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The researcher collected data from one-on-one teacher interviews. During transcription analysis, the researcher shared transcriptions with an expert in the ESOL field to ensure that the coding and analysis are correct. The expert in the field was the current ESOL facilitator employed at the research site. The ESOL facilitator was employed at the research site for over seven years and had experience with ELL students, their curriculum and testing. All identifying data were concealed to ensure the confidentiality and the identity of the participants involved in the study. The transcriptions were shared with the teacher participants to ensure member checking to make sure that they are accurate and correct before the final report was sent for submission.

Potential Research Bias

One potential area of bias in this study lies within researcher's personal belief that, in general, teachers are not properly trained to support and teach ELL students in the mainstream classroom (Correll, 2016). Berner (2019) asserted that there needs to be a uniform system in the United States to train teachers to teach ELLs properly. That way, if the children's families move to another state, they will receive the same effective ELL services with which they are familiar. Another potential area of bias in this study is that, because the researcher was a teacher in the school where the research took take place, the study was conducted with teacher colleagues. To ensure that teachers would respond honestly, the researcher assured the participants that all their responses were anonymous, and responses were kept under lock and key.

The researcher has been an elementary school teacher in Florida for 20 years. For approximately 5 of those years, the researcher taught in a sheltered ELL classroom where all students were ELL and required some level of accommodation. Moreover, the

researcher has four older siblings who were ELL students in the New York State educational system and has secondhand knowledge of their experiences in the classroom. The researcher was the only child of five siblings born in the United States and can identify with having to translate documents for her parents who spoke only Haitian Creole in the household and were unable to effectively communicate with her teachers. During parent-teacher conferences, the researcher often had to translate what the teacher had to say about her to her parents.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to explore teachers' perceived preparedness to teach ELLs in mainstream classes in the researcher's work setting. The main research question was as follows: What are mainstream teachers' perceptions as they make meaning of their preparedness to academically support ELL students in their integrated classrooms? There were two supporting questions:

1. What are teachers' experiences in the education of ELLs in the mainstream classroom?

2. What current pedagogical practices are teachers employing to teach ELL students?

By analyzing the survey and interview responses of 12 kindergarten to second-grade teachers ranging from preservice (student teachers) to veteran (20-plus years), the researcher was able to get a general understanding of teachers' perceived preparedness to teach ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. In this chapter, the researcher presents the findings related to the research questions.

The researcher conducted this phenomenological research study to highlight the phenomena from the teachers' point of view regarding their perceptions of preparedness to teach ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. Shahbazi (2020) contended that this type of research allows the reader to see through the participants' lens, and it helps to share their stories and experiences. Through the research conducted in this study, the researcher was able to explore the teachers' perceptions of how adequate they believed they were or were not prepared to teach ELLs in their classrooms. The use of surveys and one-on-one interviews allowed the researcher to find commonalities and themes among the group of

teacher participants related to teacher efficacy and their perceived preparedness.

As the population of ELLs continues to increase in the United States, it is imperative that the educators teaching them have the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively instruct them. Prior to planning lessons for general education students, teachers must plan content that is tailored to meet their specific needs and skills; ELL students are no different (Santillan et al., 2015). Research has shown that mainstream teachers need specialized knowledge to help ELLs students navigate and become proficient in the new language that they are learning (Wissink & Starks, 2019). Research has also shown that, although ELLs require teachers with specialized knowledge to teach them, many mainstream teachers do not have the foundational knowledge to effectively teach these students due to a dearth in training, or resources (De Jong et al., 2013). Due to the high enrollment of ELLs in U.S. schools with a shortage of bilingual or ELL/ESOL teachers, administrators must place ELLs in mainstream classrooms with general education teachers who may not be adequately prepared educationally to support these students.

According to Szecsi et al. (2017), teachers' views, perceptions, beliefs, and biases regarding the teaching of language instruction and assessment will impact their practices, instruction, and communication inside and outside of the classroom. Specialized training is important to consider when creating a curriculum designed to teach ELLs, but it is also important to take teacher efficacy into account. Even if individuals are provided with all the information needed to succeed at a task, if they do not believe they can succeed, they ultimately will not. The researcher believed that this study could assist education stakeholders in the United States to create a specialized and uniform curriculum to help general education teachers instruct ELL students in the mainstream classroom with

confidence and efficacy. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore teachers' perceived preparedness to teach ELLs in mainstream classes in the researcher's work setting.

The researcher chose a phenomenological research method for this qualitative research study. According to Smith and Osborn (2015), phenomenological research is how an individual or group perceives the meaning of an event and seeks to understand their perceptions, and perspectives of that event and this researcher used that information in the form of surveys or personal interviews to create an understanding of what it is like to experience an event. The researcher believed that a phenomenological research method was appropriate for this qualitative study because it incorporated the unique perspectives of teachers from different walks of life from preservice to veteran teachers and sought to provide a detailed understanding of teacher perspectives as they relate to how adequately they perceive they were trained to teach ELL students in their mainstream classrooms. The use of surveys and interviews provided a more indepth exploration that gave data about teacher perspectives.

Chapter 4 presents findings that were collected via surveys and interviews from 12 participants who taught ELLs in the primary grades (i.e., kindergarten to second grade). The site was located in an urban county in the southeastern United States. The findings from this qualitative research addressed the three research questions and included participant information, demographic surveys about the participants, the data instruments used in this study, and the results and findings of the research. By analyzing participant responses to the demographic survey and the personal interview questions, the researcher was able to gather a general understanding of participant perceptions of their preparedness to teach ELL students in their mainstream classrooms.

Participant Information

The researcher currently works at the site where research was conducted. The researchers contacted the prospective participants via email to see who would be interested in participating in the research. The participants who agreed to participate were given specifics about the study, and 12 teachers in total were selected. Once the teachers were selected, they signed up for a time to be interviewed by the researcher. After the interview, the participants filled out the demographic survey about their educational background and the way they perceived the effectiveness of their teacher educational programs. The survey also inquired about how they perceived the educational program prepared them to teach ELLs, their perceptions of the elements of teacher education programs that benefit teachers' abilities for serving ELLs, as well as demographic information pertinent to the study.

Demographics

The teachers who were selected to be part of this study had taught for varying numbers of years. The teaching experience ranged from 0 years teaching in a classroom to 20-plus years as an educator. Table 1 summarizes the demographic data of the general education teachers who participated in this study. The table lists their teaching experience, whether they were native speakers of English, and if they were fluent in a language other than English.

Instruments

Two instruments were used in this study to explore teacher perceptions of preparedness.

Survey

The first instrument was a teacher survey adapted from a study conducted by

Correll (2016). The use of the demographic survey further not only explored the participants' perceptions of preparedness, but it delved into the course work and trainings they underwent in their educational career. This instrument was a bit more in depth than the personal interview because it covered more detailed information relating to the participants' educational background and coursework. The participants complete the survey on paper, and the researcher collected the responses and put them all into a google form. The use of the Google form makes it easier to analyze large sets of data and converts that data into charts and graphs. The google form also supports a variety of question types, such as Likert-scale responses, yes-no responses, and fill-in-the-blank responses.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Teacher	Teaching experience	Native speaker of English?	Speak another language? If yes, what language?
1	Preservice	Yes	Yes (Spanish)
2	Preservice	Yes	No
3	First-year teacher	Yes	No
4	2-10 years	Yes	No
5	2-10 years	Yes	Yes (Spanish)
6	2-10 years	Yes	No
7	2-10 years	Yes	No
8	10-20 years	Yes	Yes (Spanish)
9	20+ years	Yes	No
10	10-20 years	Yes	No
11	10-20 years	Yes	No
12	20+ years	Yes	No

The questions on the survey included demographic questions about race, languages spoken, educational background information (e.g., educational degrees obtained, endorsements, professional learning communities taken, information about student teaching and college courses geared toward teaching ELLs), and educators'

perceptions of how well those courses prepared them to teach ELLs. Tables 2 to 4 show the common themes found among the participants as they related to their perceptions of how well they feel they were prepared to teach ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. Table 2 shows the results for the questions on professional development and teacher education courses. Table 3 shows the results for the questions about preparedness to teach ELLs, and Table 4 shows the results for the questions on teacher education courses and perceptions of teaching ELLs.

Table 2

Percentage of Responses on Professional Development and Teacher Education Courses

Question	Yes	No	N/A
1. Have you participated in PLCs that included techniques for teaching ELLs?	42	42	16
2. Would you be willing to participate in professional development for teaching ELLs if it was available?	100	0	0
3. During your teacher education program, were you required to take a course in teaching ELLs?	83	17	0
4. Did you take courses in second language acquisition during your teacher education program?	25	75	0
5. Did your teacher education program include classroom observations or other field experiences that included ELLs prior to student teaching?	67	25	8
6. Do you believe that mainstream teachers are responsible for teaching ELLs in their classrooms?	100	0	0

Note. N/A = Not applicable. PLC = Professional learning community. ELL = English language learner.

The themes that emerged from Table 2 indicated that all 12 participants believed that mainstream teachers should be responsible for teaching ELLs placed into their classrooms and are willing to take additional training geared toward teaching ELLs. However, fewer than half of the participants received training geared toward ELLs. Eighty-three percent of the participants were required to take courses about ELLs, but

only 25% took courses about second language acquisition in college.

Table 3

Percentage of Responses on Perceptions of Preparedness to Teach English Learners

Question	EP	AP	SP	NP
1. How well are you prepared to teach in a mainstream classroom?	8	59	25	8
2. How well are you prepared to give ELLs specific feedback on how they can meet learning expectations?	0	42	33	25
3. How well are you prepared to use varied forms of assessments to monitor ELLs' learning?	0	58	25	17
4. How well are you prepared to evaluate curriculum materials for ELLs?	0	33	25	42
5. How well are you prepared to use real-world examples to make learning meaningful for ELLs?	0	59	33	8
6. How well are you prepared to teach methods to ELLs for understanding new vocabulary?	8	25	42	25
7. How well are you prepared to teach ELLs the skills for engaging in academic conversations?	8	42	17	33
8. How well are you prepared to teach reading to ELLs?	0	42	42	16
9. How well are you prepared to teach writing to ELLs?	0	33	33	34
10. How well are you prepared to teach math to ELLs?	0	42	42	16
11. How well are you prepared to teach science to ELLs?	0	42	25	33
12. How well are you prepared to teach social studies to ELLs?	0	33	25	42

Note. EP = Extremely prepared. AP = Adequately prepared. SP = Somewhat prepared. NP = Not at all prepared.

Some themes that emerged from Table 3 indicated that a little over half the participants believed that they were adequately prepared to teach students in a mainstream classroom, a little over half can use varied assessments to teach ELLs, and a little over half can use real-life examples to make learning meaningful for ELLs. This shows that the participants may feel comfortable using what they already know to teach all students in their mainstream classrooms. When it comes to teaching the ELLs in the

academic content areas, most of the participants did not feel as prepared to teach them in the mainstream classroom.

Table 4

Percentage of Responses on Teacher Education Courses and Perceptions of Teaching English Learners

Question	SA	AA	SoA	DA
1. Many of my ideas for teaching ELLs come from my teacher education courses.	9	33	33	25
2. Many of my ideas for teaching ELLs come from my own experiences as a student in school.	33	17	25	25
3. Many of my ideas for teaching ELLs come from my student teaching or college fieldwork experiences.	9	33	33	25
4. My teacher education coursework included theories of learning and teaching ELLs, methods of ESL, classroom instruction, and the links between them.	0	59	8	33
5. My student teaching experience occurred in a positive environment for learning to teach ELLs.	25	42	33	0
6. The teachers that I observed during my field work experience and student teaching were positive role models for teaching ELLs.	25	25	42	8

Note. SA = Strongly agreed. AA = Adequately agree. SoA = Somewhat agree. DA = Do not agree. ELL = English language learner. ESL = English as a second language.

Some themes that emerged from Table 4 show that, although over half of the participants took coursework that prepared them to teach ELLs, those courses did not appear to help them to form their current teacher pedagogy. This researcher believes that they formed their pedagogy by teaching in the classroom and getting real world teaching experience or attending professional development geared toward ELLs (DeJong et al., 2013). The participants who participated in student teaching overwhelmingly agreed that their host educators and their experience in the classroom were positive.

Interview

The second instrument involved the teacher interview related to participant

perceptions of preparedness to teach ELLs. The interview questions were adapted from a study conducted by Sicignano (2013). There were eight questions in total for the first instrument. Five questions were general questions about mainstream teachers, peer support, planning time needed and training of mainstream teachers of ELLs, and three questions were more specific to the participant as far as administrative support, the role of the ELL teacher and whether they felt they were adequately prepared to teach ELL students in a mainstream classroom.

The participant interviews were conducted one on one in the researcher's classroom or the participants' classroom. The participants signed up for an interview time and the researcher met with each participant to conduct the interview. Prior to sitting down with the participant one on one, the researcher emailed the participant a copy of the interview questions so that the participant had an opportunity to come up with well thought out answers. The researcher used a voice recorder to record the interviews so that they answers could be transcribed later.

Some common themes were found among the participant interview responses. For instance, when asked Interview Question 1 (How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?), many of the participants' responded with more resources, training of teachers and pull-out support for ELL students. One participant responded as follows:

> They should provide a separate curriculum or an explicit approach to teach ELLs. Teachers should get small group activities to help them academically and to give them a better connection to their language. Pull out teachers should have a set curriculum to do the same thing as teachers in the classroom.

When asked Interview Question 4 (What types of training in ELL instruction do

general education teachers need?), the participants overwhelmingly responded that they need training in how ELL students are coded after the students take the required WIDA Access testing. One participant responded, “General education teachers need training in WIDA strategies, the ESOL Matrix, Can-Do descriptors, the progression of ELL students and their learning.” Another response to that same question was as follows:

> Mainstream teachers need thorough training from the district to help teachers learn how to engage or approach students with what they are deficient in to create a bridge with students between their language and the English language. Teachers should learn the use of terms such as BICS and CALP, ELL accommodations, strategies, materials, books, charts, language objectives, terms and levels such as A1-LY.

When asked Interview Question 6 (How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?), all but one of the participants responded that their administration provided minimal support to the ELL students in their classroom. One participant responded as follows:

> The administration provides minimal support. Push in support is given for ELL students from an ELL facilitator. All the students receive support, and they don’t consider whether they are ELL or not. They look at the data and give support to all students and don’t consider their status. Administrators may need some training to better understand the needs of the ELL population.

The sole participant who felt that the administration provided moderate support and responded by stating, “The administration provides moderate support. Admin supplies high ELL classes with ELL push in support to expand vocabulary in grades 2-5.” Several other participants described receiving some form of push in support by an ELL facilitator

for some portion of the day but described it as minimal support for their ELLs.

When asked Interview Question 7 (Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to teach ELL students in your classroom?), many of the participants felt that the trainings and professional developments helped them with technical knowledge but not real-world application. The consensus was that a combination of training, PLCs, trial and error, and collaborating with peers is what helped them to navigate working with ELL students. One participant pointed out, “I was adequately prepared to a point. The information that I received from the textbooks was good but real-world experience and application is completely different from paper.”

Summary of Findings

Overall, the data from this research show that the participants did not feel adequately prepared to teach ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. The participants strongly agreed that once the ELL student is placed in their classroom, it is their responsibility to teach them strategies to help them learn academic content but doing it effectively is a different conversation. The findings of this research resulted in three important finings that are summarized in the following paragraphs. The transcribed interviews with the 12 participants can be found in Appendix C.

Main Research Question

What are mainstream teachers’ perceptions as they make meaning of their preparedness to academically support ELL students in their integrated classrooms? The findings for the first research question showed that the participants in this study felt that more planning time or professional learning communities devoted to strategies that would teach ELLs would be beneficial to help them support their students. Many of the teachers attended professional learning communities, but none of them were specialized and

focused solely on ELLs. If those kinds of professional learning communities were offered, most of the participants reported that they would sign up for them. Like native speakers of English, ELL students also come with a variety of literacy levels and abilities, so it is imperative that the teacher is cognizant of strategies that will work with different students. For example, educators of ELLs need to be able to scaffold information, modify learning and lessons and use visual cues in the classroom to guide those students academically. ELLs need to feel valued while trying to learn a new language and academic content (Szecsi et al., 2017).

Method courses taken in teacher preparation programs should be updated to include current research about ELLs. Most of the participants took method courses that dealt with ELLs, but that was during their teacher preparation courses. Teachers should have the opportunity to take those courses at any stage of their teaching career. Teachers should also take courses that delve deeply into the ESOL matrix, can-do descriptors, and coding used to identify ELL students. ESOL strategies should be embedded into all teacher preparation courses to help teach students in depth. While teachers may be cognizant of the terms mentioned in the ESOL matrix or the coding used to identify the ELL students' language classification, some may be unable to explain what they mean and how it can used in the mainstream classroom to support their ELL students (Broward County Schools, 2020, 2023).

Supporting Research Question 1

What are teachers' experiences in the education of ELLs in the mainstream classroom? The findings for the first supporting question indicated that the participants believed that ELL teachers and ELL students should have access to different resources that will assist with instructional practices and support student engagement in the

mainstream classroom. They often felt overwhelmed due to teaching mandates and a lack of acceptable resources for their ELL students. These resources could include tangible items or courses that will prepare them to effectively support ELLs in a mainstream classroom. Another finding was that mainstream teachers receiving support for ELLs from a push in teacher were not receiving it on a consistent basis or for long periods of time. For ELL support to be effective for the ELL student, it needs to be consistent and ongoing for it to work. Olds et al. (2021) stated that educators must utilize researched based practices with consistency and fidelity to ensure that ELL students receive the academic scaffolds that they need to support their achievement and learning. Not receiving support on a daily or weekly basis can lead the teacher to become overwhelmed and possibly ignore the ELL student altogether.

Supporting Research Question 2

What current pedagogical practices are teachers employing to teach ELL students? The findings for the second supporting question showed that participants in this study were using ESOL matrix strategies to reach their students. The language curriculum academic skills and processes are integrated into instruction using ESOL instructional strategies found in the matrix. They were also building vocabulary using pictures, visuals gestures, icons, concrete examples, and technology and applications designed for ELLs. The vocabulary being taught was not limited to reading; the participants taught unfamiliar vocabulary across the content areas of math, science, social studies, and writing to facilitate recognition. The participants were using these tools to help their mainstream classroom become a support environment for their ELL students. Collaboration with teacher peers has also been a helpful tool for teachers to help reach their ELL students, as language needs and academic needs cannot be separated because

they are dependent upon each other (Avila, 2015). Teachers could share what was working and exchange ideas during weekly grade-level meetings or another scheduled time set aside for collaborative practices. Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the findings supported by the data collected for this study.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to explore teachers' perceived preparedness to teach ELLs in mainstream classes in the researcher's work setting. Throughout this research study, the researcher aimed to examine teacher perceptions of preparedness to teach a diverse group of ELLs with different literacy levels and languages in the mainstream elementary classroom. In addition, the researcher sought to increase understandings of mainstream teachers' perceptions as they make meaning of their preparedness to academically support ELL students in their integrated classrooms to become cognizant of teachers' experiences in the education of ELLs in the mainstream classroom and lastly to make meaning of the current pedagogical practice teachers are employing to teach ELL students. The main research question guiding this research study was as follows: What are mainstream teachers' perceptions as they make meaning of their preparedness to academically support ELL students in their integrated classrooms? The supporting research questions were as follows:

1. What are teachers' experiences in the education of ELLs in the mainstream classroom?

2. What current pedagogical practices are teachers employing to teach ELL students?

Discussion of the Findings

Twelve teachers from the researcher's work setting participated in the study and completed the survey. The first part of the survey included demographic questions about the participants' educational background and professional development attendance. The second part of the survey included yes-no questions about the participants' teacher

education background. The last part of the survey included Likert-type scale questions and open-ended questions about the participants' teacher education background and content area instruction. The data from the completed surveys provided information related to teacher perceptions of preparedness to teach and support ELLs with different literacy levels in the mainstream classroom, the experiences of mainstream teachers of ELLs, and the pedagogical practices that teachers employ with ELLs.

Some trends emerged from the data that were reported from the survey. First, all 12 of the participants indicated that they would sign up for a professional development course that was geared toward teaching ELLs in their mainstream classroom if it was available in their school district. When teachers receive professional development geared toward meeting the needs of ELLs, ELLs' academic achievement is fostered along with behavior and relationships (Rodriguez, 2013). Eighty-three percent of those teachers were required to take a course or took course work in their teacher preparation program about teaching ELLs. The federal government requires school districts in the United States to provide some sort of professional development for general education teachers of ELLs. There are only 12 U.S. states that require course work in their teacher preparation programs for preservice teachers (Mills et al., 2020).

Florida, where this study was conducted, is one of the states that requires teachers to complete course work to work with ELLs. In Florida, teacher preparation programs include ESOL courses that are taught by bilingual faculty who have an ESOL endorsement on their teaching certificate and have met all the ESOL competency standards (Wissink & Starks, 2019). Yazan (2015) defined student teaching as supervised teaching coupled with fundamental observation while gaining familiarity with a particular teaching context. Working with ELLs as a student teacher has proven to be an asset for

preservice teachers in a teacher preparation program. Daniel (2014) asserted that observing ELLs in a classroom setting can help preservice teachers to gain knowledge, skills, and an outlook to work with ELLs.

Two thirds of the participants in this study student taught before accepting a position as a teacher, and most of those participants did have an opportunity to work with ELL students during the time that they were student teachers. When preservice teachers utilize principles of culturally and linguistically pedagogy in the classrooms, ELLs' academic experiences are accentuated, and their engagement in learning is enhanced activities in meaningful ways (Daniel, 2014). Three quarters of the participants in the survey strongly, adequately, or somewhat agreed that many of their teaching ideas for teaching ELLs were developed from their student teaching and/or college fieldwork experiences.

Considering that most of the participants agreed with that last statement, it makes sense that all of the participants strongly, adequately, and somewhat agreed that their student teaching experience occurred in a positive environment conducive for learning to teach ELLs. Not surprisingly, 11 of the participants reported that the teachers they observed during their field work experience and student teaching were positive role models for teaching. Half of the participants indicated that many of their ideas for teaching ELLs came from their own experiences as a student in school. Salerno and Kibler (2013) stated that preservice teachers will sometimes construct their beliefs about teaching ELLs based on experiences they had as a student in school.

Second, all 12 of the participants in this study responded that they believed mainstream teachers are responsible for teaching ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. This statistic was corroborated by Salerno and Kibler (2013), who postulated that

teaching ELLs is not the sole responsibility of the ELL or ESOL teacher, but it is the responsibility of all teachers with ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. This tells the researcher that the participants understand that it is their responsibility to teach all students who are in their classroom, regardless of their label as a native speaker of English or an ELL. It makes sense that 11 of the participants reported that they were extremely, adequately, or somewhat prepared to teach in a mainstream classroom. While they may feel responsible to teach in a mainstream classroom, a quarter of the participants reported that they were not at all prepared to teach ELLs vocabulary or to give them specific feedback on how they can meet their learning expectations in the mainstream classroom. These data seem congruent with research that denotes that many mainstream teachers feel underprepared to work with ELLs, even though they are in the mainstream classroom for most or almost all of the day (Pappamihiel & Lynn, 2016).

Third, the academic content area also showed some data trends. Data from the content area instruction showed that less than half of the participants felt adequately prepared to teach reading, math, and science, and a third of the participants felt adequately prepared to teach social studies and writing to their ELL students. Wissink and Starks (2019) posited that teachers need to have specialized knowledge of the content they are teaching and should be able to teach and model content academic knowledge to ELLs in the mainstream classroom. It is important for mainstream teachers of ELLs to know that they need to provide accommodations and interventions that address both the language acquisition and academic content (Pappamihiel & Lynn, 2016). Teaching the English language while simultaneously teaching academic content will enable ELLs to receive the academic instruction that they require to succeed (Rodriguez, 2013).

Using real-world examples in the classroom can make learning more meaningful

and help students to be engaged in learning. Over half of the participants indicated that they were adequately prepared to use real-world examples to make learning meaningful for ELLs. Rodriguez (2013) postulated that ELLs are most likely to complete tasks in a new language when they understand that the language serves an important purpose and that they must communicate in writing and/or orally. Connecting with their ELL students by activating their prior knowledge or utilizing artifacts from their culture will help to make their students feel more comfortable and more apt to want to learn a new language. More than half of the participants reported that they were adequately prepared to use varied forms of ready-made assessments to monitor ELLs' learning. According to Wilcox et al. (2017), formative assessment is beneficial for ELLs because they go through many changes in a short period of time compared to their native English-speaking peers. ELLs in kindergarten through second grade experience the language learning and socialization process quickly, which requires their teachers to assess them frequently and adjust instructional practices.

Data from the portion of the survey that asked about teacher preparation and pedagogy showed some very interesting trends. Approximately eight participants adequately or somewhat agreed that their teacher education course work included theories of learning and teaching ELLs, methods of ESOL, and classroom instruction. It is interesting to note that less than half of the participants strongly or adequately reported that their teaching ideas for teaching ELLs came from education courses. Daniel (2014) argued that experiences in internships will influence preservice teachers more heavily than their experiences in coursework. This leads the researcher to believe that ELLs' courses are important to lay the foundation, but pedagogy is also developed from real-life teaching experiences in the classroom and professional development throughout their

teaching career.

Implications of the Findings

All over the United States, preservice teachers enrolled in teacher preparation programs are learning how to educate a diverse set of students in their mainstream classrooms. Due to the influx of individuals coming from other parts of the world, many of those students are ELLs. According to Mills et al. (2020), ELLs are the fastest growing population in U.S. schools. Once of the challenges that these teachers are facing is that they must provide instruction to ELLs who are also learning the language (Wissink & Starks, 2019). There has been a steady increase in the number of ELLs entering U.S. schools, and research has shown that many of these educators are not adequately prepared to teach ELLs in their mainstream classroom when they have completed their teacher education preparation programs (Wissink & Starks, 2019).

More than half of the participants were required to take a course in teaching ELLs, and their teacher education course work included theories of learning and teaching ELLs, methods of ESOL, classroom instruction, and the links between them. The majority of the participants did not take courses in second-language acquisition during their teacher education programs. While many of the participants felt comfortable teaching in the mainstream classroom, the findings of this study showed that at least half of the participants felt unprepared to teach ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. Even though they utilize the ESOL matrix and other strategies to connect with their ELL students, the participants felt they needed more assistance to reach these students properly and effectively. All participants, however, indicated a willingness to take additional training to provide equitable educational opportunities for their ELL students to receive content instruction as well as language support. Moreover, many of the

participants believed that teacher education programs included classroom observations or other field experiences that included ELLs prior to student teaching. When considering academic instruction most of the participants did not feel adequately prepared to teach reading, math, science, social studies and/or writing to the ELLs in their mainstream classroom.

The results of this study add to previous research that authenticated the claim that teachers do not feel adequately prepared to teach ELLs in their classroom setting (Correll, 2016). This study also included factors that may hinder the perceptions of preparedness for teachers of ELL students. One such factor is that many teachers of ELL students speak only English, whereas their students speak a variety of languages (Maltese, 2014). In this study, there was a small percentage of participants who spoke another language, which seems to be consistent with the research. According to Diaz et al. (2016), some ELL students experience poor academic achievement due to lack of motivation, and the authors attributed this to the lack of motivation of teachers with little experience or training to teach ELLs with scant guidance from administration. Teacher self-efficacy or lack of can be another hindrance contributing to teacher perception or preparedness. The practices of mainstream teachers of ELLs will often coincide with or conform to their perception of feasibility to complete the task of effectively educating their students (Olds et al., 2021). If teachers believe that the strategy they are employing with their students will help them, they are more likely to utilize that strategy consistently and with fidelity.

Cummings (2015) defined teacher self-efficacy as having confidence in one's ability to teach. This term was derived from the term self-efficacy coined by Bandura (1977), which he defined as the belief of individuals in their ability to achieve a task in their lives. According to Cummings, teachers with a high teacher self-efficacy are

successful, motivated, confident, and prepared, and they have knowledge about the content they are teaching to ELLs. According to this study, about half of the participants reported that they felt adequately prepared, which may contribute to their lack of teacher self-efficacy. This factor may be a hindrance because a majority indicated that they took courses that should have prepared them, but they still felt unprepared to teach the ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. There may or may not be a correlation between the two, but another hindrance can be that, even though the participants took course work to prepare them to teach ELLs with different literacy levels, it was not sufficient to increase their teacher self-efficacy.

According to Olds et al. (2021), many teacher preparation programs do not provide adequate training centered on ELL students and can result in not meeting the diverse needs of ELL students in mainstream classrooms. During the interview portion of the study, most of the participants indicated that they needed more professional development after their teacher preparation program and that they needed resources that could assist them and help to motivate and engage their ELLs. Research supports this finding because adequate teacher training is an essential tool that will support appropriate strategies for ELLs, increase their academic success, and allow the teacher to implement appropriate strategies in the mainstream classroom (Olds et al., 2021).

Relevance of the Study

This study is relevant in the world of research for several reasons. First, ELLs are one of the largest and growing demographics in U.S. schools (De Jong et al., 2013). Numerous research studies pinpoint the educational lag between ELLs and native speakers of English (Chen, 2015; Sicignano, 2013; Turgut et al., 2016). According to Osorio (2013), policy makers, business leaders, community members and parents are

placing the blame of academic failure of ELLs on teachers, principals, and schools. It is the belief of the researcher of this study that all educational entities should come together to find a solution to properly determine where the educational disconnect is and to find solutions to decrease the educational lag between ELLs and their native English-speaking peers.

This population of students comes with various and diverse backgrounds, and it stands to reason that there are numerous reasons why the lag exists. Studies such as this one seeks to uncover the reasons for the significant achievement gaps that ELLs face and to attempt to narrow them using continued and ongoing professional development for teachers, educational resources for parents and students and any other innovation that researchers can uncover. Continued professional development will support and enhance the mainstream teacher's performance in the classroom and ultimately increase and aid in the academic success of ELL students in their classrooms (Olds et al., 2021).

Second, teachers have the responsibility to effectively teach all students that come into their classrooms but many of them feel unprepared to teach them (Cummings, 2015: Diaz et al., 2016). Teachers need to be well equipped to provide their students with language support as well as academic support. To do this, teachers must understand the challenges that ELLs face while trying to master a new language and academic content simultaneously. If the teacher is not properly trained, it can result in ineffective instruction and low educational attainment (Giatsou, 2019). All teachers need the opportunity to have proper training to teach the ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. Hadjioannou et al. (2016) posited that restructuring professional development geared toward mainstream teachers of ELLs will alleviate the negative consequences of failure to support ELLs in mainstream classrooms. This training should not stop once they have

a classroom; it should be ongoing and relevant to the students in their classrooms. If teachers are not properly trained to teach to the specific needs in their classroom, they will fall back on the strategies that they believe will work for their students because they lack the training to facilitate the correct research-based strategies (Olds et al., 2021).

They should not have to rely on what they believe good teaching looks like or sounds like. Many ELL teachers utilize ELL strategies based on their own personal knowledge or training that they may have received but often that training is not research based, according to Olds et al. (2021). The lack of effective teacher training can often lead to inadequate practices employed in mainstream classrooms. Teachers need to be able to attend professional development that is geared toward ELLs, be given instructional supports that will aid in their students' engagement and motivation, and should have the full support of their administration. Making sure that ELLs have access to academic content that will challenge them and providing needed instructional support are in the best interest of the whole school and not just the ELL population, according to Rutherford-Quach et al. (2018).

Third, this research study, in addition to others, highlights the inconsistency of mandates and statutes pertaining to the education of ELLs in U.S. schools. The 1968 Bilingual Education Act gave school districts grant money to create educational programs to provide educational opportunities to ELLs (Sicignano, 2013). While the federal government required all school districts to provide services to ELLs, the government did not mandate what type of services they should have. School districts were then left to decide and create them in whatever way they saw fit (Chen, 2015). If ELLs move from one district to another, the services they receive will most likely not be the same because not all districts have a uniform program in place to support ELLs in the mainstream

classroom. Ultimately, the ELL will suffer, and the achievement gap will continue to widen. The amended Bilingual Education Act of 1974 mandated the creation of regional support centers to provide guidance and training for staff at the local level (Sicignano, 2013). The federal government understood the need for the creation of these ELL programs in every district to make learning equitable but failed to make it uniform.

Granted, it would be a daunting task to create one single curriculum to be used in all 50 states because not all educators would use the program with consistency and fidelity. ELLs are a population of diverse learners, and there is not a single instructional approach that would be effective for all ELLs because of their diversity of backgrounds, and challenges they bring to the mainstream classroom (Hadjioannou et al., 2016). However, the creation of uniform training for educators utilized across all school districts would be a start to give ELLs a chance to learn in an environment that is parallel to that of their English-speaking counterparts. As previously stated, as of 2020, there are only 12 U.S. states that require course work in their teacher preparation programs for preservice teachers (Mills et al., 2020).

The federal government saw the need to create the programs due to the education gap between ELLs and their English-speaking peers, but this researcher feels strongly that continued research and studies will demonstrate to the federal government the need to restructure policies and create effective and targeted programs for ELLs that will be put into action across all 50 U.S. states. Correll (2016) recommended that there needs to be targeted changes in policies relating to preservice and inservice teachers. Preservice teachers should participate in comprehensive fieldwork with ELLs, and inservice teachers should participate in professional development related to supporting ELLs. Finally, school districts should develop evaluation procedures to see if the professional

development is working.

Limitations

This study sought to explore teacher perceptions of preparedness to teach a diverse group of ELLs in a mainstream classroom. One limitation of this study is that perceptions can change due to a lack of or an abundance of self-efficacy or teacher efficacy. Participant's perceptions can change from one day to the next due to a course they took or a PLC they enrolled in that demonstrated an effective strategy to use with ELLs. One's perception of a situation is personal and can change based on many factors and/or biases that the individual holds (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The researcher believes that the time frame in which the data were collected from participants was not enough time for the participants to drastically alter their perceptions of the subject matter being researched.

Another limitation is that the researcher conducted this study with colleagues at the current research site. Since the researcher has a working relationship with the participants, some of them may not have felt comfortable to divulge personal feelings regarding the subject matter being studied for fear of being judged. A portion of the interview questions asked about the administration and how they help to support mainstream teachers of ELL students. As a result, some of the participants may not have felt free to respond candidly for fear of retaliation from their superiors if they voiced any negative opinions about ELLs or the administration. In contrast, the researcher believes that the participants may have felt more comfortable sharing their honest thoughts with the researcher due to the nature of their work relationship.

A third limitation is that the sample size was small and limited to lower elementary teachers and only one school in the district. The data collected from this

research site may or may not reflect the opinions of teachers at other schools in the district. Although the sample size was small, the researcher believed it was imperative to delve into the subject matter being studied.

Recommendations for Further Research

There is a need for studies such as this one and other related studies to help address the growing needs of ELLs in the mainstream classroom. The findings of this research study made it evident that there is a need for more studies about teacher perceptions of preparedness to teach ELL. In addition, those studies should research teacher perceptions of preparedness in correlation to ELL student achievement. It would be interesting to see the data associated with teachers who perceive themselves as being prepared to teach ELLs and their students' scores on statewide tests.

Another recommendation for future research is to look at perceptions of school administration as they pertain to ELLs. The principal and the assistant principal set the tone for the actions of their school. If they have ambivalent thoughts about ELLs or inherent biases, it could prove to be a detriment to the teachers, students and families. Researchers should create a study to see examine how administrators view ELLs at their schools, what programs and resources they have available for ELLs, how they seek to connect with ELL families, and then contrast that data with the overall student achievement of ELLs in their schools. Schools with principals who hold high expectations for ELLs and have a myriad of programs and resources for ELLs should be compared to schools with principals who do not exhibit high expectations for ELLs.

A third recommendation for future studies would be a comparison study of teachers with high efficacy and the ELL student achievement in their mainstream classrooms. Teachers who have high teacher efficacy tend to perceive that they can teach

their students the needed content in a way that they can understand. These teachers hold high standards for their students and more than likely give their students all the needed resources to reach those high standards. Researchers have cited Albert Bandura's definition of high self-efficacy (Beechio, 2016; Brouwer, 2018; Cummings, 2015; Lindsey, 2012; Pisciotta, 2014). A high self-efficacy perception that exceeds a person's level of competence will have a positive effect on the teacher with high self-efficacy because that teacher will utilize effort despite experiencing difficulties. Research about this subject area would be helpful to see whether increased level of teacher efficacy significantly influences their ELL students' persistence, motivation, engagement and academic success in the mainstream classroom. According to Beechio (2016), teacher self-efficacy can have a positive impact on the achievement and learning experience of children. The beliefs that teachers have about their own self-worth as an educator increases motivation, promotes positive classroom behavior, and enhances student achievement.

The fourth and final recommendation for future study is a long-term study that investigates the perceptions of preparation for ELL students to learn in the mainstream classroom. The study should be a long-term study that follows the students for several years to see how they grow and change throughout the course of their education career. A long-term study would yield more results and data that can help educational districts to make changes as it concerns ELL students. The study could follow ELLs from the BICs stage to the CALP stage and see if that had any significant effect on their academic achievement in the mainstream classroom.

Reflections and Conclusions

As the researcher reflects on the reason that she chose this subject matter to study,

it is because she comes from a family of ELLs. Her parents were immigrants who came to this country when she was born so that she and her four sisters could have a chance for a better future. She was born in the United States, but my four older sisters were placed into the school system as ELLs. She heard the stories of how they were treated by the administration, the teachers, and English-speaking students, even though she never experienced it for herself. That is where her passion for equitable instruction for ELLs originated.

As an adult, the researcher became an elementary teacher and had the opportunity to try a style of teaching that was new to her. The principal wanted to utilize sheltered instruction for a couple classes per grade level. The researcher was one of the teachers who was chosen to teach 20 ELL students. The breakdown of languages spoken in her sheltered classroom included only Haitian-Creole and Spanish. The sheltered classes had to teach the same standard at the same time, but all ESOL modifications were utilized with the ELLs to ensure that they would learn the same content as their English-Speaking counterparts. The researcher was lucky enough to teach sheltered ESOL classes for 6 years. In those 6 years, her students made numerous gains throughout the year, which represented more growth than when she taught a mixture of general education students and ELLs.

The researcher focused on ELLs because she was an ELL by relation. She has experience with both perspectives, first as a child whose entire family was born in another country in which all of us spoke a different language (Haitian Creole and French) and second as a teacher who taught in a classroom where she did not speak the primary language of some of her students (Spanish). The survey and the personal interviews provided an indepth analysis of the perceptions of mainstream teachers of ELL students.

This study helped her to realize that most teachers are doing the best they can with what they have, but it is not enough. How many more studies need to be conducted about the achievement gap between ELLs and their native English-speaking peers before we find a way to make learning equitable for all?

The participants in this study want to increase their teacher efficacy, but not having resources and proper training makes that difficult to do. All education stakeholders, such as the principal, assistant principal, paraprofessionals, and teachers, are responsible for teaching ELLs. ELLs represent a demographic that is large and will continue to grow, and soon they will be making laws that affect the United States. We need to make sure that they are well equipped now so that they can make a great impact on the future of this country.

In summary, while teacher efficacy plays a large part in the success of ELLs in the mainstream classroom, it is not enough. Preservice teachers as well as veteran teachers need to be well equipped to instruct the ELLs placed in their mainstream classrooms. Rutherford-Quach et al. (2018) argued that there is an urgent need for educators across the United States to be equipped with structured, comprehensive, and high-quality professional development that will effectively address how to incorporate and formulate language and academic content instruction that will better serve ELLs in mainstream classrooms. They also need to be able to collaborate with other teachers and need more common planning time to discuss ELL strategies. They need current and updated profession development to help ELLs achieve language acquisition and academic content while going through the BICS and CALP phases. Professional learning communities encourage teachers to support each other while they learn how to best support ELLs to learn the language as they master the academic content in their

mainstream classrooms (Rutherford-Quach et al., 2018).

It is the hope of the researcher that this study and future research about ELLs helps the federal government to enact more laws that will change the requirements for ELLs and the teachers who teach them. A suitable curriculum to teach ELLs can be found and mandated to be taught across all 50 states. Resources and training for school personnel and parents can be provided to make the learning for ELLs a collaborative process.

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Appendix A

Survey

Survey

I am undertaking a research project in order to examine the perceptions that teachers have of their preparation to teach English language learners (ELLs). My focus for this project is to investigate how elementary teachers perceive the effectiveness of their teacher education programs in preparing them to teach ELLs. I am also researching teachers' perceptions of the elements of teacher education programs that benefit teachers' abilities for serving ELLs. My goal for this study is to analyze characteristics of preservice teacher programs that help prepare teachers for teaching students learning English as a second language. Your thoughtful responses to these questions will be beneficial as I conduct this study. Thank you for completing this survey. **To ensure your privacy, information from this survey will be released in summary form only.**

Demographics

1. What grade level(s) do you teach in school? ______________________________
2. What subjects do you currently teach? ____________________________________
3. What is your teaching experience (Years in education)? ______________________
4. What grade levels have you taught, and for how many years? ________________
5. What teaching certification(s) do you hold? _______________________________
   ____
6. In what year did you obtain your teaching certificate? _______________________
7. What is your gender? _____ female _____ male _____ other_______
8. What is your ethnicity? (optional) _____Caucasian _____African American _____Hispanic _____Asian American _____Native American _____Other
9. Are you a native speaker of English? _____Yes _____No
10. Are you a fluent speaker of another language? _____Yes _____No If yes, which language(s)? ____
11. Were you enrolled in a four- or five-year teacher education program of studies?
    ____
12. Did you student teach prior to getting hired as a teacher? _________________
13. Did you work with ELL students during your student teaching experience?
    ____
    ____
    ____
14. Was student teaching helpful in preparing you for teaching English language learners, and if so, how?
    ____
    ____
    ____
15. Did you receive a baccalaureate degree in elementary education, or a related field?
    ____
16. What degree(s) have you earned?
    ____
17. Please list any endorsements you have earned or post-certification coursework which you have taken.

____
____
____

Professional Development

18. Since the end of last school year, have you participated in any professional development or in-service training? _____ Yes _____ No
19. If yes, how many hours? _____1-8 _____8-16 _____ 17- 32 What was the focus of the professional development or in-service that you attended?
    ____
20. Did this professional development or in-service provide information that you had not learned previously? _____ Yes _____ No _____Not applicable
21. Did this professional development or in-service change your beliefs about teaching? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Not applicable If yes, please describe.
    ____
    ____
    ____
22. After the professional development or in-service, did you change your teaching practices? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Not applicable If yes, please describe.
    ____
    ____
23. Prior to this school year, have you participated in professional development opportunities which included techniques for teaching English language learners? If yes, please describe.
    ____
    ____
24. Would you be willing to participate in professional development for teaching ELLs if it is available? _____ Yes _____ No

Teacher Education Courses

(1) During your teacher education program, did you receive information about teaching ELLs through methods courses or other required coursework? _____ Yes _____ No
(2) During your teacher education program, were you required to take a course in teaching ELLs? _____ Yes _____ No
If you did not take any coursework for teaching ELLs during your teacher education program, would you have taken a course if it had been offered? _____ Yes _____ No
(3) Did your teacher education program require a course in teaching culturally diverse students? _____ Yes _____ No
If not, would you have taken this course if it had been offered? _____ Yes _____ No
(4) Did you take any courses in second language acquisition during your teacher education program? _____ Yes _____ No
(5) Did your teacher preparation program require you to take a course in second language acquisition? _____ Yes _____ No
(6) Was a course on second language acquisition offered at your college/university?
_____ Yes _____ No _____ Don't know

(7) Did your teacher education program include classroom observations or other field experiences that included ELLs prior to student teaching? _____ Yes _____ No
(8) Did you work with ELLs during your college fieldwork experiences? ___Yes ___No
(9) Did you work with ELLs during your student teaching assignment? ___ Yes ___ No
(10) During student teaching, were you expected to plan and implement instruction to meet the learning needs of your ELL students? _____Yes _____ No _____ Not applicable
(11) During student teaching, did your cooperating teacher observe you teaching ELLs? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Not applicable
(12) During student teaching, did your university supervisor observe you teaching ELLs? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Not applicable
(13) During student teaching, did your cooperating teacher give you feedback after observing you teach ELLs? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Not applicable
(14) During student teaching, did your university supervisor give you feedback after observing you teach ELLs? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Not applicable
(15) During student teaching, did your cooperating teacher give you suggestions for teaching ELLs? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Not applicable
(16) During student teaching, did your university supervisor give you suggestions for teaching ELLs? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Not applicable
(17) Do you believe that mainstream teachers are responsible for teaching ELLs in their classroom? _____ Yes _____ No

Preparation for Teaching English Language Learners

Please indicate your preparation for teaching ELLs after completing your teacher education program for each of the items below.
Rate your degree of preparation by writing a number from 1 to 4 using the scale below.

1	2	3	4
Not at all prepared	Somewhat prepared	Adequately prepared	Extremely prepared

After completing your teacher education program, how well prepared were you to:

	Preparation (1 - 4)
Teach in a mainstream classroom	
Teach students learning English as a second language	
Develop positive classroom relationships with the students in your classroom in general	
Develop positive classroom relationships with the ELLs in your classroom	
Give ELL students specific feedback on how they can meet learning expectations	
Encourage ELLs to collaborate with their peers during learning activities	
Maintain regular communication with parents and caregivers of all students in your classroom	

Maintain regular communication with parents and caregivers of ELLs	
Encourage parents of ELLs to participate in classroom and school activities and events	
Ask ELL parents for their suggestions on how best to instruct their child	
Use varied forms of assessment to monitor student learning overall	
Use varied forms of assessment to monitor ELL students' learning	
Offer constructive feedback to ELLs	
Evaluate curriculum materials for ELLs	
Develop curriculum that builds on interests, prior experiences, and abilities of ELLs	
Use strategies to make verbal instruction comprehensible for ELLs	
Incorporate hands-on activities that allow ELLs to apply concepts and learning	
Use real-world examples to make learning meaningful for ELLs	
Teach methods to ELLs for independently understanding new vocabulary	
Use technology to support Ells' learning	
Teach ELLs skills for engaging in academic conversations	
Set language objectives for ELLs along with content area objective	
Encourage students in your classroom in general to examine real-world issues and engage in problem-solving	
Encourage ELLs to examine real-world issues and engage in problem- solving	

Content Area Instruction

Please indicate your preparation after completing your teacher education program for teaching ELLs in each of the following subject areas.

Rate your degree of preparation by writing a number from 1 to 4 using the scale below.

1	2	3	4
Not at all prepared	Somewhat prepared	Adequately prepared	Extremely prepared

Preparation (1 - 4)

How well did your teacher preparation program prepare you to:

Teach English language skills to ELLs	
Teach reading to ELLs	

Teach writing to ELLs	
Teach mathematics concepts to ELLs	
Teach science concepts to ELLs	
Teach social studies concepts to ELLs	

Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with each of the items below.
Rate your agreement/disagreement with the following statements by writing a number from 1 to 4 using the scale below

1	2	3	4
Not at all prepared	Somewhat prepared	Adequately prepared	Extremely prepared

Agreement (1 - 4)

Many of my ideas for teaching ELLs come from my teacher education courses	
Many of my ideas for teaching ELLs come from my own experiences as a student in school	
Many of my ideas for teaching ELLs come from my student teaching or college fieldwork experiences	
My teacher education coursework included theories of learning and teaching ELLs, methods of ESL classroom instruction, and the links between them	
My student teaching experience occurred in a positive environment for practice teaching in general	
My student teaching experience occurred in a positive environment for learning to teach ELLs	
My student teaching experience allowed me to practice instructional strategies for ELLs that I learned in my methods courses	
The teachers I observed during my fieldwork experiences and student teaching were positive role models for classroom teaching in general	
The teachers I observed during my fieldwork experiences and student teaching were positive role models for teaching ELLs	

Please answer the following:
Were the methods courses that you took as part of your teacher education program helpful in preparing you for teaching ELLs? Please explain. ______________________
____
____
____

Were you able to utilize techniques for teaching English language learners that you learned from your pre-service courses after you began teaching in your own classroom? Please explain.____
____
____

In your opinion, how could the content of methods courses be adjusted to be more beneficial in preparing teachers for teaching English language learners? _____________

____
____
____

In your opinion, what kinds of preparatory experiences would be helpful in preparing classroom teachers to teach ELLs? ____
____
____

In reflecting on your teaching experiences, how well prepared were you for teaching students learning English as a second language? ______________________________
____
____
____

Is there anything else you'd like to add? _______________________________________
____
____
____

Appendix B

Interview

Interview

1. How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?
2. What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?
3. What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?
4. What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?
5. Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.
6. How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?
7. Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?
8. What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Appendix C

Participant Interview Data

Participant Interview Data

Teacher 1 Personal Interview

Researcher: How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?

Teacher 1: Administration can provide guidance for teachers such as workshops with strategic and or basic knowledge about ELLs.

Researcher: What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?

Teacher 1: They need to know what is working in their classrooms and different points of view that can help you to approach things in your classroom.

Researcher: What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?

Teacher 1: Teachers can discuss ELL issues during the regular weekly meetings but if the teachers are struggling, they can meet on an extra day at least once per week.

Researcher: What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?

Teacher 1: An in-depth training on codes, WIDA can do descriptors, strategies to engage beginning ELL students to help them feel like they are a part of the classroom.

Researcher: Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.

Teacher 1: ELLs are often pushed to the side. I felt underprepared to work with beginning ELLs. At least now they are a part of the classroom and get to be with their friends. When I was growing up, they did not get to be with their friends throughout the school day.

Researcher: How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?

Teacher 1: The administration provides minimum support. The ELLs do not get the support they need. They do not pay attention to the ELL population.

Researcher: Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?

Teacher 1: Yes, somewhat I learned from my mentor teacher during my field experience. The classes at school did not fully prepare me.

Researcher: What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Teacher 1: An ELL teacher is aware of strategies that work with different students. They will break down information and modify learning, model lessons, and use visual cues in the classroom.

Teacher 2 Personal Interview

Researcher: How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?

Teacher 2: Administration can offer extra assessment and academic tools to help support ELL students.

Researcher: What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?

Teacher 2: Target teachers with a high ELL population and collaborate on lessons.

Researcher: What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?

Teacher 2: During weekly meetings, teachers can discuss strategies to help ELLs. They could meet once per week.

Researcher: What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?

Teacher 2: ELL courses that teach how to place ELLs in reading groups, how to modify instruction also using visual aids in the classroom.

Researcher: Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.

Teacher 2: I can't think of any right now.

Researcher: How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?

Teacher 2: The support is minimal. Administration needs to be fully aware of ELL students. I have not seen support for ELL students at this school.

Researcher: Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?

Teacher 2: Yes, but not 100%. The college courses and field experience helped me to prepare to teach ELLs.

Researcher: What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Teacher 2: ELL teachers should use visual aids, give students extra time, use Google translate and modify instruction for students. Some assignments should be modified by making it work for them at their level.

Teacher 3 Personal Interview

Researcher: How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?

Teacher 3: Administration can provide teachers with aides or additional training to help them work with ELL students more efficiently

Researcher: What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?

Teacher 3: They can use collaborative efforts to see if someone else is doing something different that may help you in your classroom.

Researcher: What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?

Teacher 3: Teachers should plan for ELLs at a separate meeting from the regular meeting at least once a week.

Researcher: What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?

Teacher 3: Teachers need to learn how to plan for ELLs, what materials they need to work with ELLs, how to give explicit instruction and to

model how to teach ELLs.

Researcher: Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.

Teacher 3: ELLs should be in sheltered ELL classrooms. They should also have peer to peer scaffolding and pull out instruction should be provided for all grade levels.

Researcher: How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?

Teacher 3: They give minimal support. ELLs only receive Imagine learning on the computer if they are an ELL student.

Researcher: Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?

Teacher 3: No, because I have not received anything at the school level. The college courses that I took only provided me with technical information.

Researcher: What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Teacher 3: ELL students Develop language skills, bridging the gap between English and their home language, using visual cues, providing accommodations and extra time for ELLS.

Teacher 4 Personal Interview

Researcher: How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?

Teacher 4: Administration should hire more pullout support to work with ELL students in small groups. We only have one ELL facilitator at our school. We don't need push in, they should be pulled out of the class for a portion of the day.

Researcher: What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?

Teacher 4: Teachers need to get together to learn about WIDA. We need to include differentiated instruction for ELLs during planning time and not just focus on low students' strategies as a group. We should also be using pictures and differentiated lesson plans for students in our classroom.

Researcher: What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?

Teacher 4: We should have a separate planning for ELL students to discuss better ways to teach them how we can help them and assign things in Imagine learning. We should assign lessons so that they can learn exactly what they need to and also where they fall on the Can-Do descriptors or WIDA.

Researcher: What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?

Teacher 4: Teachers need training on ELL codes. How and why students are coded, WIDA and can-do descriptors. District training is quick, and teachers need a deeper dive into Imagine learning. I want to know how to differentiate lessons for ELL students. ELL students

should not be placed into a classroom until the teacher is fully ESOL endorsed.

Researcher: Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.

Teacher 4: We need more support to focus on ELL students. ELLs are starting to have behavior problems because they are beginning to mimic the general education students. Students should not be placed in my classroom until I am fully endorsed. If I have 10 ELL students and I only took 4 courses, then I am not fully prepared to teach these students.

Researcher: How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?

Teacher 4: They provide minimal support- Although we do have an ELL support facilitator, it is still not enough. It there was more support, the students could be pulled out for at least 30 minutes a day.

Researcher: Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?

Teacher 4: Yes, to a certain extent. I have taken courses, but it prepared me on paper but not for real world experience. I had the tools but never did field experience, so I had to learn from day-to-day teaching.

Researcher: What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Teacher 4: ELL teachers should teach students how to communicate effectively. They should make them feel comfortable in the classroom and build their confidence. They should not drill the students with memorization facts. Teachers should make sure they are following the WIDA Can Do standards. They should personalize lessons for ELLs. They should learn what they need to learn but also teach grade level appropriate standards.

Teacher 5 Personal Interview

Researcher: How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?

Teacher 5: Administration needs to provide more pullout or books for students. They should provide a separate curriculum or an explicit approach to teach ELLs. Teachers should get small group activities to help them academically and to give them a better connection to their language. Pull out teachers should have a set curriculum to do the same thing as teachers in the classroom.

Researcher: What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?

Teacher 5: Students should walk to read with other teachers. Each teacher should concentrate on different ESOL skills. 2 or 3 teachers should be dedicated to helping students with ELL language objectives. The rest of the teachers can focus on the Gen Ed population.

Researcher: What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?

Teacher 5: The planning time should be tailored to what the students need.

Whole group should have 1-2 accommodations to cover everyone. Teachers can plan with their teams or by themselves because they know their students well. They should meet at least once a week. ELL planning should be separate from Gen Ed because it is two different conversations,

Researcher: What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?

Teacher 5: Teachers need thorough training from the district to help teachers learn about how to engage or approach students with what they are deficient in to create a bridge with students. We need to bridge a gap between their language and the English language. Teachers should learn the Use of terms such as BICS and CALP, accommodations, strategies, materials, books. Charts and language objectives, and terms and levels such as A1-LY.

Researcher: Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.

Teacher 5: More praise should be given such as a special honor roll or milestone program for ELL students demonstrating success to help engage students. The district is failing the kids that need language support. The system is not focused on a progressive approach for these kids.

Researcher: How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?

Teacher 5: They give minimal support. The kids use a computer program called Imagine learning. Other than that, no one really talks about ELLs; they often get pushed to the side and forgotten.

Researcher: Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?

No, I took endorsement classes, but the classes just reviewed laws and gave a synopsis of ELL teaching. It was not in depth enough to prepare me for real world teaching.

Researcher: What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Teacher 5: ELL teachers should model and demonstrate expectations of whatever goal you are teaching them. They need a lot of repetition, (I do, we do, you do). The district collects money for ELL students and is doing the bare minimum to support multi cultures in the classroom.

Teacher 6 Personal Interview

Researcher: How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?

Teacher 6: Administration should provide more support and training. People that are certified or trained to work with ELLs should actually be in those positions.

Researcher: What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?

Teacher 6: Collaborating with teachers who have taught ELL sheltered classes

or bilingual teachers who speak other languages to share strategies to implement in the classroom with ELL students.

Researcher: What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?

Teacher 6: Teachers should have a separate meeting with an ELL facilitator so that they can tell us how to better serve the ELL population. They should meet once a week.

Researcher: What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?

Teacher 6: Teachers should ne trained in Access 2.0. All teachers should know how to administer WIDA testing, not just certain teachers. They should learn about the can-do descriptors and the ESOL matrix. Teachers should also learn strategies that we can implement in the classroom with ELLs.

Researcher: Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.

Teacher 6: ELLs are not properly serviced in the classroom. They do not receive support or proper accommodations. They are thrown into a gen ed classroom and expected to be on grade level by the end of the year, The ELL facilitators are placed into these positions but are not always properly trained or certified.

Researcher: How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?

Teacher 6: They provide minimal support. Students get imagine learning when they are A1-ly classified. We also get radius machines that often do not work.

Researcher: Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?

Teacher 6: No, I did not receive any college courses to prepare me to teach ELL students. When I moved to S. Florida, I had to take ESOL courses, and it helped only minimally. Professional development gave me a better understanding of ELL instruction and strategies.

Researcher: What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Teacher 6: ELL teachers should use visual cues, model lessons, use peer support in their language, scaffold learning and be placed in sheltered classrooms.

Teacher 7 Personal Interview

Researcher: How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?

Teacher 7: Administration can support teachers by providing push in or pull out, one-on-one instruction, resources such as books, center materials and differentiated centers.

Researcher: What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?

Teacher 7: Teachers should collaborate and share materials and activities for

ELL students.

Researcher: What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?

Teacher 7: The planning time should be an additional planning time at least once a week to plan for the following week.

Researcher: What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?

Teacher 7: They need refresher courses that are face to face not online. They should learn the ELL classification codes such as A1-LY. They should share new resources to teach ELLs.

Researcher: Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.

Teacher 7: I can't think of any right now.

Researcher: How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?

Teacher 7: The provide minimal support. The students only get- Imagine learning. We do not have push in or pull out. Since we are not a testing grade, we don't often receive support.

Researcher: Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?

Teacher 7: Yes, but due to my own research such as collaborating with teachers from other schools and ELL facilitators.

Researcher: What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Teacher 7: ELL teachers should use visual cues, differentiated instructions, time accommodation, small group instruction, modify instruction and scaffolding instruction for ELLs.

Teacher 8 Personal Interviews

Researcher: How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?

Teacher 8: Administration should provide professional development and strategies and resources to assist in the development of ELL students.

Researcher: What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?

Teacher 8: Collaboration with one another to share ideas that will help the growth of ELL students. Some teachers are bilingual, that assists with translation for students and parents. Those teachers can understand the students' culture better because they come from that culture.

Researcher: What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?

Teacher 8: The planning time should occur during the regular planning time because the standards are for all students, not just ELLs. Many of

the strategies yield to General Education students, peer buddies, vocabulary strategies and graphic organizers.

Researcher: What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?

Teacher 8: Teachers need training in WIDA strategies, the ESOL Matrix, Can-Do descriptors, the progression of ELL students and their learning.

Researcher: Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.

Teacher 8: The state of Florida places a 2-year limit for entering ELL students to catch up to their peers. It should not be based on years it should be based on how well they are progressing through the ESOL matrix based on individual situations.

Researcher: How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?

Teacher 8: They receive moderate support- Administration supplies high ELL classes with an ELL push in support to expand vocabulary in grades 2-5. All ELLs get imagine learning.

Researcher: Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?

Teacher 8: No, I do not feel like I was adequately prepared because there was not a diverse population during my internship and the first school that I worked at before this did not have a lot of ELL students. The current school that I work at has a large ELL population and the first-hand experience has helped me to get more experience.

Researcher: What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Teacher 8: ELL teachers should have discussions with students. They should use visuals, vocabulary is vast, print rich environment, skill-based groups, resources that help support students and get the students to listen, speak and have discussions.

Teacher 9 Personal Interview:

Researcher: How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?

Teacher 9: Admin can support teachers by placing paraprofessionals in the classroom that speak the student's language. They can also have a separate curriculum for ELLs to help them learn the language.

Researcher: What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?

Teacher 9: Teachers should collaborate with each other and discuss the different resources that they use in their classrooms as well as any apps or software geared toward ELL students.

Researcher: What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?

Teacher 9: Teachers should meet separately to discuss ELL strategies and activities. They should meet at least once a week to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

Researcher: What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?

Teacher 9: Workshops based on ELL curriculum, how to administer strategies to work with ELL students and how to grade ELL students on report cards. They also need to take ELL refresher courses.

Researcher: Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.

Teacher 9: ELL students need a separate curriculum than Gen Ed students. Teachers should be given information on how to get ELL students through the RTI system. They need paraprofessionals who speak the language of the ELL population in the Gen Ed class.

Researcher: How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?

Teacher 9: They provide minimum support-There is an ELL facilitator that works with some of the students that have ELL students and some of the students get Imagine learning.

Researcher: Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?

Teacher 9: No, I do not feel as if I was adequately prepared because I did not take any ESOL courses when I went to college. The courses that I took after college did not help because I could not apply it. PLCs are helpful but they are not specific to ELL strategies. Some of the PLCS that are required should concentrate strictly on ELL strategies especially how to help engage them and to help them advance academically as well.

Researcher: What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Teacher 9: ELL teachers use hands on learning, visual cues, modeling, incorporate technology into their lessons.

Teacher 10 Personal Interviews

Researcher: How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?

Teacher 10: Administration should give teachers qualified ELL coaches to address the needs of kids. Teachers need more supplies because that is necessary for ELL students. They also need additional personnel for pull out services for ELL students.

Researcher: What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?

Teacher 10: We need consultation and collaboration with teachers and coaches who have experience with cultural diversity and translation services would be helpful too.

Researcher: What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?

Teacher 10: Teachers need a separate planning day for ELL/ESE students because they have similar accommodations. They should meet

once per week especially with severe students.

Researcher: What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?

Teacher 10: ELL college courses that target the ELL population that talk about the expectations and traditions of ELL families. They need to be able to understand those differences to help them assimilate. School should do an on-campus training to help students deal with the ELL population. They should also help teacher to deal with parent conferences.

Researcher: Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.

Teacher 10: Schools should celebrate the diversity of the children in the school.

Researcher: How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?

Teacher 10: They provide minimal support. We have ELL coaches, a Para that tests the ELL students, and Imagine learning for some ELL students. Buts that's it.

Researcher: Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?

Teacher 10: The courses I took prepared me somewhat but collaboration amongst my peer teachers and PLCs prepared me much more.

Researcher: What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Teacher 10: ELL teachers give students the necessary curriculum experience and are aware of student capabilities. They find ways to help students understand what they need to understand using strategies. They can also help students adjust to the new culture.

Teacher 11 Personal interview

Researcher: How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?

Teacher 11: Administration can give access to Imagine learning for all ELL learners regardless of ELL classification. More resources for ELL students like language master machines and multimedia tools to help them engage in learning.

Researcher: What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?

Teacher 11: ELL teachers should be able to share resources, lesson plans and generate ideas at meetings and just when they need assistance.

Researcher: What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?

Teacher 11: During regular weekly meetings. Teachers need more time to plan so that they can reach all students. They should meet more than once a week to edit and revise what they have learned about.

Researcher: What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?

Teacher 11: How to incorporate ELL resources that are already embedded into

the current curriculum. Also, how to help parents gain access to the resources perhaps during an ELL parent night meeting. Teachers should take refresher courses or breakout sessions to help teachers collaborate and how to use strategies to help ELL students.

Researcher: Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.

Teacher 11: Teachers need access to translators or translation services to help them communicate with parents during conferences that do not speak English. They especially need translators when the languages are not the convention languages such as English or Creole because it is hard to communicate with parents and this causes a barrier between the teacher and the student's home life.

Researcher: How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?

Teacher 11: Administration provides minimal Support. If I speak up, I feel that I can get a little more tiered support from coaches and team leaders.

Researcher: Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?

Teacher 11: I was adequately prepared to a point. The information that I received from the textbooks was good but real-world experience and application is completely different from paper.

Researcher: What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Teacher 11: ELL teachers can reach all students no matter what the modality is. They know all students' strengths and use it to the best of their abilities. They are passionate, think outside the box, love and support and value their students no matter where they are academically.

Teacher 12 Personal Interview

Researcher: How can administration support the needs of mainstream teachers of ELL students?

Teacher 12: Class size reduction is important. Teachers with a high ELL population can get extra support such as push in or pull-out groups because ELLs are spread out amongst teachers on the grade level.

Researcher: What type of peer support if any, do general education teachers feel they need from each other to teach ELL students?

Teacher 12: A co-teaching model can help teachers learn from each other. Whatever one teacher is strong at, they can bounce ideas off each other. Teachers that are strong with ELL strategies should pair up with someone and have both classes together so that both classes can learn something.

Researcher: What kind of common planning time is necessary for ELL teachers? How often?

Teacher 12: ELL meetings should be separate from regular meetings. During those meetings, teachers should learn how to use strategies from the ELL matrix or construct a list of things that you can do with ELL students. They can use those strategies in their lesson plans. The meeting should occur at least once a quarter or 4 times a year.

Researcher: What types of training in ELL instruction do general education teachers need?

Teacher 12: Teachers need more information about the classification levels and ELL codes. They should learn what strategies they can use to help ELLs kids of all levels. They need to do a deep dive into the matrix and learn what exactly each code means and how to utilize in their daily teaching.

Researcher: Discuss any other issues teachers would like to raise.

Teacher 12: Some teachers are not as concerned with teaching ELLs to the best of their ability because they know that they will pass at the end of the year regardless of their reading level.

Researcher: How does your administration support the inclusion of ELL students in your general education classroom?

Teacher 12: They provide minimum support. Push in support is given for ELL students from an ELL facilitator. All kids get support and don’t consider whether they are ELL or not. They look at the data and give support for all students and don’t consider their status. Administrators may need some training to understand the needs of ELL students.

Researcher: Do you feel you were adequately prepared in your training and professional development to co teach ELL students in your classroom?

Teacher 12: Not really. ESOL endorsements did not prepare me adequately. College, trial, and error has prepared me to better teach ELLs. Being a primary teacher and focusing on oral language in primary grades has helped me.

Researcher: What are your perceptions of the role of the ELL teacher?

Teacher 12: ELL teachers should use the ESOL matrix strategies. They should build vocabulary using pictures, gestures, icons, visuals. They should communicate with parents using talking points to translate information into their original language.