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HOOD COLLEGE



Mainstream Teachers' Perspectives on Secondary, English Learner Engagement in Inclusive
Classrooms: Communities of Practice

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Hood College
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree
Doctor of Organizational Leadership

by
Katherine A. Gull

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The members of the committee appointed to examine the dissertation of Katherine A. Gull find that this dissertation fulfills the requirements and meets the standards of the Hood College Doctoral Program in Organizational Leadership and recommend that it be approved.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to English Learner students in the United States public education system. May you gain consistent and equitable access to all learning Communities of Practice to build and develop your identities through meaning, interaction, practice, and community. You do belong.

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Mainstream Teachers' Perspectives on Secondary English Learner Engagement in Inclusive Classrooms: Community of Practice

Katherine A. Gull, DOL

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ABSTRACT

Public school systems across the United States face the challenge of effectively educating high school immigrant students who are learning English. In many states, high school English Learner (EL) students are aging out, dropping out, and are not achieving academic success. In the large school system site of this study, the research-based practice was for EL students to be placed in general education or mainstream courses. Mainstreaming was followed as an equitable practice which allowed EL students to simultaneously acquire English and required credits towards graduation. Wanting to explore how general education teachers experienced mainstreaming of their EL students, this qualitative study examined perspectives about EL student inclusion, their sense of efficacy, impact on workload, obstacles, and successes. This study was grounded in learning as a Community of Practice, or according to Wenger (2015), a group of people with a shared passion who learn through interaction, and integrated key second language acquisition theory. The classroom is a learning community where a sense of belonging facilitates interaction through input, output, and feedback. Belonging to the learning Community of Practice builds identity and makes meaning, all critical elements in EL student success. The study involved comparing survey data on the perception of EL students in mainstream classrooms, interview data from mainstream teachers assigned EL students, and EL student engagement data based on class attendance. Data analysis revealed a cycle of learning mainstream teachers experienced when working with EL students; it consisted of five elements, *Discovery*, *Emotional Reaction*,

Solutions Search, Observation, and Reflection/Learning. The identification and understanding of the cycle of behaviors that occurred in the classroom will enable administrators and system leaders to adjust and effectively support teachers during different stages of learning, increasing EL student access to the classroom Community of Practice. This study justifies support for teachers through professional learning about working with EL students. This study also highlighted the need for policy changes such as requiring pre-service teacher training on how to effectively teach English Learner students.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The immigrant population in the United States has grown exponentially in the last few decades. Since 1980 the immigrant population increased by 200% (Batalova, Hanna, & Levesque, 2021). According to the Migration Policy Institute (Batalova, Hanna, & Levesque, 2021), approximately 44.9 million immigrants live in the United States comprising almost 13.5% of the total population. The National Center for Education Statistics Annual Report (May, 2021) stated in their report *The Condition of Education 2021* in 2018 there were about 4.9 million English Learner (EL) students in the public-school system; about 22.3% of whom were high school students, grades nine through twelve. According to the United States Department of Education (2020) in the last 20 years, 43 states saw increases in their EL student populations. Currently, an estimated 3.5 million undocumented children live in the United States. Historically, educating undocumented, immigrant children was a point of contention. In Texas, for example, the state legislature tried to withhold funds to schools who enrolled undocumented children as students. A class action was filed in district court against the legislature asking them to stop denying education to members of their community. When taken to the Supreme Court the question at hand was, “Whether denying undocumented children of illegal immigrants the right to attend public school constitutes discrimination based on alienage that violates the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment?” (Plyler v. Doe, 1982). The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the community members stating, “education has a fundamental role in maintaining the fabric of our society, it provides the basic tools by which individuals might lead economically productive lives to the benefit of us all.” (Plyler v. Doe, 1982). The ruling relied on the Equal Protection Clause, which is embedded within the Fourteenth Amendment, addressing the denial of any person life, liberty or property residing within its jurisdiction. Undocumented

people are not citizens and do not have the rights of citizenship, but they do reside within the jurisdiction of the local school system and are therefore given the privileges of the jurisdiction. In 1982 the Supreme Court ruled the Texas legislation of denying enrollment to immigrant children unconstitutional guaranteeing access to public education regardless of legal status.

These large, overarching laws granting access to education did not give clear and concise guidelines about *how to* successfully educate English Learners. Cohen et al. (2007) explained, “Substantial autonomy is given to states and districts in implementing policy, creating a risk of a gap between the intent of federal policies and actual classroom practice.” Public education systems were required to meet the linguistic, cultural, and content learning needs of their burgeoning English Learner (EL) student populations who come with complex needs, in the best way they can. Plyler v. Doe protected access to education for immigrant English Learners. States have autonomy to decide how to educate their immigrant students but there has been minimal research on sustainable, effective, educational programming for older, high school aged, immigrant English Learners.

Impact of Immigration on the Community

Immigration impacts members of communities in different ways. Wright (2011) examined the impact of increasing numbers of immigrants in a community on a sense of national identity. He found an influx of immigrants caused community members to view them as a threat to social harmony, disrupting the nation’s identity. Mangum and Block (2018) explored perspectives on immigration through the lens of social identity theory. Their research found anti-immigrant sentiment was not based solely on cultural or economic threats rather on the likelihood immigrants evolve or not evolve into having an American identity. Studies showed communities struggled with the influx of immigrant children into the public-school system.

Some community groups were worried that new, immigrant students did not want to learn English and would not take advantage of their education therefore wasting taxpayer dollars (Valdes, 1998).

In the context of this study, the recent influx of immigrant children over the last eight years into one large mid-Atlantic school system caused reevaluation of English Learner programming and teaching practices. Systemic leaders changed the way EL students were scheduled for coursework necessary for graduation based on research showing that inequitable access to coursework was a major obstacle to student achievement. This decision coupled with precedence set by Special Education leaders within the system to utilize the power of co-teaching in high school classes to meet their students' needs led to EL students being placed in mainstream courses with EL co-teacher support. English Learner (EL) students at lower language levels were scheduled into mainstream classes. For some mainstream courses containing EL students there were not enough EL teachers to function as co-teachers for teachers who needed one. The EL students in these mainstream classes experienced a spectrum of challenges where they were largely dependent on the teacher in the room. Some teachers were excited to have ELs in class; they co-plan effectively, scaffold their instruction, and follow up with students, regardless of linguistic barriers. Other teachers progressed through content with little change to their instructional approaches which left struggling learners behind. This resulted in failure, frustration, and/or need to repeat the class to gain credit towards graduation. Oftentimes, EL students did not have enough time in their schedule to repeat a class due to advanced age, number of courses needed to graduate, and gaps in prior learning.

Inclusive education is considered a highly effective educational practice. The United Nations Education agency (UNESCO) defined inclusive education at a world conference held in Salamanca, Spain. The UN called it the Salamanca Statement which stated,

Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society, and achieving education for all; moreover, they prove an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost effectiveness of the entire education system. (Salamanca Statement, June 1994, para 4)

Inclusive education is considered a best practice for Special Education (SE) students and EL students. EL and SE students are in mainstream classes as much as possible. EL teachers and SE teachers collaborate with mainstream teachers, co-teach, and provide resources that help meet the needs of their EL and SE students. When co-teachers are not available or assigned to another class, English Learners are often in mainstream classes without effective support. They were often not in an environment that supported their native language or their native culture. Research shows the detriments of identity threat to student achievement (Oyserman et al., 2006). Research also shows the importance of the sense of belonging in the academic environment to student achievement (Yeager et. al, 2014). Understanding how teachers view EL inclusive education and investigating possible influences of their perspectives of EL student engagement through interaction in the mainstream classroom will help educators understand its importance and inform systemic leaders' future programming decisions.

Teacher Challenges

Mainstream teachers often have minimal prior experiences and professional training about teaching English Learners which negatively affects their ability to serve their students. Mainstream teachers with minimal knowledge about effectively working with EL students teach in schools where large numbers of immigrant children attend (Callahan, 2005; Pettit, 2011; Verplaetse, 1998). Khong and Saito (2014) identified three main challenges teachers face: social,

institutional, and personal. Embedded within each overarching area are specific challenges. Khong and Saito (2014) discussed the growth and diversity of the students who are classified under one English Learner label. They identified societal concerns with English Learners considered problems due to their linguistic and cultural needs and described the shallow, inconsistent public policies in place holding states and local school systems accountable for educating their immigrant students. Barriers continue with a lack of teacher preparation programs, and a lack of vetted, rigorous materials, time, and communication constraints in addition to drastically different school cultures. Khong and Saito (2014) identified teacher personal challenges as being an area requiring more research and one that is important in determining English Learner success. They noted multiple misconceptions, biases, low expectations, and negative attitudes as some of the greatest challenges teachers face.

English Learner Challenges

High school EL students must simultaneously learn a second language and course content using specific vocabulary with complex sentence structures in an unfamiliar language. In ideal conditions, with trained teachers, this is a monumental task; yet English Learners often find themselves in less-than-ideal conditions with teachers who are not properly trained and have low expectations for non-English speaking students (Nora & Echevarria, 2016).

Not all English Learners are the same. Another challenge for EL students is the EL label given to all non-English speaking students. There is wide diversity within this umbrella label. The types of EL students represented in schools today range from literate, educated, working families, to unaccompanied minors with interrupted schooling living in poverty to EL students who immigrated as children but remain as long-term EL students unable to succeed in mainstream classes. The learner profiles are different, but all the students are placed in the same

courses to learn English. Freeman et al. (2003) stated, “The first step in providing effective instruction for older English language learners is to recognize the differences among them” (p. 121).

Another challenge ELs face is access to coursework. English learners need linguistic supports which often exclude them from certain courses they need to graduate. This puts them on a track to experience less rigorous courses. Johnson (2019) studied the courses EL students were assigned in high school and showed EL students, “face considerable disadvantage in accessing math, science, and social science classes” (p. 15). When they do have access to courses, they are often taught by teachers who are content experts but not pedagogical experts. The teachers know what they are talking about but do not know ways to differentiate their instructional approach to meet the unique needs of EL students.

There are some EL high school students who come to the local school system (LSS) with long stretches of absenteeism from school. It may have taken them months to travel here, they may have dropped out of school in their home country to work and support their family, or they may have stopped attending school due to violence and threats. These students are labeled SIFE, Students with Interrupted Formal Education. SIFE students struggle in school and their dropout rate is high (DeCapua, 2016). EL students struggle with feeling like they do not belong in the academic environment regardless of teacher perspective.

A significant, yet not clearly understood challenge is when high school English Learners experience acculturative stress. Berry (1997) described students with acculturative stress as feeling marginalized while experiencing depression, confusion, and anxiety. Recent work has been done in the area of mindsets, specifically the mindset of belonging and the positive impact it has on student achievement. Roche and Kuperminc (2012) looked at the academic impact of

discrimination stress on new immigrant students who arrive at different ages. Their study shows a sense of belonging mitigates the negative impact discrimination stressors cause. Freeman et al. (2003) found, “Many older English Learners enter schools in the United States with little confidence” (p. 116). “As students experience academic success, their attitudes begin to change, and they engage more fully in the curriculum” (p. 117).

Statement of the Problem

There are multiple issues creating obstacles for EL academic achievement. Understanding how to effectively educate diverse learners who do not speak English, immigrated from countries with different education systems, have various backgrounds, and disparate amounts of prior knowledge, is a continuous challenge facing public-school systems. General educators or mainstream teachers often have little pre-service training on second language acquisition theory, cross-cultural communication, or rights of immigrants to public schooling and subsequently struggle to meet the instructional needs of their students. Diverse students struggle with acceptance and support in the public-school system. Minority students with different ethnic backgrounds are among the most marginalized student groups in educational systems in the United States. English Learners have the challenge of moving to a community with a vastly different culture than their own and may face community members with negative perspectives of immigrants increasing the barriers to feeling like they belong and as a result effectively accessing and developing their education.

New high school English Learner students come to public-school systems with diverse educational experiences and varying levels of literacy skills in their native language. Students who arrive in the United States during their high school years struggle to learn English, access academic content, and often drop out due to economic hardships. Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-

Orozco (2001) found, “Although some Latinos successfully navigate the American educational system, the majority struggle academically and leave schools without the skills necessary to compete in the new global economy” (p. 330). They explained the repercussions for Latinos leaving high school, “In the twelfth grade, Latino students average only an eighth-grade reading level and are more likely to drop out of high school than students from all other groups” (p. 330).

Because our immigrant populations are woven into the fabric of our communities and our country, we must ensure they feel they belong in the classroom to support their academic success. We can increase EL student engagement in the academic environment by increasing positive types of interactions they have with their teachers and peers resulting in an increase in their sense of belonging. Martin-Beltran et al. (2018) found, “constructing a CoP [community of practice] in which language minority students were central participants afforded many opportunities for multilingual, multidirectional learning by all participants.” According to Baskin et al. (2013), “Low educational achievement is associated with unemployment, lower earnings, higher crime, and greater dependency on welfare and other social services” (p. 398). Do mainstream teachers know how to build relationships with students who are significantly different in many ways from themselves? Effectively educating immigrant children will increase their ability to contribute to the communities of which they are an important part, increasing the richness and diversity for everyone.

As the English Learner Coordinator for a large school district in a mid-Atlantic state, I regularly visit high school classrooms with diverse student groups. The teachers are often representative of the majority population in the local school system. In this specific school system, it is primarily native English speaking, Caucasian individuals with varying degrees of experience teaching English Learners. As the EL population grows at the secondary level,

mainstream teachers are being asked to work with more complex and diverse student groups (Reeves, 2006). Through professional learning and instructional coaching some teachers effectively teach their content to EL students resulting in student achievement. Other teachers struggle with mindset, pedagogy, and low expectations for their EL students that results in marginalized groups of students within their classrooms. Cherng (2017) demonstrated the impact of teacher expectations: “Biases are linked to lower student expectations and achievement” (p. 180). Research shows EL students are not successful in these environments (Byfield, 2019; Cherng, 2017; Pettit, 2011; Pit-ten Cate & Glock, 2019). This study examined the interactions and relationships between teachers and their diverse students who represent multiple cultures, languages, and prior experiences. It examined mainstream teachers’ perspectives about English Learners included in mainstream classrooms. I studied the role of perspective and possible relationship to interactions and engagement between mainstream teachers and EL students.

Theoretical Framework

Wenger’s (2001) work on Communities of Practice (CoP) and Social Learning Theory provided the foundation for this study. Wenger analyzed the components of identity, learning as becoming through community, and learning as belonging. In this study, classrooms were defined as Communities of Practice in which teachers are the leaders setting the tone for the class, modeling behaviors, and facilitating interactions. Students spend most of their day in the classroom environment during the school year. Students create knowledge, meaning, and understanding through their interactions within the classroom environment. This becomes their community where they create and shape their identity and make meaning of the world. What happens in the classroom is a major factor in their identity development. Learning is also a result

of participation in community and formation of individual identity and how individuals relate to other participants in the community.

Second Language Acquisition theory demonstrates the importance of interaction to successful language acquisition. EL students do not share the same language or culture as the teacher who is facilitating and leading the learning environment or the classroom Community of Practice. How do they develop their identity, learn, and become a contributing part of the classroom community with large, cultural differences? Understanding the phenomenon of EL student engagement in the CoP helped me understand the influences on identity building and community for them. Teachers directly influence, whether positively or negatively, how students fit into and participate in the classroom community and subsequently how students create their definition of themselves through learning. Teachers facilitate the quantity and quality of interactions that occur in the classroom.

Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory through Communities of Practice (CoP) explains learning with the following components: meaning, practice, community, and identity. Creating meaning out of the world requires experiences and interaction. Through experiences individuals create understanding, confirm the understanding, or disprove the understanding. Practice makes this process iterative and occurs regularly in the classroom CoP. Wenger (2001) defined community with three elements, mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire. This is important when viewing the classroom as a CoP. Is there mutual engagement on the part of the teacher and the students? Are they partners in constructing meaning out of the content, and do they have a skillset with which they attempt the endeavor? Linguistic and cultural differences will influence the three elements of CoP. Educators need to understand whether EL students can effectively

participate in the elements of the CoP regardless of linguistic and cultural differences and if teachers can effectively engage EL students in the classroom as the CoP. EL student, academic success is a prevalent problem at the high school level. Mitigating factors that inhibit their access to learning through community will help them learn and succeed.

Classroom Interaction

Interaction is an important element of the classroom environment regardless of language or culture. Allen et al. (2011) noted: “In secondary schools, one of the largest potential mediators of academic outcomes is the extent to which students are motivated and engaged by their interactions with teachers” (p. 1034). Allen et al. explained that students report interaction as “critical to their success” (p. 1034). Through interactions with teachers, students become invested and engaged in learning. Newman et al. (1992) established, “engagement involves psychological investment in learning, comprehending, or mastering knowledge, skills, and crafts, not simply a commitment to complete assigned tasks or to acquire symbols of high performance such as grades or social approval” (p. 12). Engagement is developed and supported by the teacher.

EL students must interact in the classroom for academic success but also because it is an essential part of successfully learning English. Gass et al. (1998), noted that, “considerable attention has been directed towards the role of interaction with respect to the conditions considered theoretically important for SLA [Second Language Acquisition], such as the learners’ comprehension of input, access to feedback, and production of modified output” (p. 299). Mainstream teachers who work with EL students must make purposeful interaction a priority. “Facilitating input comprehension in the classroom setting thus requires a teacher-student relationship and patterns of classroom interaction that are radically different from the pattern of

teacher elicitation, student response, and teacher feedback that classroom research has identified as typical of teacher and student discourse” (Pica et al., 1987, p. 754).

Social and Individual Identity

“Issues of identity are an integral aspect of a social theory of learning and are thus inseparable from issues of practice, community, and meaning” (Wenger, 2001, p. 145). Identity is the lens through which all members of the Community of Practice interact. Wenger discussed the importance of the interplay of identity through individual perspectives defined through social, cultural, and human experiences. Social and individual identities are not mutually exclusive but intricately linked, blended together, to form the person. Identity is an evolutionary process occurring through negotiating understanding and learning within layers of community both local and global all within a social context.

Large influxes of EL students moving into the mainstream Community of Practice which is facilitated by a teacher who has built an identity through vastly different social constructs than their students may impact the efficacy of the CoP for diverse learners. The local school system under study is moving to a co-teaching model of instruction under the premise that inclusive education is a successful way to teach immigrant students. How do educators support efficacious CoPs with increasingly more diverse student members and predominantly uniform teaching staff? Secondary EL students must navigate the different components of the classroom community successfully to learn language and content at the same time. Their success and achievement in school depends upon it. The EL students must develop their identity with the social, cultural, and human experiences that are very different from the culture in which they were raised. They must make connections with the social context of the classroom from a background of influences that differ from that of their teachers’ and their peers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand the perspective of mainstream teachers on EL students placed in their classroom through inclusive education practices. I studied how the teachers' perspectives may influence interactions thus influencing EL student engagement. I explored the nature of interactions between mainstream teachers and English Learner students in the hopes of understanding how to advise systemic leaders about necessary professional learning, programmatic choices, and EL student course placement. Teachers are the gatekeepers of interaction through their lesson planning, facilitation of activities that support interaction, and their feedback to students. Insecurities about interacting with students from other cultures who speak a different language or other causes of potential negative perceptions of students may impact their facilitation of interaction resulting in EL students' ability to access learning, identity building, and sense of belonging to the Community of Practice.

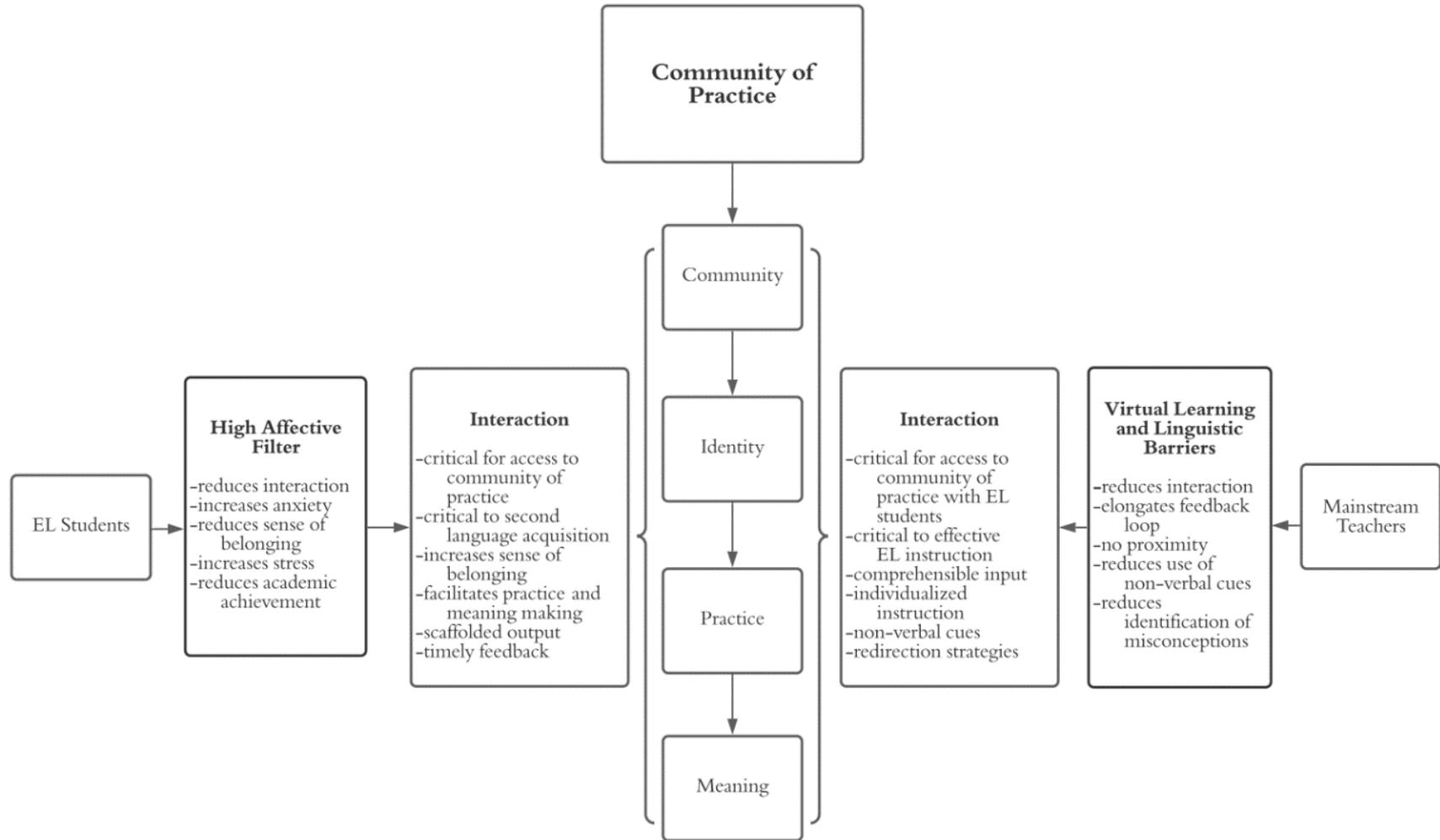
Academic belongingness positively impacts student achievement. Goodenow and Grady (2010) found that when students feel like they belong in school they exhibit characteristics of motivated learners and have a stronger sense of self-efficacy. I explored teachers' perspectives about English Learners and how they perceive EL students' sense of self-efficacy within the mainstream classroom. I also explored how English Learner students negotiate the dichotomy of creating and forming their own identity within a community that is facilitated by a teacher from a different cultural background.

Both teachers and students bring their current identities composed from beliefs, experiences, and expectations to the classroom community. Within the classroom community, students and teachers learn through doing, experiencing, becoming, and belonging (Wenger, 2001). This comprises the four main components of the CoP: practice, meaning, identity, and

community. Certain barriers can hinder students' ability to access the four components of the classroom as a community of practice. For English Learners, the barriers to the CoP are significant. EL students have linguistic barriers, experiential barriers, and cultural barriers that make it difficult for teachers to engage them in the learning process. Figure 1 displays the obstacles EL students and mainstream teachers faced when attempting to interact and access the classroom as a learning Community of Practice.

Figure 1

Original Conceptual Framework



Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

R₁ How do mainstream teachers perceive EL students in their classes?

R_{1.1} How do mainstream teachers describe EL student inclusion?

R_{1.2} What challenges do mainstream teachers describe when working with EL students?

R_{1.3} How do mainstream teachers interact with EL students given linguistic challenges?

R₂ What similarities exist among mainstream teachers' lived experiences teaching EL students?

Overview of Methodology

This study was a qualitative study of the phenomenon of EL students in mainstream courses without an EL co-teacher, and the influence of general education teachers' perspectives on EL student engagement in the classroom. I used a teacher survey titled, *English-as-Second Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classroom: A Survey of Teachers* (Reeves, 2006) as one data source about teachers' opinions and perspectives (Appendix A). I used a semi-structured interview protocol with 10 questions related to the research questions as my second source of data (Appendix B). I coded the data using pattern coding (Saldana, 2013) to identify patterns in the responses to the interview questions to find themes about educating English Learners. My final source of data analyzes student engagement through attendance. I looked at the results of the three data sources to identify overarching themes. I used the three sources to triangulate my data increasing the trustworthiness of the themes and patterns identified through analysis.

Study Positioning

I am the English Learner Coordinator for a large, public school system in the mid-Atlantic region. There are multiple facets to my job which could have impacted my study. One of

my responsibilities is to develop and facilitate professional learning for teachers, EL teachers, special educators, administrators, and system leaders. I present on a variety of topics centered around effective English Learner instruction, equity, culturally proficient instruction, and Mind Brain Education research. Mind Brain Education is using the combined research of neuroscience, psychology, and cognitive science to influence educational practice. I analyze data to identify trends in order to make programmatic decisions. I balance systemic initiatives, state and federal compliance mandated by law, current trends, and international events impacting immigration and research on educating English Learners in grades pre-kindergarten through grade twelve. I have a vested interest in EL student success in school. I observe staff, meet with administrators, and serve on multiple systemic, leadership committees and workgroups. If teachers participated in my professional learning this year or in previous years their attitude about EL students may be different than if they had not. My position is potentially evaluative which may have influenced responses on the survey or in the interviews. I consciously mitigated the influence my role plays in data collection and analysis.

Significance of the Study

The high school population of EL students is growing steadily in this large suburban school system. They come with a wide variety of previous schooling experiences, represent diverse cultures and languages, and have different motivations for being in the United States school system. The demographics of this particular community and school system was historically homogenous. The influx of immigrants into the community at large may impact the way teachers view English Learners in their classrooms. In order to help EL students learn English, but also access coursework required to graduate, the local school system is encouraging schools to use co-teaching methods with new English Learner students to meet the students'

content learning needs and language learning needs. Students are scheduled in content classes with native speaking students, a content or mainstream teacher, and an EL teacher. The EL teacher and the co-teacher work together to meet the unique needs of the students. There are a limited number of EL teachers and as a result there are many EL students in mainstream content courses who are not co-taught but only taught by the mainstream teacher. This shift requires teachers, who have not had coursework in teaching English Learners, acquired knowledge about second language acquisition pedagogy, nor developed proficiency in cross-cultural communication, teach large numbers of these types of learners. The combination of potentially negative perspectives and lack of professional learning on effective EL pedagogy compounds the difficulty in achieving success for the EL student and the mainstream teacher thus highlighting the importance of understanding interactions that occur in the classroom.

This study considered the mainstream classroom as a Community of Practice (CoP) and lensed the different elements of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory, critical to EL student success focusing on interaction. SLA theory does not combine all the elements represented in CoP (identity, learning as becoming, and community); learning as belonging were elements not frequently represented or addressed in SLA theory. Comparing the elements of CoP, practice, meaning, identity, and community with Krashen's (1982, 1985, 1988, 1991) Input and Affective Filter Hypotheses and Swain's (1985, 1995, 1997, 2000) Output Hypothesis of SLA theory allowed me to identify where SLA and CoP overlap and where they differ. It allowed me to look at SLA through the perspective of CoP. Studying the differences between the theories enabled me to identify potential missing elements in SLA learning theory. This study has the potential to influence the focus of future Second Language Acquisition studies by integrating Communities of Practice theory with Second Language Acquisition theory. In educators'

collective efforts to understand effective English Learner instruction it is important to research learning as belonging and learning as becoming. Pragmatically, this study has the potential to inform EL programming, course structures, teacher supports, and student supports. The study may contribute to pedagogical approaches used with secondary English Learners who are often marginalized and struggle to be successful in the classroom.

Instruction in school year 2020-2021 had many forms. The school year began in a completely virtual format due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many school system leaders spent the summer focusing on logistics. They focused on internet access, technological devices, schedules, technological resources for teachers, a learning management system, a digital enrollment system, example virtual lessons, and communicating the logistics to parents. Due to the urgent need of logistics, a minimal amount of time was spent on relationship building for teachers and students in a virtual environment. Some students returned to the building in the middle of the year for two in-person days of instruction and three days of virtual instruction. Students had the option to elect for four days of in-person instruction if classrooms were able to maintain social distancing and keep space between students to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The pandemic changed the nature of instruction and the mainstream classroom or learning Community of Practice. Mainstream teachers and EL students had to learn how to interact in all virtual classrooms and hybrid face-to-face and virtual classrooms.

Regardless of instructional model, deeply understanding the nature and mechanisms that influence relationships in the secondary classroom has the potential to positively impact how teachers, students, and staff perceive each other. Identifying obstacles to interaction and joint enterprise enables instructional leaders to intervene appropriately, supporting both teachers and

EL students. Understanding how to meet the needs of all students and teachers will result in greater student achievement and ultimately strengthen and elevate the community.

Operational Definitions

Several terms and definitions were used in development and execution of this research:

Attitude – The tendency to evaluate a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor; consists of three components: knowledge and beliefs about the entity, feelings associated with the entity, informs behavior (Pettit, 2011; Pit-ten Cate & Glock, 2019)

Analysis and Inquiry – Teachers tap into the natural problem-solving abilities and curiosity of students by providing opportunities to solve ill-defined problems and apply learning (Hafen et al., 2014)

Behavior Management – Effective classroom management with predictability, established comfortable and orderly classroom with proactive teacher (Hafen et al., 2014)

Classroom Organization – Three dimensions of teaching practice that are hypothesized to support students' abilities to regulate behavior and attention in the classroom: behavior management, productivity, and instructional learning formats (Hafen et al., 2014)

Community – A way of talking about the social configurations in which the enterprise is defined as worth pursuing and participation is recognizable and competent (Wenger, 2001)

Content Understanding – Teachers teach subject matter in depth, providing many examples with similarities and differences explicitly addressed; new material presented in small steps, relevant previous learning and prerequisite skills and knowledge is reviewed; new information tied to students' background knowledge (Hafen et al., 2014)

Emotional Support – Four dimensions of teaching practice that are hypothesized to support students' social and emotional skills as well as their engagement in academic pursuits:

positive climate, negative climate, teacher sensitivity, and regard for adolescent perspectives (Hafen et al., 2014)

Engagement – Students’ psychological investment in and effort directed toward learning, understanding, or mastering the knowledge, skills, or crafts that academic work is intended to promote (Newman, 1992)

Identity – A way of talking about how learning changes who an individual is and creates personal histories of becoming in the context of their communities (Wenger, 2001)

Instructional Dialogue – Dialogues that occur between teachers and students and among students; students learn more when they are engaged in deep and meaningful conversations about content; purposeful questioning and chaining of ideas into covert lines of thinking and inquiry (Hafen et al., 2014)

Instructional Learning Formats – Clear learning targets and specific feedback are given; variety of novelty in presentation modes and types of activities (Hafen et al., 2014)

Instructional Support – Four instructional dimensions of teaching practice that are hypothesized to enhance students’ cognition and learning: content understanding, analysis and inquiry, quality of feedback, and instructional dialogue (Hafen et al., 2014)

Interaction – Comprehensible input and output exchanged between people; negotiation of meaning (Gass et al., 1998; Krashen, 1982, 1985; Swain, 1985, 1995, 2000)

Mainstream Teacher – Those whose primary training has been in one or more traditional subject areas, such as mathematics, science, English or social studies; synonymous with content area teacher (Pettit, 2011)

Meaning – A way of talking about individuals’ (changing) ability, individually and collectively, to experience life and the world (Wenger, 2001)

Mind Brain and Education – Insights from cognitive neuroscience which increases understanding of brain development improving learning and teaching practices (van Atteveldt, Tijsma, Janssen, and Kippur, 2019)

Negative Climate – Unpredictable, inconsistent environment without emotional support (Hafen et al., 2014)

Positive School Climate – A strong student-teacher relationship, increased school motivation, challenging yet supportive environment to which they [students] feel a positive connection (Hafen et al., 2014)

Practice – A way of talking about the shared historical and social resources, frameworks, and perspectives that can sustain mutual engagement in action (Wenger, 2001)

Productivity – Students are consistently exposed to learning opportunities and downtime is kept to a minimum; lesson run smoothly with explicitly taught routines and procedures (Hafen et al., 2014)

Quality of Feedback – Bridging the gap between a students' current level and the target goal; pushes student to think or process information in greater depth (Hafen et al., 2014)

Regard for Adolescent Perspective – Supporting students' need for autonomy and decision making, providing students with meaningful choices, guiding positive development, student is recognized as an individual (Hafen et al., 2014)

Social Identity – An individual's belief that they are a member of a particular social group, and that belief is derived from comparisons between members of the selected group and other groups (Mangum & Block, 2017)

Teacher Sensitivity – [Teachers who] are attuned and responsive to the social, emotional, and academic needs of students in their classrooms, while maintaining a focus on the classroom as a whole (Hafen et al., 2014)

Limitations

There were different limitations to this study. The first limitation was sample size. The number of mainstream teachers in the study who were scheduled to teach EL students in their mainstream classrooms without an EL co-teacher was limited. Another limitation was the shift to different instructional models throughout the school year. At the beginning of the study, teachers and students were fully virtual. All instruction was occurring online through digital conferencing software and a learning management system. A new model of instruction began halfway through the year. Teachers started seeing half their class in a face-to-face setting while teaching the other half online at home. This was called concurrent instruction and allowed students to socially distance in an attempt to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The changing instructional models may have influenced teacher perspectives on working with English Learner students in their courses.

The third limitation was my position in the local school system. I was asking teachers who work with students in a program I supervise, to be participants in my study. This could have influenced how teachers responded on the survey and in their interviews. To mitigate this issue, I kept teacher identities confidential and used pseudonyms when referring to them. Teachers always had the right to opt out of the study with no impact on their professional position. The work location and school system were given pseudonyms to further protect identity.

Summary

Public school systems are experiencing an influx of immigrant students. Particularly challenging are students who arrive at the high school level with no English language skills, limited proficiency in their native language, and vastly different life experiences than their teachers or their mainstream peers. Teachers have minimal training in teaching English Learner students, and struggle with cultural and linguistic barriers to meet their needs. One mid-Atlantic local school system was grappling with how to best meet the complex needs of their English Learner secondary students. To give EL students the courses required towards graduation and support their language learning, local school system leaders instituted co-teaching between content teachers and EL teachers. Due to staffing restrictions and time constraints, there were occasions when EL students were in content courses without EL teachers. This created a need to study the influence on EL student access to the Community of Practice for many EL students taught by mainstream teachers with little training or professional learning in how to effectively teach EL students.

This study was founded in Social Learning Theory and views the classroom as a Community of Practice (CoP). The study focused on the concepts of identity and community as essential components helping English Learners feel they belong in the academic environment, increasing their opportunities for interaction, which increased the likelihood of them being successful. I looked at teachers' attitudes and beliefs about mainstreaming EL students using survey data, interview data, and interaction counts through observation. I compared the number and types of interactions to the results of the survey. I looked for themes to arise from the interview sessions. The triangulation of data allowed me to see if teacher perception impacted

interaction type, which impacted EL student interaction. Table one displays a summary of Chapter one, an overview of the research, and how it contributes to the field of study.

Table 1

Research Overview and Chapter 1 Summary

| Section | Summary |
|--|--|
| Purpose of the Study | <p>To understand perspectives of mainstream teachers on the inclusion of high school English Learner students in their classrooms</p> <p>To understand engagement level of EL students in the mainstream Community of Practice</p> <p>To identify supports increasing the capacity of mainstream teachers working with EL students</p> |
| Justification | <p>Approximately 4.9 million students in the United States are English Learners. Federal and state policy grant access to education for English Learners but do not give guidance on <i>how</i> to effectively educate them. Secondary English Learners historically underperform and are the most likely student group to drop out.</p> |
| Methodology | <p>This qualitative study included mainstream teacher surveys, interview data, and EL student engagement data based on attendance.</p> |
| Scope | <p>Analysis of data from the lived experiences of 14 high school content teachers</p> |
| Theoretical Framework | <p>Second language acquisition relies heavily on interaction through input, output, feedback, and reduction of the affective filter. This study integrated Second Language Acquisition Theory with the four elements of Communities of Practice—practice, meaning, identity, and community.</p> |
| Limitations | <p>Limitations include sample size, 14 teachers participated; the shift in instructional models throughout school year 2020–2021 from fully virtual to hybrid concurrent and face to face; my evaluative position over staff where research was conducted.</p> |
| Contribution to the Field of Education | <p>This study contributed to prior research by adding an in-depth analysis of mainstream teachers’ lived experiences working with high school English Learner students. I</p> |

| Section | Summary |
|--------------------------|---|
| Contribution to Practice | <p>integrated Second Language Acquisition Theory into a Communities of Practice theoretical framework when analyzing the data.</p> <p>Through this study I identified a learning cycle mainstream teachers experienced named the EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers (ELCMT). EL student access to the learning Community of Practice may be improved through targeted intervention and support during different elements of the EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers.</p> |

Organization of Dissertation

Chapter 1 presented background information about the increasing numbers of immigrants in communities and the impact of immigration on schools. I discussed challenges faced by teachers and challenges faced by EL students in the school setting. Lackluster EL student achievement at the secondary level is the defining problem. The theoretical underpinnings of the study are the integration of Wenger’s (2001) Community of Practice Social Learning Theory with specific components of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theory about interaction. I highlighted the importance of identity and belonging for EL students participating in the Community of Practice. The conceptual framework demonstrates the connections of the constructs of the study. Definitions are included to explain my understanding and approach with important constructs within this study.

Chapter 2 is the literature review. I review Wenger’s (2001) Social Learning Theory, Communities of Practice; Second Language Acquisition Theory related to interactions and current research on teaching English Learners in school; and Wenger’s (2001) Community of

Practice (CoP) Theory and connect it to Identity Theory. I also demonstrate the integration of CoP with my SLA theories in another conceptual framework.

Chapter 3 presents the research questions, research design, setting, and my positionality. I explain how I chose my participants, the data collection tools, and how I ensured trustworthiness. Chapter 4 displays the data from the three collection tools; a survey of mainstream teachers, one-on-one teacher interviews, and student engagement data defined by virtual classroom logins and learning management system logins. Chapter 5 constitutes a description of the findings, the discussion, implications for practice and policy, and the conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this literature review is to explore the role of interaction in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theory and compare it to the Community of Practice Social Learning Theory as the framework for the study. I begin with Second Language Acquisition Theory, specifically input hypothesis, affective filter hypothesis, output hypothesis, and interaction. I then explore other research on English Learner students in the mainstream classroom. The next section of literature reviewed is about Communities of Practice, specifically practice as meaning, practice as community, learning, and identity. I end with looking at EL students in the Community of Practice. I explore research on English Learners in the mainstream classroom and teacher perspectives, and look at identity theory and how English Learners fit or do not fit into the classroom understood as a community of practice.

Interaction is composed of input and output perceived through or influenced by the affective filter. Krashen's (1982) input hypothesis of SLA is accepted as a standard for SLA Theory.

I explain Krashen's (1982) input hypothesis and affective filter hypothesis to clarify the importance of input and external variables that impact the second language learning environment, and Swain's (1985) output hypothesis as an essential component of interaction embedded within second language learning. Supporting opportunities for input and output with respect for the influence of affective filter demonstrates the importance of the learning environment in language acquisition. SLA theories influence pedagogical decisions made by EL teachers when planning and implementing EL student instruction, yet mainstream teachers are often unaware of EL pedagogy while planning for their lessons. I explain the importance of

interaction and how the facilitation of successful interaction impacts belongingness in the classroom.

Belongingness through consistent interaction helps meet the needs of English Learners as academic students. Feeling like you belong in the academic environment directly impacts individuals' success in that environment (Oyserman et al., 2006). I investigate teachers' perceptions of EL students and the influence on EL students' interactions in mainstream classrooms and then explore Wenger's (1998) Community of Practice (CoP) Learning theory, specifically the view of practice as meaning, community, and identity to look at the elements of interaction and second language acquisition through a different perspective. I look for similarities and differences between interaction in SLA theory and the elements of practice within the theory of CoP.

Understanding the intersection of the theories frames the research questions investigating mainstream teacher perceptions of EL students impacting the quality and quantity of interaction in the classroom. Exploring ways teacher perception of EL students and EL student interactions in the classroom are related may identify barriers for English Learners to the different elements of the CoP. The barriers affect EL students' ability to learn content and English. Understanding obstacles to learning and figuring out how to mitigate them helps clarify how English Learners might fit into the Community of Practice and be more successful in a mainstream classroom taking educators one step closer to effectively supporting secondary EL students on their educational journey.

Parameters of Search

For this literature review, I explored foundational theory in Second Language Acquisition from Krashen (1982, 1985, 1988, 1991), specifically Krashen's input hypothesis and affective filter hypothesis. Additionally, I:

- compared Swain's (1985, 1995, 1997, 2000) output hypothesis to Krashen (1982, 1985, 1988, 1991)
- searched for previous research on interaction between English Learners and teachers and/or peers in mainstream classrooms, looking at work done by Verplaetse (2000)
- examined peer reviewed research on teachers' attitudes and perspectives about English Learner students in the mainstream classroom
- studied Wenger's (2001) Community of Practice Theory to understand the connections between input, output, affective filter, and EL student engagement in the classroom as a community of practice
- searched the terms *interaction in second language acquisition, English Learners and inclusive education, mainstream teacher preparation program and English Language Learners, mindset of belonging and English Learners, Communities of practice and English Learners, English Language Learners in mainstream classrooms, teacher identity, teacher attitudes, teacher perspectives, English Learners in content classrooms, Input Hypothesis, Affective Filter, Output Hypothesis, interaction, communities of practice and English Learners.*

Input Hypothesis – Krashen (1982, 1985, 1988, 1991)

The input hypothesis of Second Language Acquisition Theory explains the way an individual acquires a second language. Krashen (1982) distinguished between language

acquisition and language learning. Learning is defined as the study of linguistic structures, error correction, and focus on product. Second language acquisition as learning is focused on the knowledge of the language rules. Krashen (1982) targeted the slow, irregular development of language acquisition as a subconscious process. The learners deliberate on communication not on language learning per se. Acquisition, “occurs only when comprehension of real messages occurs, and when the acquirer is not on the defensive” (p. 12). The focus of second language learning is on the learner understanding the meaning of the message within context. Fluency develops by focusing on meaning and the linguistic structures will follow. The second component of the hypothesis is that the input the language learner receives must have structures, “a bit beyond our current level of competence” (p. 23). Krashen (1982) notated the learner as I and the input that is slightly beyond learner competence as $+ 1$. Krashen displayed the input hypothesis as $i + 1$. The third part of his hypothesis stated that when successful communication occurs, meaning the input is comprehended by the learner learning a new language, then $i + 1$ is achieved.

Krashen (1982) discussed the forms of input or $+ 1$ that occur with language learners in the classroom. Simplified teacher speech or comprehensible input is input that is understood by language learners based on their second language comprehension levels. The teachers use simplified linguistic structures, understanding of their students’ background knowledge of the world, visual supports, and realia (objects and materials from everyday life) to increase the comprehensibility of their input. Krashen (1982) cautioned the use of native language (L1) rules as comprehensible input for the second language (L2) learner. Krashen stated that if an L1 rule is used as input or $+ 1$, it causes the L2 learner to constantly monitor errors that occur when L1 rules are applied to L2 communication. Another disadvantage would be the lack of progression

in learning L2 rules. The learner may have an immediate production enhancement but no real gain in L2 production over time.

It is important to note Krashen's (1982) implication for the input hypothesis on classroom L2 instruction. Krashen stated, "the input hypothesis predicts that the classroom may be an excellent place for second language acquisition, at least up to the "intermediate" level. For beginners, the classroom can be much better than the outside world, since the outside usually provides beginners with very little comprehensible input" (p. 29). The classroom is an important place for English Learners to receive input that they can understand and in multiple forms for their second language acquisition development (Echevarria et al., 2000; Lucas et al., 2008).

Affective Filter Hypothesis Steven Krashen (1982, 1985, 1988, 1991)

Dulay and Burt (1977) coined the term affective filter in their research about learner attitudes that impact language acquisition. Krashen (1982) applied their filter to a hypothesis on second language learning. Krashen listed three categories that impact second language learner success: motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. Krashen stated that if an L2 learner is motivated to learn, has a positive self-image in the classroom, and has low personal and classroom anxiety, they will acquire the second language. The three variables are tied to how the student receives the input given by the teacher. A motivated, self-confident learner is more open to the input provided in the second language. If they have low anxiety in the second language environment then, "they will be more open to the input, and it will strike deeper" (p. 30). Krashen clarified that these variables are tied to the organic, irregular, slow patterns of acquisition, not to the knowledge of language or as previously stated, language learning.

Krashen (1982) used the affective filter to explain why some second language learners do not learn despite the amount of comprehensible input they are receiving. Krashen stated that

learners with optimal attitudes have low affective filters. Krashen explained the importance of a classroom environment conducive to low affective filters and low anxiety (p. 31). Teachers working with English Learner students must not only provide a variety of input in multiple modalities but must also ensure a safe environment. Producing in a language other than your native language can raise anxiety and produce stress. Reducing student anxiety and lowering their affective filter will encourage students to participate which may help them be more successful.

Swain's (1985, 1995, 1997, 2000) Output Hypothesis

Swain (1985) made claims about the importance of output to second language acquisition after studying syntactic and grammatical errors observed in French immersion students after years of what Swain (1985) called French, “acquisition-rich input” (p. 99). Swain (1995) explained the importance of output for language learners. Language learners are required to do more thinking and synthesizing when attempting to produce in the language they are currently learning. Swain (1995) stated, “output pushes learners to process language more deeply-with more mental effort-than does input” (p. 99). Swain explained that comprehensible input as defined by Krashen (1985) is an important part of the acquisition process but does not provide opportunities for language learners to become aware of linguistic structures in the L2 that they do not have. Requiring language learners to produce allows them the chance to identify what Swain (1997) called “holes in their linguistic knowledge” (p. 100). Identifying the holes and then using resources, whether it be a grammar book, dictionary, native speaker, or their teacher, allows students to fill in the linguistic gaps. Swain (2000) expanded the output hypothesis with collaborative dialogue and explained that “collaborative dialogue mediates joint problem solving and knowledge building” (p. 102). Enhancing the output hypothesis allowed Swain to

incorporate different elements of Krashen's (1985) comprehensible input into the output hypothesis. Swain (2000) stated, "dialogue serves second language learning by mediating its own construction and the construction of knowledge about itself. Internalization of process and knowledge is facilitated by their initial appearance in external speech" (p. 112). Individuals cannot have dialogue without input and output. The input of constituents when conversing allows for the joint construction of problem solving and understanding. Dialogue in a classroom setting must be planned for and facilitated by the teacher. The teacher must allow for the time and space for input and output to occur.

Interaction in Second Language Acquisition

Interaction is a long-held theory in second language acquisition and is seen as an essential component of language learning, "with interaction viewed as the context and process through which language can be learned" (Pica, 1996, p. 2). Researchers have identified different areas of interaction that impact language acquisition; comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982), output (Swain, 1985), interaction through negotiation (Hatch, 1978), quantities of interaction versus quality (Long, 1983), the social components of interaction and interaction modification (Pica, 1987), and corrective feedback (Ellis, 2006). Pica (1987) described the social component of interaction. Pica explained that the non-native speaker and the native speaker have linguistically unequal relationships, yet they must see themselves as equal within the interaction. "Those classrooms that encourage spoken interaction among participants, so that both teachers and students feel confident to initiate discussion for unclear points, will help to make input comprehensible" (Pica et al., 1987, p. 754). Verplaetse (2000) stated, "interaction provides a learner the repeated practice needed to develop communicative competency" (p. 20). Verpalaetse discussed the role of interaction in creating membership in the community, "interaction

determines the level of co-membership a student is to experience within the group” (p. 20).

When EL students are not given opportunities to interact, their ability to connect socially and learn academic skills is limited.

Hamre and Pianta (2007) studied teacher student interaction, not specific to second language acquisition, and created a tool to help identify the types of interactions between teachers and students. They identified three main areas of interaction that occur: emotional, organizational, and instructional. Each of the domains has specific sub domains to better identify the type of interaction that occurs. Among the sub domains are concept development, feedback, and language and instructional discourse. Hamre and Pianta’s work integrates with the work done by second language acquisition theorists on interaction supporting English Language development.

English Learners in the Mainstream Classroom

The demographics of the population of students in the United States public education system has shifted dramatically in recent years. There is an increasing number of English Learners enrolling in the public education system. Local School Systems (LSS) are making scheduling adjustments to meet the needs of their growing EL population. Much like special education, many secondary EL students are being placed in mainstream classes with linguistic supports in place to help the students learn language and content at the same time. EL teachers and mainstream teachers are responsible for EL student instruction (Pettit, 2011; Valdes et al., 2014). Despite EL student placement into mainstream classes, mainstream teachers are unprepared and untrained on how to meet the unique needs of this diverse population. “Teachers in mainstream classroom are largely untrained to work with ELLs; only 12.5% of U.S. teachers have received 8 or more hours of recent training to teach students of limited English proficiency”

(Reeves, 2006). The EL student experience in school depends on the teachers and the teachers' perceptions and beliefs (Pettit, 2011).

Teacher Perspectives About English Learner Students

Teacher perspectives about different types of learners are informed by their personal and professional experiences that shape their attitudes (Byfield, 2019; Pettit, 2011; Pit-ten Cate & Glock, 2019). “Not only do teachers’ beliefs affect the expectations they hold of students, but their actions in the classroom also reflect their beliefs” (Pettit, 2011, p. 124). Large numbers of English Learner students across the country in urban and rural settings are mainstreamed into general education classes (Martin, 2018; Reeves, 2006). Mainstream teachers are unprepared to work with EL students due to minimal teacher training, stereotypes about students labeled EL, and the teachers’ perspective on the unique instructional needs of English learners (Byfield, 2019; Delpit, 1995; Reeves, 2006). Pettit (2011) described two challenges mainstream teachers have expressed in teaching EL students: “communication with students and their families and having enough time to teach all of the required subject matter in addition to developing the students’ English” (p. 131).

Pre-service and in-service teachers have minimal training on how to effectively work with English Learners. The lack of preparedness impacts their attitudes and perspectives about EL students. Research shows that many teachers do not feel they are prepared to teach culturally and linguistically diverse children (Lucas et al., 2008; Pettit, 2011; Villegas et al., 2018; Walker et al., 2004; Wessels et al., 2017). The lack of preparation makes teachers insecure about working with English Learners which can deteriorate into a negative attitude. Teachers are subject to stereotypes and biases, often live within the communities in which they work, and can reflect the negative community sentiment about immigrant students (Khong & Saito, 2014; Pettit, 2011,

2013). Teachers struggle with the amount of work it takes to teach EL students; EL students require a lot of instructional supports to understand the curriculum. The supports require time and effort on behalf of the teacher (Harrison & Lakin, 2018; Khong & Saito, 2014; Villegas et al., 2018). These challenges impact teachers' perspectives at a time more EL students are moving into their classrooms.

Effective English Learner Instruction

Effective EL student instruction requires a unique perspective and specific skills developed through Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) coursework at the collegiate level or professional learning focused on EL pedagogy (Marsh, 2018). English as a Second Language (ESL) courses and Sheltered English immersion are the two most common types of EL instructional program models. In the ESL model EL teachers are primarily responsible for the language learning needs of the students whether in self-contained classrooms or co-teachers in mainstream classes. Sheltered English immersion courses, “allow for some tailoring toward students’ linguistic, cultural, and academic needs” (Marsh, 2018, p. 11). Sheltered English immersion can be taught through a resource called Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) (Echevarria et al., 2004). SIOP consists of thirty features organized into eight different components including lesson planning, setting content and language objectives, and specific strategies such as allowing for purposeful interactions and feedback, to assessments and practice.

Effective EL pedagogical strategies support EL student engagement, scaffold their use of English in academic settings, support their understanding through comprehensible input, and teach them how to implement specific strategies to support their own learning (Olson et al., 2016). EL instruction also focuses on academic vocabulary support through visuals, concept

mapping, modeling, gestures, and cognates when applicable (Marsh, 2018). Teachers who work with EL students must be aware of and support social interactions through conversations with native speaking peers. Successfully supporting the EL student in the classroom requires teachers to value diversity and be respectful of the EL students' prior experiences and backgrounds (Freeman et al., 2003; Gonzalez & Moll, 2002).

An important element of teaching second language learners is the social aspect of learning. Vygotsky's (1978) learning theory contains an element that applies to effective EL pedagogy, social interaction. "Social interaction is the basis of learning and development. Learning is a process of apprenticeship and internalization in which skills and knowledge are transformed from the social into the cognitive plane" (Walqui, 2006). Structured interaction with peers is consistently cited as an effective strategy to improve student learning (Goldenberg, 2013). The environment and opportunities to participate in interaction is an important pedagogical approach in addition to strategies implemented by the teacher in the classroom.

Mindset of Belonging

Feeling like one belongs, social connectedness, is a basic human need; "the belongingness hypothesis is that human beings have a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships" (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Belongingness has a significant impact in the school setting. Social connectedness or the lack thereof impacts relationships between the teacher and students in the classroom setting. Social exclusion reduces peoples' capacity for intelligent thought (Baumeister et al., 2002). It also reduces students' motivation and results in poor performance (Deci et al., 1991). Belongingness impacts academic success through lowering anxiety levels and increases commitment to coursework (Osterman, 2000). When a student feels like their teacher cares about

them, they put forth more academic effort (Goodenow & Grady, 1993; Wentzel, 1997, 1998).

Belongingness significantly impacts student engagement with the academic environment which impacts achievement (Osterman, 2000).

EL Student Belongingness

EL students often have a difficult time feeling like they belong in the mainstream academic environment; “in academic and professional settings, members of socially stigmatized groups are more uncertain of the quality of their social bonds and thus more sensitive to issues of social belonging” (Walton & Cohen, 2007). Students who feel stigmatized or experience identity threat spend energy paying attention to potential threats from their environment which negatively impacts their sense of belonging (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2012). Low student achievement among ethnically diverse, low-income students is linked to low teacher expectations and biases (Valenzuela, 1999). The stress of discrimination and bias in school reduces student achievement. In a study done by Roche and Kuperminc (2012), “27% of the total effect of discrimination stress on grades was mediated by school belonging” (p. 71), meaning if a student felt like they belonged in the academic environment they would be more likely to achieve academically.

Belongingness also influences students’ identity; “identities are influenced by the social roles individuals perform, by the purposeful use of language (or voice), and by their participation in the daily practices of their various communities” (DaSilva Iddings & Katz, 2007, p. 303). Identities impact classroom behavior and attitudes about school. Students who are committed to their identity have better academic performance (Zhou & Zhou, 2018). Work done by Freeman et al. (2003) revealed four keys to academic success for secondary level EL students. They explain that schools must, “create confident students who value school and value themselves as learners” (p. 116). If educators want EL students to be successful in the academic environment, they must

support their purposeful use of language and participation in the academic community and acknowledge and support their identities and make them feel like they belong.

Community of Practice

Wenger's (2001) Community of Practice (CoP) is a social theory of learning that incorporates social participation in the community as the main process of learning and knowing.

Wenger (2001) explained the components of CoP as:

- meaning or learning as experience,
- practice or learning as doing,
- community or learning as belonging,
- identity or learning as becoming.

Wenger (2001) discussed learning as participation and stated, "it takes place through our engagement in actions and interactions, but it embeds this engagement in culture and history" (p. 13). There are two foci to Wenger's learning theory—practice and identity. All the components of CoP stem from these two areas. I will look specifically at the following elements of CoP: practice as meaning, practice as community, and practice as identity.

Practice

Practice, the act of doing, incorporates explicit or what is said, and tacit, what is intuited, within a social and historical context (Wenger, p. 47). It is important to consider how diverse students, who have different concepts of social and historical contexts, attempt to become a part of the classroom community of practice. They do not have the same social and historical contexts within which to ground their practice. How is meaning, practice, community, and identity impacted when there are substantial cultural, linguistic, and historical differences between the

leader of the CoP or the teacher in the case of the classroom, and the students who are active members of the CoP?

Practice as Meaning. Wenger (2001) defined meaning as, “a way of talking about our (changing) ability – individually and collectively – to experience our life and the world as meaningful” (p. 5). People create meaning through *negotiation of meaning*, or the combination of participation and reification. Participation is defined as membership within a social community and active involvement in social endeavors (p. 82). Reification is defined as objectifying one’s experiences into tangible, concrete understandings. Wenger described the method of meaning making by combining these definitions of practice and reification. Humans living in relation to the world are constantly negotiating meaning through dynamic interactions resulting in tangible understandings. Negotiation of meaning is an individual’s engagement with the world through thought, speech, problem solving, and action.

Practice as Community. Wenger (2001) defined community as “a way of talking about the social configurations in which our enterprises are defined as worth pursuing and our participation is recognizable as competence” (p. 5). Practice weaves through and is a “source of coherence” within the three elements of community, mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire (p. 73).

Members of the community are engaged in what Wenger (2001) called mutual engagement. This is the first dimension of the association between practice and community. Practice exists within the mutual engagement of the community members in their unit of the community. Mutual engagement requires interactions between people (p. 74). Different community members bring different sets of knowledge and expertise to the community.

Mutual engagement involves not only our competence, but also the competence of others. It draws on what we do and what we know, as well as our ability to connect meaningfully

to what we don't do and what we don't know – that is, to the contributions and knowledge of others. (p. 76)

A community of practice should not be misunderstood as a happy place full of peace and contentment. Rather, it should be a place where the realities of life, positive, negative, and in between, all exist.

Joint enterprise is a complex conglomeration of personal responses to individual and group situations, interconnected responses to mutual endeavors, all in coordination of individual aspirations and group goals (Wenger, 2001, p. 79). The enterprise is ultimately owned by the members of the community of practice. Regardless of the resources and constraints, they own their responses to the conditions and therefore the enterprise itself (p. 79). When members of a community of practice pursue the same enterprise, they create a shared repertoire or what Wenger (2001) called, “resources for negotiating meaning” (p. 82). Wenger explained that, over the course of its existence, a repertoire is created that includes “routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions, or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence” (p. 83). The joint resources were created through a shared history of mutual engagement. The repertoire is a dynamic, evolving form of the community that, when combined with joint enterprise and mutual engagement, create the definition of practice as community.

Learning in the Community of Practice. Wenger (2001) discussed the role of learning within the community of practice. “It is a matter of sustaining enough mutual engagement in pursuing an enterprise together to share some significant learning” (p. 86). Wenger noted that “communities of practice can be thought of as shared histories of learning” (p. 86). Learning takes the elements of practice as community, mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire and makes what a linguist would call, gerunds out of them; Wenger made them

developmental processes by stating that learning is, *evolving* forms of mutual engagement, *understanding*, and *tuning* enterprise, and *developing* a repertoire, styles, and discourse (p. 95). Wenger addressed newcomers being introduced into the community of practice, their impact on the community, and that the addition of new experiences may be reinvigorating to the community. It may also create a disturbance and cause renegotiation to occur when and where it would not have occurred otherwise. This is something to consider when looking at the classroom as a CoP and EL students as newcomer members with linguistic obstacles.

Identity

Identity is a compilation of practice, community, and meaning. It is the social, cultural, and historical lived experiences (Wenger, 2001, p. 145). Creating a CoP requires the negotiation and understanding of identity within and in relation to the community unit. Wenger explained the multiple levels of identity; identity is formed through internal negotiation in which individuals examine themselves in relation to their temporal experiences. Individuals' identities are impacted by what happened in the past and what will happen in the future. Wenger (2001) defined identity as "a layering of events of participation and reification by which our experience and its social interpretation inform each other" (p. 151). The components of community are dimensions of identity. Mutual engagement requires the individual to understand the rules of engagement when interacting with others. Individuals become competent in the ways of the community. The second element of community is joint enterprise. Individuals lend their perspective towards the joint enterprise. Their perspective comes from their identity. The third element is repertoire through sustained engagement. Individual identities have different personal ties to the elements and experiences creating the repertoire.

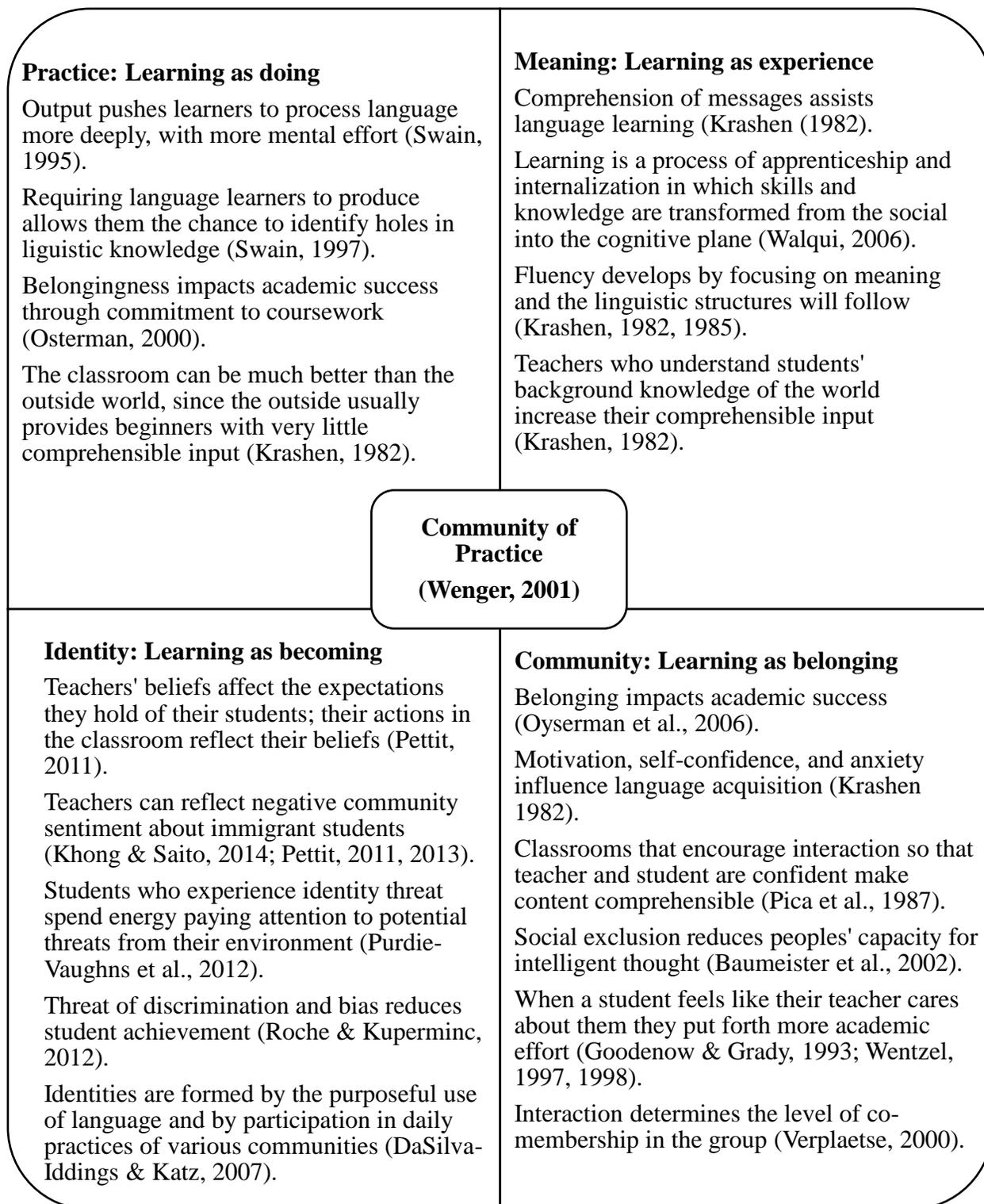
What happens when a new member of the CoP is introduced? There is a lack of competence in the elements of the CoP. The individual is lacking identity through mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire. New EL students that come into the classroom at different points of the year must reinvent their identities in relation to a new, unfamiliar CoP. They must do so without a similar history, culture, or language. How can their engagement in the community be facilitated?

EL Students in the Community of Practice

There were many elements of second language acquisition theory that overlapped, supported, and integrated with Wenger's (2001) Community of Practice Social Learning Theory. Figure 2 explains the integration of the theories presented in this literature review organized within the four components of a Community of Practice. Figure 2 depicts the explicit connections between theories.

Figure 2

Integration of Second Language Acquisition Theory with Community of Practice Theory



The theories for second language acquisition addressed input and output as important elements of interaction. I discussed belongingness and identity as additional instrumental elements in facilitating English Learners' access to instruction and learning by reducing anxiety, and addressing other elements presented in Krashen's (1985) affective filter hypothesis. Table 2 displays the constructs researched in the literature which laid the foundation for the study.

Table 2

Major Literature Constructs that Influenced the Study

| Author | Date | Association with Research | Research Contributions |
|--------------------|------|--|--|
| Baumeister et al. | 2002 | Belongingness | Social exclusion reduces capacity for intelligent thought. |
| Baumeister & Leary | 1995 | Belongingness | Social connectedness is a basic human need. |
| Khong & Saito | 2014 | Teacher perspective | Teachers can reflect the negative community sentiment about immigrant students |
| Krashen | 1982 | Input Hypothesis (SLA) | Comprehensible input, a component of interaction, is critical to second language acquisition (SLA). |
| Krashen | 1982 | Affective Filter Hypothesis (SLA) | Motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence influences interaction which impacts second language acquisition. |
| Oyserman et al. | 2006 | Belongingness | Feelings of belongingness in the academic environment directly impact student achievement. |
| Pettit | 2011 | Teacher perspectives of diverse learners | Mainstream teacher challenges when teaching EL students |
| Pica | 1996 | Interaction | Social component of interaction; linguistically unequal relationships between native and nonnative speaking participants |

| Author | Date | Association with Research | Research Contributions |
|----------------------|------|---|--|
| Pit-ten Cate & Glock | 2019 | Teacher perspective of diverse learners | Teachers' experiences informed and shaped their attitudes about diverse learners |
| Reeves | 2006 | Teacher training | Lack of teacher training on how to effectively work with EL students |
| Swain | 1985 | Output Hypothesis (SLA) | Production, a component of interaction, is critical to second language acquisition (SLA). |
| Verplaetse | 2000 | Mainstreamed English Learners | Interaction of English Learner students in mainstream classrooms creates membership in the group |
| Walker et al. | 2044 | Teacher Preparation | Teachers do not feel prepared to work with diverse learners |
| Walqui | 2006 | Interaction | Social interaction is the basis of learning and development |
| Wenger | 1998 | Community of Practice (CoP) | The classroom is a Community of Practice characterized by the 4 elements: practice, meaning, community, and identity |

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Public-school systems in the United States struggle with sustainable, student achievement for secondary, English Learner (EL) students (Byfield, 2019; Delpit, 1995; Martin, 2018; Reeves, 2006; Walker et al., 2004). There are external, circumstantial variables and classroom instructional variables that impact successfully educating the EL student population. This study focused on the classroom instructional variables of teacher perception and interaction with EL students. EL students face many challenges in the classroom. Mainstream teachers struggle to successfully teach EL students (Lucas et al., 2008; Villegas et al., 2018; Walker et al., 2004; Wessels et al., 2017). They did not know second language acquisition theory and had minimal knowledge of effective instructional strategies. Teachers had few opportunities for professional learning and struggled to effectively communicate with students. More and more EL students were placed in mainstream classes due to inclusive education and the desire to provide EL students access to rigorous coursework (Harrison & Lakin, 2018; Khong & Saito, 2014; Villegas et al., 2018). Interaction is a foundational element in second language acquisition (Gass & Varonis, 1994; Krashen, 1982; Pica, 1987; Swain, 1985; Verplaetse, 2000). EL students must interact with their teachers and native speaking peers to learn content and language at the same time (Echevarria & Vogt, 2000).

This study was designed to explore the phenomenon of teacher student interaction in the mainstream classroom. It explored the quality and quantity of interactions helping school system leaders understand the efficacy of the decision to mainstream EL students and helped identify future needs for support and professional learning when teaching EL students. The results gave

insight into EL inclusive education and how to continue to move EL students forward in simultaneous content and English language acquisition.

Research Design

This study was a qualitative exploration of the phenomenon of mainstream teachers' perspectives about working with EL high school students in their courses. In this study, mainstream teachers are also referenced as general education teachers. According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2013), phenomenology studies the structures of experience through a first-person perspective. When describing phenomenological research, Groenewald (2004) described the researcher as "concerned with the lived experiences of the people" (p. 44). Phenomenology systematically studies and describes how people experience a phenomenon attempting to understand it deeply thereby making meaning of the experiences (Patton, 2002 & Moustakas, 1994). I studied mainstream teachers' experiences teaching EL students through their perspectives using a survey, a semi-structured interview protocol, and student engagement through class attendance. I examined their experiences from different perspectives, described them with accuracy, and made meaning through reflection and understanding of the experiences aligning with the principles and processes of phenomenology defined by Moustakas (1994).

I gathered perceptual data using a vetted survey with Likert scale items. The survey gathered information on teachers' opinions about classroom practices, the impact of inclusion, and teacher support. The semi-structured interview protocol gathered qualitative data about teachers' experiences with EL students and their perspectives on efficacy of their instruction. The semi-structured interview asked questions about the same concepts presented in the survey but in an open-ended, authentic manner. The interviews gave teachers an opportunity to discuss their perspectives and experiences. I captured student interaction using a systemic dashboard that

collected data on student engagement in Schoology, a learning management system, and attendance. These engagement and attendance data helped me define EL student engagement in the virtual classroom. These data were previously collected by the school system to determine student engagement during virtual learning and were a secondary data source. Triangulating the survey data, the interview protocol data, and student engagement data gave me enough data to code through multiple cycles to highlight themes and patterns of lived experiences of mainstream teachers teaching EL students.

The three data sources answered the research questions with triangulated data which I used to identify themes about teacher perception of EL students and EL students' ability to interact in the learning Community of Practice. The following were my research questions:

R₁ How do mainstream teachers perceive EL students in their classes?

R_{1.1} How do mainstream teachers describe EL student inclusion?

R_{1.2} What challenges do teachers describe when working with EL students?

R_{1.3} How do mainstream teachers interact with EL students given linguistic challenges?

R₂ What similarities exist among mainstream teachers' lived experiences teaching EL students?

Setting

The research took place in a large, suburban, mid-Atlantic, public school system encompassing rural, suburban, and urban areas. The school system, named Community County for the sake of this study, educated approximately 40,000 students. There were approximately 13,000 high school students with more than 700 high school EL students. According to the school system website the demographics of Community County were as follows: 57% White, 18% Hispanic, 13% Black/African American, 6% Asian, 6% two or more races, 0.3% American

Indian/Alaskan Native, and 0.2% Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian. The percentage of students needing special education services was 11%, EL services 13%, and free or reduced meals 27%.

There was a rapid influx of EL students into Community County in the last decade. In 2010 there were approximately 400 EL students in the entire school system with 45 EL students housed in one high school EL program. In school year 2020 – 2021 there were 3,671 EL students in the school system, an 800% increase. The EL students represented over 63 different languages with most EL students speaking Spanish. In the school year 2020 – 2021 Community County had four high school EL programs. EL students took an English language placement test when they enrolled in Community County to determine how much English they knew. This assisted with course placement at the high school level. Community County scheduled students for language courses and content courses based on their knowledge of their current proficiency in English, previous educational history, and courses needed for graduation.

Positionality

At the time of the study, I was employed by the large, suburban, mid-Atlantic school system as the EL Coordinator.

- I served English Learner students as a teacher, a teacher specialist, an achievement specialist and at the time of the study, coordinator of the EL program for Community County.
- I had evaluative capacity over EL teachers and other teachers per principal request.
- I was a systemic leader who worked at central office and had relationships with many principals, assistant principals, and other systemic leaders throughout the county.
- I sat on the leadership team of two large high schools and one elementary school who served large populations of EL students.

- One major professional responsibility was providing professional learning to different stakeholders in the school system.
- I presented multiple times to various site-based staff, county wide leaders, EL teachers, specialists, and community groups on topics ranging from EL instructional strategies, Mind Brain Education to Equity Leadership.

Personally, I grew up in a military family that lived in and traveled extensively to many different countries. I was exposed to different cultures, languages, and people while growing up. As a child I traveled extensively. I received part of my education through Department of Defense schools which required students to learn about the history, culture, and language of the country in which they lived. As an adult, I taught English in an orphanage in Honduras, built a red cross center in a different town in Honduras, and continued to travel extensively. I had a unique appreciation for the complex facets of culture and language. I had a deep sense of commitment to immigrant students and families in the United States and was passionate about the power of public education to transform lives. I believed education is a fundamental human right for all people.

Participants

I chose the participants in this study through purposeful selection (Maxwell, 2013). The participants were selected due to insight they brought about the phenomenon on which the study was based. As Maxwell (2013) stated, the participants were “selected deliberately to provide information particularly relevant to your questions and goals and can’t be gotten as well from other choices” (p. 97). This study focused on high school, mainstream teachers who were assigned EL students in their mainstream classes. Some teachers had the support of an EL co-teacher who focused on language instruction and provided supports in the lesson to help EL

students understand what they were learning. I purposefully sampled mainstream teachers teaching EL students without an EL co-teacher. I did not choose specific grade levels within the high school grade bands. EL students came to school at different ages with different course needs and due to these circumstances grade level was not representative of age or ability level. I focused on mainstream teachers who taught core courses required for graduation. A criterion for participating in the study was the number of EL students assigned to the class. The teacher must have had three or more EL students assigned to the class. If the teacher had one or two EL students, there was a risk for limited interaction between the teacher and student which may have influenced the data. I found potential teacher participants based on an EL student schedule review. The identities of the teachers were protected through pseudonyms for the school and for the teacher. The participants were free to drop out at any time without consequence.

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, all data were collected using digital platforms. I collected data in multiple ways. My first source was a survey adapted from a previously developed and implemented survey titled, *English-as-a-second language (ESL) Students in the Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers* (Reeves, 2006). This tool gathered information about mainstream teachers' perspectives on EL students in their classrooms (See Appendix A). The survey had four sections with responses to statements ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

- The first section asked for teachers' opinion about EL students.
- The second section focused on classroom practices, impact of inclusion, and teacher support.

- The third section consisted of open-ended questions which addressed challenges and benefits.
- The last section collected demographic information about the teacher.

The survey was sent out via email and responses were collected in a digital format to protect participants from possible COVID 19 exposures.

My second data source was a semi-structured interview with 14 mainstream teachers who completed the survey. The interviews were done using Google Meets, an online digital conferencing platform. I recorded the interviews for transcription and requested cameras remained off to make participants more comfortable with the process. The interview consisted of 10 questions (See Appendix B) created to elicit in-depth teacher perspectives about working with EL students. The first five questions mirrored some of the concepts addressed in the survey and were meant to increase the comfort level of the interviewee while beginning to explore their professional learning experiences about EL students. The second set of questions in the interview explored teacher workload, approaches to instruction, and thought processes. One of the questions in the second half of the interview was a critical incident question (Cassell & Symon, 2004). Cassell and Symon described a critical incident as a way to “capture the thought processes, the frame of reference and the feelings about an incident or set of incidents, which have meaning for the respondent” (p. 47). I chose a question about an interaction the teacher experienced with an EL student. I asked the participants to describe a positive interaction they had with an EL student during a lesson they were teaching. The purpose of this question was to study teacher perception of EL students through actual teacher—student interaction as opposed to perspectives influenced by elements occurring outside of the classroom. This type of question helped me gather a rich variety of data.

The third data source was systemic student engagement data previously collected by the school system in a locally developed database. Student engagement was determined by Community County as the number of times students logged in to their courses hosted on the system wide learning management system in addition to their grades in the course. They also collected data on the number of times the students logged into their virtual classrooms using Google Meets, the digital conferencing platform. These data were collected systemically and was a secondary data source I used to define student engagement. I compared all three data sources to identify patterns and themes. The variety of data collection tools created a broad, rich pool of data from which to work. Theme identification compared to secondary student engagement data allowed me to answer my research questions.

Survey Instrument and Interview Question Preliminary Testing

The survey was developed by a researcher, Reeves (2006), when she studied mainstream teachers who worked with EL students. I received permission from her via email to use her survey with modifications of my own to meet the needs of the study. I asked three mainstream teachers, not participating in the study, to take the survey. I asked for informal feedback about the length of time it took to take the survey and the readability of the questions. The responses were all positive. The interview questions were shared with three mainstream teachers who did not participate in the study. I checked their responses against the research questions to ensure the interview questions supported the purpose of the study. One of the three pilot participants did not currently have EL students in their classes but still felt comfortable answering the questions based on previous experiences.

Data Analysis

Data were collected from December 2020 through March 2021 during school year 2020-2021. High school students began the new school year with a virtual learning model of instruction. High school students participated in Google Meets, an online digital conferencing platform with teachers to receive direct instruction and were then responsible for completing assignments, notes, and projects asynchronously with predetermined deadlines. Teachers used a learning management system, Schoology, to assign work, receive submissions from students, and give feedback to students on submitted work. Due to the digital learning environment for the first semester, I used electronic forms of communication and data collection. I sent the teacher survey via email and respondents returned their answers digitally. I collected survey responses in a password protected, digital folder. I analyzed the survey data for demographic information and looked at race, gender, years of experience teaching, and experiences in professional learning about teaching EL students. The survey gathered information about participant perspectives on workload caused by EL students, feelings of insecurity from lack of professional learning, environmental influences of EL students in mainstream classrooms, lack of student engagement, lack of resources to help students understand, or lack of time to prepare effectively. I analyzed the survey data for positive and negative perspectives about EL students in class.

The second source of data were teacher interviews. Teachers who agreed to participate in the study discussed their perspectives in depth in a 10-question, one-on-one interview using Google Meets, an online conferencing platform. Cameras were turned off to increase the comfort level of the interviewees and the responses were recorded to create transcripts. The interview consisted of questions crafted to gain a deeper understanding of the teachers' perspective. The critical incident question enabled interviewees to recall a time they had a positive interaction

with an EL student and were successful with them in class. The question asked why they felt they were successful. This allowed the interviewee to explain their definition of success while describing their feelings about the interaction. Each interview ended with an open-ended question, giving participants the freedom to share anything they wanted regarding the instruction of EL students.

The responses to interview questions were pattern coded, or as Saldana (2013) explained, “explanatory or inferential codes, ones that identify an emergent theme, configuration, or explanation” (p. 210). This helped me group the responses into concepts looking for a pattern. I looked for words and phrases in participant responses indicative of positive or negative perspectives about English Learner students in the mainstream classroom and responses that reflected concepts participants responded to in the survey. I compared these data with the survey data looking for similarities in prevalent codes. The first cycle of coding consisted of open coding, letting the data tell the story. The second cycle of coding consisted of focused coding, where I grouped prevalent responses into concepts. The concepts were compared to concepts expressed in the survey. I identified themes based on grouped concepts.

Saldana (2013) discussed the relationship between quantitative data collection and qualitative data collection.

Assuming that quantitative and qualitative research, with their distinctive symbol systems of meaning, are two separate approaches to inquiry, it is possible to achieve comparable types of results when each approach examines the same local phenomenon or data set. As an example, I analyzed survey data that collected both quantitative ratings from respondents to close-ended prompts, plus written responses to related, open-ended, follow-up prompts. (p. 24)

Saldana (2013) referred to *paradigmatic corroboration* as quantitative data and qualitative data not only complementing each other but corroborating each other (p. 24). The survey responses addressed certain concepts pertaining to educating EL students in the

mainstream classroom. The interview responses closely examined the individual, personal experiences of mainstream teachers teaching EL students. I compared the Likert scale responses of the survey to the semi-structured interview responses and looked for similarities, differences, disconnections, and alignment between the two data sets.

My passion about students accessing their right to education regardless of their culture, language, background, or abilities came through in my intonation and non-verbal behaviors. It was imperative that I protected the integrity of my data collection during teacher interviews regardless of my passion for the subject matter. To mitigate potential influence, I practiced the interview protocol with two volunteers outside of the study. Through the practice sessions I determined I would hold the interviews virtually with the cameras off which created the opportunity for the interviewee to focus on the questions and answers not my intonation or non-verbal behaviors which decreased the influence of my perspectives on participant responses. Table 3 describes the connection between the research questions and the data collection instruments. The table explains how the data collection instruments answer the research questions.

Table 3

Research Question and Data Collection Matrix

| Research Question | Data Collection Instrument |
|--|--|
| Main Question: How do mainstream teachers' perspectives about the inclusion of EL students in their classes influence their interactions? | |
| R1.1 How do mainstream teachers describe EL student inclusion? | <i>Interview Q4, Q5, Q6, Q9, Q10</i> <i>Survey Data</i> |
| R1.2 What challenges do mainstream teachers describe when working with EL students? | <i>Interview Q4, Q5, Q6, Q7, Q10</i> <i>Survey Data</i> |

| Research Question | Data Collection Instrument |
|---|--|
| R_{1.3} How do mainstream teachers interact with EL students given linguistic challenges? | <i>Interview Q4, Q5, Q9, Q10</i> <i>Survey Data</i> |
| R₂ What similarities exist among mainstream teachers' lived experiences teaching EL students? | <i>Interview Q8, Q9, Q10</i> <i>Student Engagement Data</i> |

The final data were attendance data collected by Community County. Attendance was determined through teacher reporting. Teachers reported in person attendance, virtual attendance, and hybrid attendance to determine the level of engagement of all students during virtual and hybrid instruction. Community County tracked three variables in their definition of attendance as student engagement. They used percentage of times a student logged in to a Google Meet, digital conferencing classroom, the grades the student received in the class, and the number of times the student interacted with Schoology, Community County's learning management system, for each class. I analyzed EL student attendance as defined by Community County to determine their level of engagement with their classes compared to non-EL students. I looked at engagement patterns over the course of the 2020-2021 school year in the various instructional models.

Boundaries

Mainstream teachers with EL co-teachers were not included in the study due to the expertise EL teachers bring to the classroom about teaching and interacting with English Learners. I could not accurately determine whether mainstream teacher perspective impacted instruction through interaction if there was possible influence by an EL co-teacher. High school EL teachers were not included in the study due to the expertise they brought to instructing these students. Their job dictated they interact with EL students regularly and attempt to engage them in simultaneous content and language instruction.

EL students were required to participate in an annual, language assessment given every January and February. The language exams assessed the English language progress and proficiency growth of EL students in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. This assessment was known as the WIDA ACCESS test. The assessment results were returned to Community County in late May, early June. The use of these assessment results were outside the window of the data collection time frame of this study. English language proficiency scores on the ACCESS test for the students assigned to the classes in the study were not included.

Trustworthiness

I purposefully chose three unique data sources from which I gathered information answering my research questions. The first data source was a vetted survey used in a previous study. I had permission from the researcher (Reeves, 2006) to use and edit her survey as needed. The second data source was a one-on-one interview held with each teacher who filled out a survey. The interview protocol presented a variety of questions geared toward gathering rich, in-depth data aimed at answering the research questions. The third data source consisted of secondary student engagement data as determined by attendance already collected by Community County. Attendance and therefore student engagement was defined as attendance in digital classrooms and logins to the learning management system. The three sources—survey data, interview data, and secondary student engagement data—allowed me to triangulate the information I received. The interview data collected went through multiple coding cycles from which I identified codes, concepts, and corroboration between tools. Triangulation involved “using different methods as a check on one another, seeing if methods with different strengths and limitations all support a single conclusion” (Maxwell, 2013, p. 102). The second purpose for triangulation was studying different aspects of the phenomenon. I attempted to understand

different aspects of English Learner engagement through interaction in the mainstream classroom through a wide variety of data collection tools.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the purpose and importance of the study by explaining the influx of immigrant students into a local school system and the system's instructional response. I explained the research driven decision making of system leaders in regard to mainstreaming EL students giving them access to coursework they needed to graduate high school. I presented the research design and the research questions, explained the purposeful sampling criteria to justify the choice of participants and why it was important to study those individuals, and explained the importance of protecting the identity of the participants with pseudonyms and names protecting locations.

Participants were treated with respect and given the freedom to drop out of the study without repercussion. I presented the data collection tools selected and the procedures I used. The data collection tools gathered a variety of data which answered the questions and increased the trustworthiness of the study. There were three different data collection tools which provided a rich scope and depth of data used to draw themes and patterns. Specifics about the data collection tools explained their connection to the research questions. The results of the study assisted system leaders with instructional decisions about staffing, course taking, and professional learning aimed at positively impacting EL student achievement in high school. As I stated in Chapter 1, immigrants are woven into the fabric of society; educators must ensure they have every opportunity to achieve academic success.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the perspectives of high school general education teachers on the inclusion of EL students in their classrooms. Public school systems, which educate English Learner students, were leveraging inclusive education to teach language and content simultaneously to EL students (Harrison & Lakin, 2018; Khong & Saito, 2014; Villegas et al., 2018). This study explored general education teachers' perspectives about EL student inclusion in their courses. I studied teacher perspectives about challenges working with high school EL students, and strategies used to overcome linguistic barriers to successful interaction, a critical element of second language acquisition with EL students.

I analyzed the various experiences of teachers to aid in understanding how to advise systemic leaders about necessary professional learning, programmatic shifts, and EL student course development. Teachers influence EL student interaction in the classroom learning community through their lesson planning, facilitation of activities, supports for interaction, and feedback to students. When teachers perceived language as an obstacle to interaction with EL students and had little professional learning about teaching EL students it negatively impacted the incorporation of activities and lessons facilitating interaction, which was a necessity for successful second language acquisition. Due to linguistic barriers, teachers may inadvertently create obstacles for EL students to learning, identity building, and sense of belonging in the Community of Practice. The research questions which framed the study were:

R₁ How do mainstream teachers perceive EL students in their classes?

R_{1.1} How do mainstream teachers describe EL student inclusion?

R_{1.2} What challenges do teachers describe when working with EL students?

R_{1.3} How do mainstream teachers interact with EL students given linguistic challenges?

R2 What similarities exist among mainstream teachers' lived experiences teaching EL students?

In this chapter, I present the context of the study and information about the participants and the setting. I explain my analysis procedure for data from three different sources, research validated survey, semi-structured interviews that explored the lived experiences of general education teachers teaching EL students, and student engagement through attendance in the digital classroom using Google Meets, the physical classroom in face-to-face instruction, and the learning management system, Schoology logins. I conclude this chapter with findings from data analysis.

Participants and Setting

I invited high school, mainstream teachers who were teaching science, history, mathematics, and English (not English as a second language) assigned to teach English Learner students in their classes, to participate in the study. Fourteen teachers from two high schools in a large, suburban, public education system elected to participate. Participants did not have an EL co-teacher for the class in which they were assigned to teach EL students mainstream content. The high schools housed large EL programs with each serving over two hundred EL students. Each high school offered EL specific language courses as well as mainstream content courses with or without EL co-teachers. The pseudonym for the school district was Community County and for the two schools were Industrious Academy and Productive Plains.

I collected demographic data from the participants to frame my understanding about their areas of expertise, perspectives, and experiences. Most participants (92.8%, n=12) were White, female teachers. There was one male participant and one female teacher of color. The subjects the teachers taught were evenly distributed. There were representatives from the English, mathematics, science, and social studies departments (see Table 2). Mathematics had the most

representation with 36% (n=5), with English next at 29% (n=4). Participants had a variety of years of experience, the most at 43% (n=6) with 21+ years of experience and one to five years of experience at 21% (n=3). Seven of the participants had over 16 years of teaching experience. Table 4 presents mainstream content areas each participant represents, and Table 5 presents participants' years of experience teaching.

Table 4

Subjects Taught by General Education Teacher Participants

| Subject | Percentage | Respondent Totals |
|----------------|------------|-------------------------|
| English | 29% | 4 |
| Mathematics | 36% | 5 |
| Science | 21% | 3 |
| Social Studies | 14% | 2 |
| | | Total Respondents, N=14 |

Table 5

Teaching Experience in Years of General Education Teacher Participants

| Years of Experience | N | Respondent Totals |
|---------------------------|------|-------------------------|
| 1-5 Years of Experience | 21% | 3 |
| 6-10 Years of Experience | 14% | 2 |
| 11-15 Years of Experience | 14% | 2 |
| 16-20 Years of Experience | 7.1% | 1 |
| 21 + years of Experience | 43% | 6 |
| | | Total Respondents, N=14 |

Ten teacher participants worked at Industrious Academy and four teacher participants worked at Productive Plains. It was important to note 11 participants previously took part in

professional learning about teaching and working with English Learner students. Of the 11 who indicated they had professional learning only one took actual coursework on effectively teaching EL; the rest of the training were sessions participants were required to attend at their school. When asked about the value of the professional learning to their practice, nine participants stated it positively impacted their work and five participants claimed it shifted their mindset about English Learner students.

School year 2019-2020, was different and challenging for public school systems. The COVID-19 pandemic closed public schools in March of 2020. System leaders, administrators and teachers struggled to complete the year with students. Courses switched from face-to-face instruction to continuity of learning or asynchronous lessons with assignments and projects turned in online. There was no direct, teacher led, instruction or interaction. School systems began the new year 2020-2021 teaching fully virtual courses using learning management systems and live video-conferencing services. Teachers were in their homes, online, teaching students, online, in their homes. Many students never turned on their cameras, spoke in class or interacted with others. There were many reasons EL students did not turn on their cameras during virtual school. Some students gained employment during school closures to better support themselves and their families. Other students lived in multiple family dwellings with very little space available for focused work while other EL students took care of younger siblings, and other children also participating in virtual learning, during the day.

In January of 2021 schools began to reopen. Teachers returned to their classrooms and students could opt to attend school in-person, two days a week. Teachers worked with groups of students, in person in the classroom. To reduce the number of people in a school building at one time students were assigned to cohort A or cohort B. On A days, cohort A students were in-

person in class, and the cohort B students were online and student cohorts switched on cohort B days. This was called concurrent teaching, where the teacher was responsible for the instruction of both groups of students in two different learning environments. This instructional model was challenging for all stakeholders. Certain students were invited to attend four days due to technical or structural challenges precluding them from academic achievement. Many EL students were invited to attend tutoring, small group instruction at the end of the school day, and four days of in-person learning. This study was conducted during the 2020-2021 school year, and spanned fully virtual instruction of EL students, concurrent teaching of EL students assigned to cohorts, and EL students attending all four days. Participants in this study taught all models of instruction.

Data Collection

IRB approval, participant invitations, and subsequent data collection occurred from November of 2020 through February of 2021. It was important to note the impact of the ever-changing landscape COVID-19 wrought upon public education systems. During the data collection window, instructional models evolved from fully virtual, to in-person cohorts two days a week, to four days a week for certain ages, grades, and populations of students. Despite the amount of extra work, multiple challenges, and stress, 14 teachers participated to share their experiences and perspectives about working with their EL students.

The COVID-19 pandemic influenced how I collected data. Data collection included a survey, interviews, and systemic engagement data based on attendance in Google Meets and Schoology logins. The survey was recreated in a digital format, a Google Form, to adhere to safety guidelines for keeping individuals from possible COVID-19 exposure during the pandemic. They were distributed electronically to the individual teachers which, when they filled

them out, notified me immediately of the completion of the survey and the responses. The interviews were held using an online meeting system, Google Meets, so no face-to-face interactions occurred. The Google Meet interview was recorded using an online recording tool called Screencastify. I created transcripts from the recordings to use for analysis and coding purposes. The final data were gathered from an online data system already in place and used by the school system to track student engagement. Community County defined student engagement as any of the following: Google Meet log in, Schoology log in, or attendance in person.

General Education Teacher Survey

The survey instrument, titled English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers (Appendix A), focused on four areas of EL instruction impacted by teacher perspective. The survey explored teachers' attitudes about EL student inclusion in their courses and coursework modifications or the amount of additional work required to successfully support EL students they teach. The instrument surveyed attitudes about professional development, or professional learning as it is referred to in this study, and if teachers learned how to teach EL students. Finally, the survey explored attitudes about language and language learning or teacher perspectives about EL students using their native language in class, how long it should take an individual to become fluent in a second language, and if English should be the official language of the United States. Reeves (2006) piloted the survey with thirty teachers who participated in inclusive education. Her research showed the survey was valid for readability and content. Reeves then used the survey with 281 general education teachers in 12 high schools. For this qualitative study, the survey was used with 14 general education teachers in two high schools.

Of the 14 participants in this study, 100% indicated that EL student inclusion in subject area courses created a positive educational atmosphere. In the area of inclusion some teachers felt EL students should attain a minimum level of English proficiency prior to joining the general education classroom. Four of the 14 teachers (28.6%) felt general education teachers did not have enough time to deal with the needs of EL students, yet over 70% felt they did. Participants were asked about how they modified coursework for their EL students. Most teachers felt it was a good idea to simplify coursework, lessen the quantity of coursework, and allow EL students more time to complete coursework. Of the respondents, n=12 did not regard student effort when giving grades for assignments and courses. Over half, (n=8) of the teachers felt they had adequate training to work with EL students yet nearly all (n=12) expressed interest in receiving more training. The survey data were analyzed for a positive perspective or a negative perspective. Table 6 shows a breakdown of survey participant responses about EL students in mainstream courses in the areas of inclusion, workload, access to professional learning, and the role of English in the academic environment.

Table 6

Response on Teachers' Survey

| Survey Focus Area | Positive Perspective | Negative Perspective |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Inclusion | 83.9% | 16.1% |
| Impact on Workload | 71.45% | 31.8% |
| Professional Learning | 71.45% | 28.5% |
| Language and Language Learning | 60.6% | 39.4% |
| Total Respondents, N=14 | | |

Responses on the survey measuring perspectives on inclusion, impact on workload, professional learning, and language and language learning ranged from strongly disagree, disagree, to agree, and strongly agree. Analyzing the survey data reveals the positive perspectives versus the negative perspectives of teachers working with EL students. The largest negative areas were about the impact on workload and assumptions about EL students and English language acquisition.

The next section of the survey focused on classroom practices, impact of inclusion, and teacher support. Response options ranged from never or seldom, some of the time, to most or all of the time. In classroom practices 92.8% (n = 13) of participants allowed EL students more time to complete their coursework but 57.1% (n = 8) of participants did not lessen the amount of coursework they assigned. When discussing the impact of inclusion on their workload all participants indicated EL students increased their workload some of the time or most of the time; 92.8% (n = 13) of participants indicated EL students required more of their time than other students, and 64.3% (n = 9) stated the inclusion of EL students slowed the progress of the entire class some or most of the time. The last section, teacher support, illustrated general education teachers received most of their support teaching EL students through their EL teaching staff colleagues at their schools over school-based leadership.

There were three open ended questions on the survey. The first asked about benefits to EL student inclusion. Nine out of 14 teachers discussed the unique perspectives EL students bring to the class when they shared their points of view. “Their personal stories and perspectives are often unique compared to their native peers. When they are willing to share, their insights enrich our conversations and encourage others to engage and participate as well.” (Barbara). “Diversity in the classroom makes for more engaging and meaningful interactions for all students, who can

learn to appreciate each other's backgrounds and cultures." (Helen). They discussed the richness of their cultural diversity, varied backgrounds, and experiences. "I enjoy the diversity that they bring to the classroom. For math, depending on the students' background knowledge, sometimes they are able to provide different perspectives and different strategies in how they solve the problems." (Kara).

The second open-ended question asked about the greatest challenge of EL student inclusion. The most frequent challenge, listed with 50% (n = 7) of participants, was linguistic barriers to accessing content, understanding feedback, and learning academic vocabulary. "Math may be universal, but word problems are not." (Helen). "The acquisition of content that is complex and vocabulary-driven is difficult for EL students with a minimal grasp of the English language." (Charlie). Participants discussed the lack of professional learning.

My teaching preparation program did not have any classes on assisting EL students. It is difficult to find time to collaborate with members of the EL department, and I do not think our school district does enough to support Gen Ed teachers who do not have the strategies to be successful with EL inclusive classrooms. (Sam).

Participants described negative assumptions and biases about EL students. "Not making generalizations and stereotypes about EL students; in my work one of the greatest assumptions is that they know no math." (Holly). Several noted their desire for EL students to advocate for themselves in the learning community. "Very few let us know when they are not understanding a lesson or when they are having difficulties with their technology." (Karen).

The last open-ended question was a free space to share additional comments or thoughts. Participants shared a variety of additional concerns and questions. Some concerns focused on putting EL students and special education students together to meet their unique learning needs. "Why, for year-long classes, do we blend EL with autistic students? Each requires a different skill set on the part of the teachers. Totally not fair or equitable to either." (Karen). Another

participant stated, “I have more EL students than special education students, yet my special education co-teacher and I cannot properly offer these students services.” (Brenda). They stated that the wide discrepancy and variety of needs made individualizing and differentiating instruction extremely difficult. Participants discussed the struggles of a virtual model of instruction:

Virtual learning has been a huge struggle for my EL students. They are shy to begin with due to language barriers but now with online learning, it’s even worse. I have quite a few students that are not completing much at all so far this semester and they are failing. During synchronous class, they don’t participate and when they don’t turn their cameras on, I can’t read their body language or expression to know whether or not they get it.
(Kara)

Brenda stated: “EL students who are not proficient do not benefit from inclusion during distance learning and I fear concurrent teaching.” Participants described linguistic challenges and barriers and self-doubt about successfully teaching EL students in their courses. One stated, “In the last few years my classes have included more and more EL students and I have tried to change in my practices, but I am not always sure how successful I am.” (Penny).

General Education Teacher Interviews

The semi-structured interviews were conducted in a one-on-one setting, using video conferencing. I recorded them to get accurate transcripts of responses for analysis. I kept the cameras off to decrease the possibility of influencing interviewee responses through facial expressions, nervousness from recording, or positionality. The interviewees responded well to the cameras being off and stated they felt freer to share their thoughts. The set of responses to each question were combined into tables and analyzed for commonalities and discrepancies. The transcripts were analyzed in cycles. I read and reread the transcripts attempting to familiarize myself with each participants’ responses. I used in vivo coding for the first cycle. Saldaña (2016) described in vivo coding as “a word or short phrase from the actual language found in the

qualitative data record” (p. 105). I captured the in vivo codes on the transcript tables. I created a research question table indicating which interview questions supported each research question. I subsequently transferred the in vivo codes to the research question table and looked for common talking points and ideas as evidence of themes. Once I identified codes, I employed Braun and Clarke’s (2016) reflexive thematic analysis to identify themes across interview question data sets using the following steps.

- I generated initial themes looking for broader connections (Braun & Clarke, 2016).
- I then reviewed all potential themes to ensure they reflected the data collected from the interviews.
- I identified multiple examples of the themes from the coded interview data to justify choosing each one (Appendix D).

Student Engagement During Virtual, Hybrid, and In Person Learning

Community County serves approximately forty-four thousand students. During the COVID-19 pandemic, instruction of students occurred in three ways: all virtual instruction, hybrid instruction with some days in person in the classroom and other days online in a virtual setting, and all in person instruction each school day. Community County created a data dashboard to capture student engagement in the different models of instruction. Student engagement was defined in four ways: (a) a student logged in to a virtual classroom session using Google Meets, a virtual meeting tool; (b) a student logged in to Schoology, a digital learning management system housing coursework, assignments, calendars, and teacher to student communication; (c) a student attended in person learning in their classroom; (d) the grades the students received in the course. If students have the supports they need, feel like they belong to the classroom Community of Practice, and have teachers who know how to teach them they are

engaged in the learning environment and will participate in learning through the aforementioned methods. For the purposes of this study student engagement was determined through Google Meets logins, the virtual meeting tool, and Schoology logins, the learning management system. Table 7 describes demographics of students by race for Industrious Academy and Productive Plains.

Table 7

Race Demographic Data for Industrious Academy and Productive Plains

| Student Group | Industrious Academy | Productive Plains |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| American Indian | 0.2% | 0.2% |
| Asian | 6.7% | 4.8% |
| Black or African American | 25.7% | 23.8% |
| Hispanic/Latino of any race | 38.1% | 33.1% |
| Pacific Islander | 0.3% | 0.5% |
| Two or More Races | 4% | 4.1% |
| White | 25% | 33.6% |
| Total Population | <i>N</i> = 1,869 | <i>N</i> = 1,657 |

Table 8 displays information about percentages of special education students, students who receive free and reduced meals, gifted and talented students, and students who have limited English proficiency or EL students.

Table 8*Student Group Demographic Data for Industrious Academy and Productive Plains*

| Student Group | Industrious Academy | Productive Plains |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Limited English Proficiency | 18% | 11.2% |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 22.5% | 25.3% |
| Free/Reduced Meals | 51.8% | 44.1% |
| Special Education | 9.4% | 13.5% |
| Gifted/Talented | 12.9% | 12.5% |
| 504 Student Support Plan | 2.3% | 5.7% |

In Community County, 14% or approximately 6,000 students grade prekindergarten through grade twelve were, at one point in their educational careers, served by the EL program. In the 2020-2021 school year, approximately 3,000 EL students were actively receiving English Language support and services. The two high schools, Industrious Academy and Productive Plains, served 412 English Learner students during the 2020-2021 school year. Table 9 displays student engagement data for Industrious Academy.

Table 9*Industrious Academy Student Engagement Data Through Participation*

| Student Group | Grade 9 | Grade 10 | Grade 11 | Grade 12 | All Grades |
|-----------------------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| All Students | 96.1% | 96.2% | 96.7% | 93.7% | 95.7% |
| Asian | 96.3% | 93.6% | 98.2% | 95.2% | 95.8% |
| Black or African American | 97.0% | 99.1% | 98.3% | 96.1% | 97.7% |
| Hispanic/Latino of any race | 94.7% | 92.8% | 93.6% | 90.4% | 92.9% |
| Two or More Races | 92.8% | 99.3% | 98.7% | 92.3% | 95.1% |
| White | 97.4% | 98.9% | 98.1% | 96.7% | 97.8% |
| EL | 93.7% | 91.9% | 91.0% | 87.6% | 91.0% |

| Student Group | Grade 9 | Grade 10 | Grade 11 | Grade 12 | All Grades |
|----------------------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Free/Reduced Meals | 94.6% | 94.9% | 95.3% | 91.3% | 94.1% |
| Special Education | 97.4% | 97.5% | 97.2% | 95.1% | 96.8% |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 94.2% | 93.8% | 95.2% | 89.3% | 93.2% |
| Gifted/Talented | 98.9% | 98.6% | 99.7% | 98.3% | 98.9% |

EL students who attended Industrious Academy had the lowest engagement data of any other student group in grades ten, eleven, and twelve resulting in the lowest engagement data of 91.0%, overall, for all students in all grades. In ninth grade, two or more races were 0.9% lower than EL students. The three lowest student groups in terms of engagement data, in order, were English Learner students, Hispanic/Latino students of any race, and economically disadvantaged students. Table 10 shows student engagement data for Productive Plains.

Table 10

Productive Plains Student Engagement Through Participation

| Student Group | Grade 9 | Grade 10 | Grade 11 | Grade 12 | All Students |
|-----------------------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|--------------|
| All Students | 95.4% | 96.2% | 96.9% | 95.1% | 95.9% |
| Asian | 98.7% | 99.7% | 99.5% | 95.8% | 98.7% |
| Black or African American | 95.0% | 96.7% | 96.7% | 93.8% | 95.6% |
| Hispanic/Latino of any race | 95.0% | 93.8% | 94.8% | 93.6% | 94.3% |
| Two or More Races | 91.6% | 98.1% | 97.5% | 98.5% | 96.7% |
| White | 96.3% | 97.5% | 98.5% | 96.4% | 97.1% |
| EL | 91.1% | 91.9% | 94.1% | 93.6% | 92.5% |
| Free/Reduced Meals | 92.8% | 93.3% | 95.0% | 91.8% | 93.2% |
| Special Education | 91.6% | 95.6% | 95.2% | 92.5% | 93.5% |

| Student Group | Grade 9 | Grade 10 | Grade 11 | Grade 12 | All Students |
|----------------------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|--------------|
| Economically Disadvantaged | 91.3% | 92.1% | 94.5% | 90.2% | 91.9% |
| Gifted/Talented | 98.5% | 100.0% | 99.5% | 99.5% | 99.3% |

EL students attending Productive Plains had the second lowest student engagement data. They were slightly higher than the economically disadvantaged student group by 0.6%. EL students were lowest for student engagement data in grades nine, ten, and eleven. They were second lowest in twelfth grade with 0.6% higher than economically disadvantaged students. The three lowest engaged student groups in order were economically disadvantaged students, EL students, and students receiving free/reduced meals.

There were many self-reported obstacles to accessing virtual learning during all virtual instruction and hybrid instruction. EL students reported they did not have consistent access to a wireless network. Community County distributed hotspots to increase students' ability to login but there were not enough devices available to meet the need. Students stated their bandwidth did not have the capacity to support logging in to the digital conferencing platform, Google Meets, and doing work at the same time. When they were in a Google Meets, they were not able to login to Schoology, the learning management system, or work on assignments in other tabs. The Google Meets platform would stop working or they would lose connectivity. This caused frustration and when students were logged out of Google Meets, they missed valuable information or directions. Other EL students shared they obtained employment to support themselves and their families resulting in their lack of attendance in school. In some instances, students stepped in to work for the parent, who was an hourly employee and did not get paid if they did not work, but who was sick with COVID-19. Student engagement data clearly shows EL students at Industrious Academy and Productive Plains were not engaging in learning through

Google Meets, the digital classroom environment, through Schoology, the learning management system, or through in-person learning as much as their grade level peers.

Major Findings

This research revealed two major findings: The EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers and EL Student Self Advocacy. Each of the major findings includes several sub-findings.

Major Finding One: The EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers

Mainstream teachers' perception of EL students in their classes was complex and influenced by multiple professional and personal factors. I identified a pattern of teacher behavior through the coding process and analysis of interview data in conjunction with the survey data. Mainstream teachers of EL students went through similar patterns or cycles of experiences. They spoke about the experiences with different phrases and words, but it connected to five overarching concepts which occurred in a temporal order. They discussed the same experiences. I created a depiction of this cycle and named it the EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers (ELCMT). (See Figure 3.)

The learning cycle consisted of the following five components:

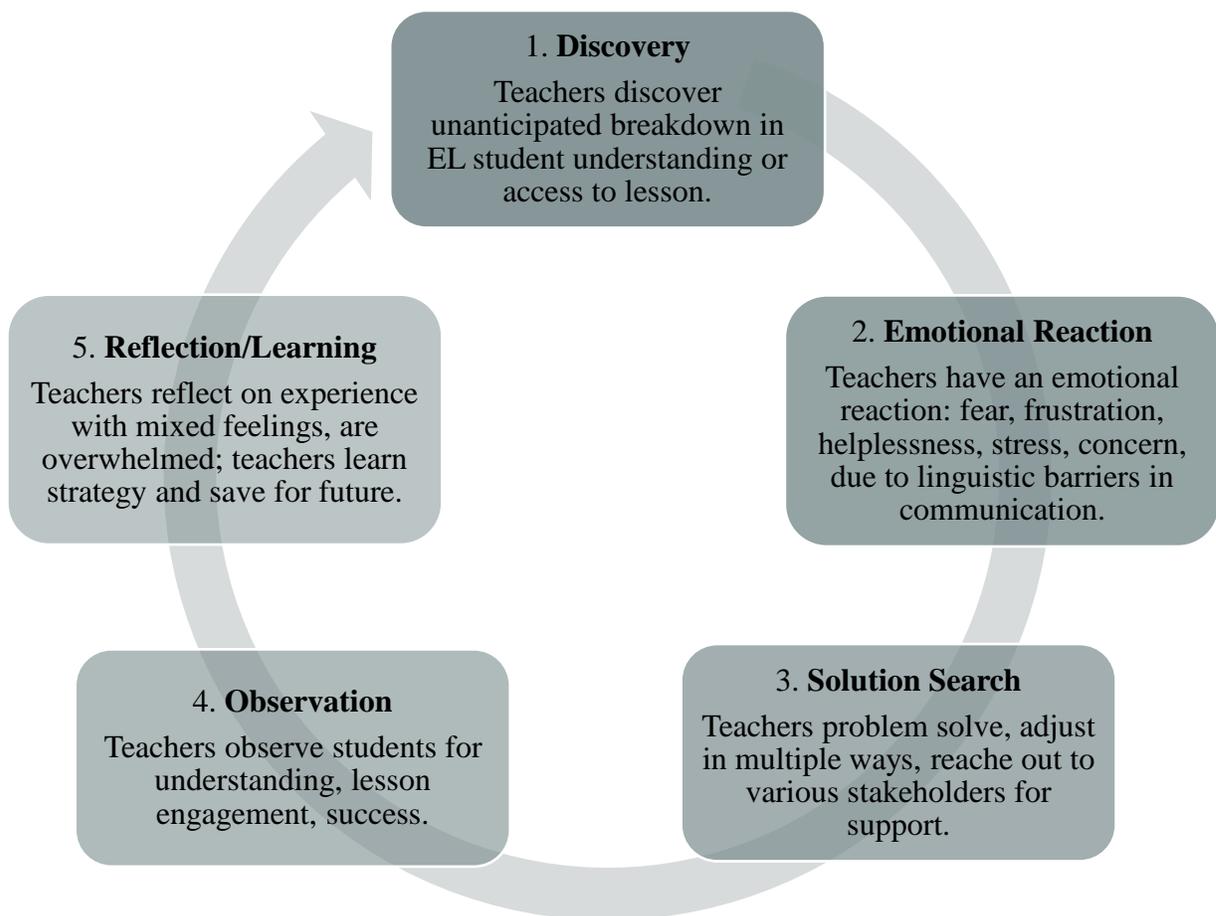
1. Discovery: teachers had an unanticipated experience with an EL student.
2. Emotional Reaction: teachers had an emotional reaction to the discovery of a breakdown in understanding.
3. Solution Search: teachers searched for a solution to the breakdown in communication and understanding.
4. Observation: teachers implemented the solutions and observed their impact on EL student understanding in the classroom.

5. Reflection/Learning: teachers reflected on adjustments to instruction for EL students saw their success and learned how to work with their students.

If mainstream teachers made it to the last stage of the cycle it increased their capacity to work with EL students and positively impacted their ability to work with future EL students assigned to their courses. If a teacher was stuck in the first two stages of the cycle, they were increasingly frustrated and expressed a defeatist perspective.

Figure 3

The EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers (ELCMT)



The participants in the study described the different components of this cycle through their individual, unique experiences but each teacher, in their own way, described elements of this same experiential sequence of events.

Discovery. The first step of the cycle I titled, *Discovery*. During this stage teachers recognized an unanticipated breakdown in EL students' understanding. They realized their plans were not what their EL students needed. After preparing, lesson planning and implementation, teachers were caught off guard by what the EL students did not understand linguistically or did not understand due to lack of background knowledge. Students had content knowledge gaps or lower English language proficiency levels than teachers assumed.

Tonya described her experience when she recognized a lack of understanding by her EL students: "I've had some eye-opening moments because I feel like because they were placed in my general education class, I had this impression that they were further along than maybe they were as far as their English development" (Question 4). Tonya discussed the surprise with a colleague: "I was like, whoa, we need to look at what we're doing because, like, this is what we're looking at, this is the level of language barrier that still exists even though these students are in our general education class. So that was really big." (Question 4). Rhonda explained how she tried to anticipate the unknown by guessing at potential barriers to learning:

Well, here is what I would normally do [discussing planning for non-EL students] now I have to think what roadblocks are going to hinder their ability to understand what I am trying to teach...trying to guess what is going to be a problem for them. (Question 4).

Tonya also described her reaction when she had EL students with very low language levels in her mainstream class: "Every once in a while, I have a student whose language levels are very low, and I've tried to explain it quite a few different ways, and I personally just can't make that connection for them." (Question 10). Cindy described her surprise at knowledge gaps some of her EL students had in her classroom: "Some of these gaps are unbelievable, and you need to

have these kids in a place where someone values their presence.” (Question 10). Kara explained her confusion trying to understand barriers limiting EL student access to the Community of Practice: “I don’t know what is confusing to them; is it the concept or is it the language barrier, it can be really confusing for teachers.” (Question 10). Karen described her mindset during the *Discovery* stage when she stated: “You try to meet their needs, so it’s an interesting balancing act now.” (Question 4).

In each case, teachers did not know if their plans for their EL students would work. They did not know enough information about their EL students’ linguistic levels or prior educational experiences. The lack of information led to confusion when working with English Learners in the mainstream Community of Practice.

Emotional Reaction. The second step of the cycle, I titled *Emotional Reaction*. After teachers recognized an unanticipated breakdown with their EL students, they experienced an emotional reaction to the discovery. *Emotional Reaction* described the first reaction teachers had to the realization that their EL students were not understanding things teachers assumed they should understand. Tonya described her feelings: “I feel like it was one of the hardest aspects of my teaching and preparing lessons because there’s so much we don’t know about their background and what we can build upon, so it is difficult for me.” (Question 3). When Tonya realized the breakdown for her EL students, she described feeling like she did not serve them well: “Wow, I have really done a disservice to these kids because in my head this is a general education class with EL students in it rather, I really need to be planning my lessons differently for the EL students so that really hit me.” (Question 4). Kara described the helplessness teachers feel: “I think teachers, I think we feel helpless because we can’t speak the language that they speak.” (Questions 6). Helen described the difficulty of learning the breakdown in

communication with EL students: “It was really difficult realizing they weren’t understanding everything that I said. (Question 4).

Mainstream teachers expressed multiple times how overwhelmed they felt when working with EL students in class. Barbara stated: “I’m sure there is a sense of just being overwhelmed by student needs; I also think teachers struggle to see how they could provide space for all students to have their needs met at the same time.” (Question 6). Tonya expressed feeling overwhelmed but also feeling like she wasn’t doing enough: “I, like most teachers, just feel overwhelmed and almost feel as though our haI are tied...I’m out here feeling like I am not doing enough.” (Question 6). Tonya also explained teachers need more strategies to help EL students: “Teachers just feel overwhelmed and then to combat that they feel just like they don’t have the tools in their pocket to really do what’s best for these kids. It breaks my heart for these kids in these classes.” (Question 10). Penny described a feeling of panic when she realized she had EL students on her schedule because she did not know how to teach EL students: “I saw that more than half of my students in a couple of my classes were EL students, and I panicked, I was like what? What’s going to happen? How was this going to work?” (Question 6).

When mainstream teachers were surprised by a breakdown with EL students, they felt stressed, overwhelmed, helpless, and frustrated. They were unsure of the cause and guess at whether it was due to English language proficiency level or lack of background or prior knowledge in the content area. They felt like they were not equipped with what they needed to effectively deal with the situation and as a result unable to effectively help their students. This was an emotional reaction to unknown information about EL students.

Solution Search. The third step of the cycle, I titled *Solution Search*. This stage described how teachers searched for solutions to help their EL students understand what they

were teaching. After the *Emotional Reaction* step, teachers attempted to solve the problem they discovered in step one, *Discovery*. Teachers tried multiple different strategies and solutions in an attempt to support their EL students' success in the classroom.

Teachers reached out to EL colleagues in their buildings, and co-workers in the same department for recommendations and suggestions. Karen described the support her co-teacher was during class: "I've learned so much from my co-teacher this year because she is so skilled." (Question 3). Teachers identified student needs and grouped them accordingly to facilitate effective instruction. Jill described how she and her partner reviewed how they grouped students so they could be more effective as teachers: "He [the principal] allowed us to basically regroup all of our students as a whole school. I took the lowest [language level] EL students and then my partner took the next level up." (Question 3).

Teachers expressed a desire for professional learning about how to work with EL students. Kara stated: "I just wish we could do professional learning where we're going to focus on how we are going to help EL students." (Question 3). Kara also tried to communicate with parents and guardians of her EL students and was frustrated by the lack of response: "The parents were unresponsive, and it was so frustrating; we need to keep the communication going because I really believe that the relationship between the teachers and the parents is an important thing you know, to make it work we have to work together." (Question 6).

Teachers described how they became more thoughtful and purposeful about their lesson planning and made problems relevant to students' lives. Holly discussed her approach to lesson planning when working with EL students: "It caused me to be more thoughtful about the lessons and how they were scaffolded for access to the curriculum." (Question 3). Barbara discussed her planning approach when working with EL students: "I try to do as much planning and formative

assessment as possible. I am much more intentional with the information I collect from students in the beginning of the semester, more than the other classes.” (Question 4). Holly recognized math word problems were nonsensical to EL students and the adjustments she made: “Our math word problems were not even things that could be translated well, so having that point of view helped me rewrite things, make things clearer, plainly worded with a variance of activities all students could access.” (Question 4).

Other teachers discussed differentiating instructional materials and the power of using models as guides for students. Helen stated: “I would try to work with the students side by side rather than just using my words to explain the steps. I would model it next to them.” (Question 4). Cindy described the power of picture clues as an instructional strategy she employed when her students did not understand: “So, one of the biggest changes... I add a lot more picture clues, which helped a lot.” (Question 4). Amy discussed multiple strategies she used when working with her EL students: “I focused on vocabulary and word walls. I focused on language and content objectives. I slowed down my rate of speech. I looked at my word choice and chose words they would understand. I highlighted important pieces of information.” (Question 4). Amy stated she learned a lot of these strategies in EL professional learning. She stated they were helpful to her instruction and positively impacted student achievement.

Teachers searched for ways to help their EL students be successful in class. They adjusted their lesson planning, changed the way they spoke and how they modeled information, got creative with grouping, and continued to want to learn more through professional learning. The *Solution Search* stage of the cycle consisted of teachers finding ways to scaffold their communication. They used a variety of comprehensible input in an effort to help EL students understand the information.

Observation. The fourth step of the cycle I titled, *Observation*. In this step teachers implemented specific strategies to support their EL learners and learned from their successes or failures. Teachers described using resources to focus on academic vocabulary resulting in students understanding the concepts taught. Rhonda described science labs working well for EL students: “Labs work the best because they’re not just trying to decipher the words. They’re actually seeing what’s going on and then I’m using the scientific words as they’re doing it.” (Question 5).

Teachers provided multiple options to practice the content using sentence frames, audio recorded answers, recorded feedback, and word problems containing scenarios to which students related. Holly stated: “We noticed a huge difference when students had some sort of connection to the activity; they could engage in the math better because it [background knowledge] wasn’t getting in their way.” (Question 5). Teachers provided multiple pathways for students to show what they learned. Jill described guides as a helpful tool for her EL students: “You know, so sometimes I found with EL students less talking and just show a guide and an example and show several of them tends to work really well.” (Question 5).

Charlie scaffolded EL student understanding by also taking notes and sharing them with students: “I’ll take notes with them and then share my notes with them at the end of the month. I think those seem to be working. I think they appreciate the help with reading comprehension.” (Question 5). Teachers modified their instructional approach to help EL students understand the routine and know exactly what to do. Barbara described routines in her class: “I found in my work with this specific lesson and my co-teacher is that we could just provide support for students because all of the information was in one place. It was easy for students to digest.” (Question 5).

Jill described her experiences teaching EL students and stated: “With almost all EL students it’s not a cognitive issue, they just literally do not know what you are saying but they are smart and super hard workers. I scaffolded the problem, showed them the pattern and they began making connections.” (Question 5). Jill said:

Sometimes as a teacher for EL students you forget how incredibly intelligent the student is, right, because they can’t communicate with you and the experience really reminded me just how I mean, how intelligent is that, not to understand the language that you’re learning and communicating in, but you’re able to fill out by the end of the experience, a pretty complicated, word problem. (Question 5).

Jill admired her EL students’ intelligence and work ethic. She understood the intelligence required to learn academic content in a different language and was impressed by their abilities.

In the Observation step of the EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers, teachers implemented the changes they searched for during the Solution Search step and watched EL student respond to the changes. Many of their statements began with “I found...”. This represents the cyclical nature of experiential learning. The learner, in this case the teacher, tried something, observed the results, modified, or kept the approach, and then continued on their learning journey.

Reflection and Learning. The fifth and final stage of the cycle I titled, *Reflection and Learning*. In this step teachers reflected on their lessons, strategies they chose, and resources they used. They described what made them successful and learned how to plan for future EL students. They commented on increased student understanding, effective work completion, and improvement of work EL students produced. The word choices teachers used in this section were more optimistic than in previous sections. Teachers learned successful strategies to support their EL students and felt good about the work. Penny described the success rate with a piece of literature EL students could access: “I think having a piece of literature that was accessible helped a lot; we had a pretty high success rate, and the theme was not easy for students to write

about.” (Question 5). Karen also described accessible reading materials helping her EL students: “When I chose a better Lexile level for them, they were able to read the article. They did all the highlighting and did their activity...they are coming along beautifully; I’m so thrilled they are finding confidence!” (Question 5). Karen was very excited with their success. Rhonda described using linguistic scaffolds in her math word problems with success: “I give them all different types of scaffolded problems, like a mixture of missing words in word problems or different numbers in the problems; it has a really nice flow and works really well with EL students.” (Question 5). Sam described her work with academic vocabulary support for her students but also her own word choices when teaching: “I would plan normally but I wasn’t really cognizant of some of the verbiage I would use even in just like basic questions.” (Question 4). Sam also stated, “I really paid attention to academic vocabulary in my content area. It’s like onboarding for my EL students so they are really comfortable with the academic language.” (Question 5).

Karen made this observation about her EL students:

With almost all EL students, it’s not a cognitive issue, right? It’s not like they struggle with reading or are having trouble reading. It’s just that they literally don’t know what you’re saying, but they’re smart as crap, and are super hard workers. (Karen, Question 5).

Teachers understood that linguistic challenges do not equate to intelligence level. Through their experiential learning cycle, they were learning to appreciate their EL students.

I asked participants to recall a positive interaction that occurred with an EL student during one of their lessons as part of their reflection. In their responses, participants compared this year to years past when they were face-to-face with EL students in school. Teachers discussed the inability to build effective relationships with EL students during virtual instruction. Eleven of 14 teachers chose a positive interaction from a previous year during face-to-face instruction as opposed to one from the current school year. Tonya stated:

[In the previous year] we created a sense of trust and community that I feel like they felt safe to take risks. It's hard being all virtual, but I don't know that I have really built that connection where they do feel safe. In fact, taking risks and asking for help, the one student who really does reach out to me and asks me for help and comes to Google Meets with me is one of the students I had last year. I just feel like I'm missing connecting with some of them. (Tonya, Question 9).

Other teachers discussed being impressed with the students' perseverance and were grateful their lesson planning worked for their students. Barbara stated: "My student didn't realize the small moments are worth celebrating. We have to celebrate those incremental shifts and progress because they are sometimes what our students only experience." (Question 9).

Another teacher described a situation in which one of her EL students answered a question correctly out loud in her class for the first time. Helen stated: "We all celebrated, we're like you did it! The classroom felt like family where we are all in it together, and I'm helping them learn and they're helping each other." (Question 9).

When describing successes during the reflection step in the cycle, multiple participants described how they rely on more English fluent EL students to work with less English fluent EL students, when they shared the same native language. Helen described this in her classroom: "There have been so many times in my classroom where the EL students helped each other. The kid that doesn't understand, somebody else can interpret for them." (Question 10). The group of EL students made up their own Community of Practice facilitated by the most English fluent member. Sam described: "I have found that usually my English learners are grouped together, and then all the other students are their own group. I try to give them moments to collaborate." (Question 7).

The facilitator of the EL sub-Community of Practice explained directions, addressed misconceptions, answered questions, and translated issues back to the mainstream teacher. Karen stated: "He encourages other kids; he might hear their frustration or see their confusion quicker.

He jumps in and explains it. He is like a teaching assistant.” (Question 9). The EL facilitator served as the linguistic bridge between the smaller, EL Community of Practice and the larger, classroom Community of Practice. Kara depicted this in her classroom as well: “I had an EL student struggling in the class and another student asked if I would like them to translate for them. It was a win-win; this student felt helpful, and the other student did not struggle as much.” (Question 9). Teachers referred to these students as peer support, peer mentors, or peer partners. Helen illustrated her attempt to support students helping each other in her room: “I tried various seating arrangements and making sure students are not isolated by themselves, like sitting with peers who understand the EL community and can answer their questions.” (Question 4). Teachers relied on their more English fluent EL students to support their students who had lower language levels.

The EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers, comprising Discovery, Emotional Reaction, Solution Search, Observation, and Reflection and Learning, occurred multiple times throughout the semester. When a teacher did not have professional learning or formal training in working with EL students, their Emotional Reaction and Solution Search steps caused stress and frustration. Rhonda described: “Every once in a while, I have a student whose language levels are very low, and I’ve tried to explain it quite a few different ways, and I personally just can’t make that connection for them.” (Question 10). They reached out to multiple people, including their own students for help which I discuss in greater detail in Major Finding Number Two.

Teachers who indicated they participated in professional learning described relying on their learning to find better ways to be effective with EL students. Holly, in response to interview question three, stated: “Every single one [professional learning session] has greatly influenced

how I approach not just teaching EL students in general but also crafting curriculum.” (Personal Communication, February 2021). Teachers cited evidence-based strategies, used understood best practices, and experienced success with their EL students. Another source of stress for teachers was lack of support. Helen explained her feelings when she stated: “I think teachers feel frustrated that they have large populations [of EL students] who are low score on that [English language proficiency test] without a translator or an interpreter to help them out because that can be really challenging.” (Question 6).

Teachers described how they did better in classes composed entirely of EL students than they did in classes with a pocket of EL students. Tonya stated: “I feel more overwhelmed trying to reach my three of four EL students in my on-grade level class than I did last year when I was teaching a whole class of EL students. I almost wonder if it’s the task of planning for multiple levels.” (Question 6). Teachers described relying heavily on colleagues with EL expertise. They appreciated having an EL co-teacher and felt students did much better and achieved more on a daily basis with two teachers in the classroom. If a teacher had professional learning and experience teaching English Learner students, the time frame between *Discovery* through *Solution Search* to implementation shortened, and stress was reduced. Teachers did not spend as much time in *Solution Search* because they remembered strategies they learned or solutions which previously worked.

Major Finding Two: EL Student Self-Advocacy

Interview question number eight asked participants: “Imagine you could speak every language your EL students could speak. What advice would you give them about going to high school in the United States?” Most teachers gave the same or a version of the same response. Of the 14 teachers, 79% (n = 11) advised EL students to self-advocate. Tony wanted EL students to:

“Start advocating for yourself. Let your teacher get to know you and don’t be afraid to ask for help.” Holly’s advice was the same: “The advice I would give them is to advocate as much as they can for themselves as learners.” Barbara wanted her EL students to ask for help about things they did not understand: “Advocate for yourself. If something doesn’t make sense or you’re not certain on how to do something you have to ask.” Other teachers also described EL student self-advocacy as asking for help or speaking up when they are confused. Kara stated: “Just make sure you speak up and get the help you need. Don’t ever be shy.” Helen said: “Don’t be afraid to ask for help.” Jill stated: “Ask for help. I think advocating for yourself, advocating for what you need is a huge part of learning.” Charlie said: “Try to ask questions, communicate with your teacher and effort is important.” Karen said: “You have to speak up when you are confused.” Cindy wanted her EL students to ask for teachers to repeat things: “I would tell them to speak up and advocate for themselves, to not be afraid to ask the teachers to repeat things.”

Two other participants included advice about not being afraid in class. Penny stated: “Use as many resources as you have available to you, use your accommodation, don’t be afraid to speak up even if your English isn’t great.” Similarly, Rhonda said: “Don’t be afraid to take risks and try because I feel like sometimes that is what hinders the students more than anything else; they’re scared they’re going to get it wrong.”

The frequency of this sentiment prompted me to send a follow up question asking teachers why they chose self-advocacy or a form of self-advocacy for their advice. Out of the 11 participants who gave the advice of self-advocacy, 10 responded to the follow up question. Most participants 60% (n = 6) described EL students in their classes as passive and quiet. They used phrases such as, “very quiet,” “intimidated and overwhelmed in certain classroom settings,” “very quiet and passive in the classroom.” Kara stated: “Self-advocating is important for EL

students because it's a necessity for success. When they don't understand something, we (teachers) do not know whether or not they don't understand because of language barrier or the concept itself. When they speak up, we can get them the right help."

Barbara explained: "My suggestion that EL students advocate for themselves is rooted in the fact that the majority of my EL students are passive participants in the classroom. They rarely ask for help, take advantage of resources or utilize additional supports in class." Helen described time constraints as contributing to the issue:

The unfortunate truth is that teachers don't often have the time or capacity to check in consistently with every student in a meaningful way, of course we monitor their work, ask if they need help but we rely on students to then be forthcoming with responses of what they are confused about or stuck on. (Helen).

Some teachers explained they must make assumptions about why the students were not understanding. They had to assume it was either because of language barriers or the concept itself, they did not know the exact reason, so did not know how to help.

And so, from all of this, EL students need to advocate for themselves probably more than non-EL students because teachers won't always understand what they need, and their parents won't always understand what they need, so it's often just on them. They are going it alone – which is scary and hard, but it doesn't have to be if they find their voice (and their confidence!) to reach out and ask questions. And that can come down to relationships with teachers, which has been exceptionally hard this year, let me tell you. (Helen, Follow up to Question 8)

Helen explained, from her perspective, the extra burden EL students must carry while navigating mainstream courses.

Teachers gave suggestions or reasons to explain EL student behaviors in class. Kara stated: "Culture can play a major role here, too. For example, if a student comes from a culture where asking questions during instruction is not encouraged, then the student is less likely to do that." Holly stated: "I think educating teachers about their students' culture as well as teaching EL students how to advocate for themselves in not only school but in the world are equally

important.” Holly explained: “Teachers being more culturally proficient and establishing communication with EL families that involves them early on is important.” Tonya described the onus being on the teacher to create a welcoming environment which would help students feel safe: “I think a big part of this is the responsibility of the teacher to create an environment where the students feel comfortable advocating for themselves.”

During the *Solution Search* component of the EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers (ELCMT), participants were reaching out to a multitude of stakeholders for support. They were even reaching out to the EL students themselves for support through their request for self-advocacy. They wanted the EL students to tell them what they needed and clarify how to help them. Teachers described a strong desire to understand what their EL students needed, all with the hope of effectively helping their students learn by increasing access to the Community of Practice.

Table 11 displays how the findings described above answered the research questions.

Table 11

Research Questions and Answers in Findings

| Research Question | Answer |
|---|---|
| Main Question How do mainstream teachers' perspectives about the inclusion of EL students in their classes, influence their interactions? | |
| R1.1 How do mainstream teachers describe EL student inclusion? | Data showing negative perspective on impact to workload ELCMT Component 1 Discovery and Component 2 Emotional Reaction |
| R1.2 What challenges do mainstream teachers describe when working with EL students? | Survey Open ended question data showing confusion and lack of pedagogical best practices ELCMT Component 1 Discovery and Component 3 Solution Search Data showing desire for EL students to self-advocate |
| R1.3 How do mainstream teachers interact with EL students given linguistic challenges? | ELCMT Component 3 Solution Search, Component 4 Observation, and Component 5 Reflection/Learning Data showing desire for EL students to self-advocate |
| R2 What similarities exist among mainstream teachers' lived experiences teaching EL students? | Major Finding One: The EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers (ELCMT) all components Major Finding Two: EL Student Self-Advocacy |

Summary

This chapter explained the overall purpose of the study and clarified how the three data collection tools answered the research questions. Data from the survey illustrated teacher perspectives on three elements related to EL students in mainstream classrooms; inclusion, language usage, and impact on workload. I combined survey data with multiple cycles of analysis of interview data to identify and explain The EL Experiential Learning Cycle of

Mainstream Teachers. I discussed the data and findings wherein mainstream teachers want EL students to self-advocate. This highlighted the desire for mainstream teachers to have their EL students actively participate in class. Finally, I evaluated demographic data and student attendance data as evidence of EL student engagement, for Industrious Academy and Productive Plains in Community County. The next chapter contains the discussion, implications for practice, future recommendations, and limitations.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, SIGNIFICANCE, AND IMPLICATIONS

Historically, in Community County, too many secondary, EL students were scheduled for English language developmental courses and not credit bearing courses necessary for graduation. A large number of EL students either aged out or dropped out of high school prior to graduating. School system leaders, in an attempt to solve the credit acquisition issue, scheduled EL students into mainstream courses with EL teachers as co-teachers, so students could learn English and content at the same time. This allowed EL students to obtain credits towards graduation at an accelerated pace. Co-teaching practices were evidence-based recommendations to support English Learner student achievement. In some schools, staffing constraints did not allow for all mainstream teachers to co-teach with an EL teacher in every class in which they were assigned to teach EL students. Mainstream teachers were assigned to teach lower English language proficiency level students without the support of an EL expert. High School English Learners did not easily access the mainstream classroom as a learning Community of Practice. They struggled with linguistic barriers resulting in communication challenges, but they also struggled with the mindset of belonging, social connectedness, and relationships with their mainstream teachers and native speaking peers.

This study viewed the classroom as a Community of Practice according to Wenger's elements of *Practice, Meaning, Community, and Belonging* (2001). I used the four components of the Community of Practice to explain the foundation of successful classroom instruction for all learners. A student, given the consistent opportunity to *Practice* as doing, and make *Meaning* as experience through interaction with teacher, peers, and content, will learn. Students must have a combination of participation and reification in the classroom facilitated by a teacher. They learn through *Community* or what Wenger (2001) called, mutual engagement. The teachers and

students bring different sets of knowledge and expertise to the community and, when engaged with each other, exchange information through input, output, and feedback. The final component, *Identity*, or learning as becoming, describes the evolution and development of an individual invested and integrated into the Community of Practice. The components of the Community of Practice were compared to, and integrated with, the critical elements of second language acquisition theory – *input, output, interaction, and affective filter*. The paradigm comparisons served as the theoretical foundation of analysis.

I captured teachers' perspectives about the different elements of educating high school English Learners through survey data, interview data, and secondary student attendance data, to study EL students' success in accessing the mainstream Classroom Community of Practice. I analyzed data and gleaned a better understanding of the specific elements constituting what occurred in the general education classroom between teachers and EL students. The mainstream teachers' perspectives were valuable in understanding thought processes, struggles, concerns, and successes when teaching EL students. Their insights offered understanding into EL students' ability or inability to effectively belong in the classroom Community of Practice. The data collected answered the following research questions:

R1 How do mainstream teachers' perceive EL students in their classes?

R1.1 How do mainstream teachers describe EL student inclusion?

R1.2 What challenges do teachers describe when working with EL students?

R1.3 How do mainstream teachers interact with EL students given linguistic challenges?

R2 What similarities exist between mainstream teachers' lived experiences teaching EL students?

Discussion

I knew, through my time as an EL leader, there were obstacles to overcome for mainstream teachers to work effectively with EL students in the mainstream learning Community of Practice, aside from linguistic obstacles. Student engagement data showed EL students as the lowest engaged student group in Community County which confirmed the existence of obstacles and challenges. I did not know what the obstacles were, the origins or causes, or the details of each. I did not know what was occurring in the classroom or, as a Community County EL leader, how to intervene and offer support. Data analysis showed there were different, complicated aspects to mainstream teachers' and EL students' co-experiences in the classroom.

Teacher student interactions and relationships were influenced by multiple complexities which changed the way each party related to and participated in the Community of Practice. EL students came to the Community of Practice with various levels of affective filter or, as Krashen (1982) explained, three categories which impacted EL student success. Krashen described the factors that determined the success of second language acquisition as motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. EL students were influenced by their motivation, their self-image, and the amount of anxiety they experienced in the classroom. These three elements impacted how EL students perceived and interacted with teachers in the Community of Practice. If the EL students felt safe and were open to feedback and input from the teacher, then they were open to learning.

Teachers came to the Community of Practice, which included EL students, with perspectives influenced by bias, personal experiences, professional learning, and attitudes shaped by different academic experiences with EL students. Teacher perspectives about different types of learners were informed by their personal and professional experiences that shaped their attitudes (Byfield, 2019; Pettit, 2011; Pit-ten Cate & Glock, 2019). "Not only do teachers' beliefs

affect the expectations they hold of students, but their actions in the classroom also reflect their beliefs” (Pettit, 2011, p. 124). The literature claimed teachers struggled with little training on effective EL pedagogy, workload EL students created, culturally responsive instruction, and personal biases. Teachers’ perceptions of their experiences with EL students were influenced by their previous teaching and professional learning experiences and specifically the types of professional learning in which they participated. Their perspectives were also influenced by structural supports they received either from their administrators, colleagues, or EL co-teachers. These factors encompassed the complexities with which teachers entered into the Community of Practice with EL students.

I used three data collection instruments to discern details about the different complexities influencing access to the Community of Practice discussed above. A macro perspective of data collected showed mainstream teachers were describing what was explained in the literature. They were also describing something unique and different. They were each referring to distinct elements of a similar, shared experience. I coded and organized the data to reflect each element the teachers were describing that built the foundation for a learning cycle I titled, The EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers (ELCMT). The elements of the cycle were *Discovery, Emotional Reaction, Solution Search, Observation, and Reflection/Learning*. Survey data and interview data justified and clarified the elements of the EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers, delineating origins and causes of obstacles mainstream teachers experience.

The survey questions collected data on teacher perspectives in three main categories: EL student inclusion, language usage, and impact on workload. Data showed teachers’ perspectives on EL inclusive education were influenced by three main factors: professional learning on how

to work with EL students, the amount of experience working with EL students, and the presence of an EL co-teacher with whom to collaborate, plan, and teach. When participants had these three support structures in place, they reported a much more positive attitude about EL student inclusion.

There were also inconsistencies in the survey data when 100% (n = 14) of the participants reported EL students created a positive learning environment. Yet 92.8% (n = 13) stated they required much more work on behalf of the teacher; 64.3% (n = 9) stated EL students slowed down the progress of the entire class, and just over half of participants, 60% (n = 8), reported EL students were quiet, shy, too timid to speak up, and did not contribute to the class environment.

I compared the results of the survey data to the concepts presented in the ELCMT, which explained the positive perspectives of mainstream teachers with EL students included in class. These participants spent less time in the *Emotional Reaction* or *Solution Search* portion of the ELCMT because they participated in professional learning about EL students, had appropriate supports in place, and learned strategies through experiences teaching EL students. Teachers with positive perspectives about inclusion did not feel ELs increased their workload, had a positive attitude towards languages other than English, and did not allude to the *Emotional Reaction* stage of the ELCMT in their responses. They moved to the *Solution Searching* stage and subsequent *Observation* stage of the ELCMT more quickly than teachers who had negative perspectives.

The interview questions elicited teachers' feelings and perspectives about EL professional learning, the impact of EL student inclusion on lesson planning, lessons that worked well for EL students, how colleagues felt about teaching EL students, how EL students felt about being in their classes, advice they would give EL students, and different types of interactions they had

with EL students. The resulting data highlighted rich, varied experiences of mainstream teachers working with EL students.

Teachers described successes and difficulties experienced in the Community of Practice, and aspirations for self and students. They described situations in which they were caught off guard by a lack of skills or English language proficiency level of which they were unaware when trying to teach EL students. They described reactions of shock, surprise, and disbelief. These emotional reactions gave way to the pursuit of solutions to the issue. They looked to colleagues, friends, EL teachers, and even the students themselves for ways around the unanticipated breakdown in understanding. At times they relied on past experiences or something they learned in professional learning. The teachers made multiple statements explaining the influence of the professional learning on their mindset and perspective, “it really kind of opened my eyes up,” “it really influenced my mindset regarding planning,” “it gave me more awareness about what it means to have an EL student in the classroom,” and “it changed my perspective.” Teachers who participated in professional learning in specific EL teaching strategies also moved to the *Observation* stage of the ELCMT quickly, yet others looked for an interpreter or translation resources to support communication.

Some participants discussed the frustration they experienced that resulted in them spending more time in the *Emotional Reaction* stage and the *Solution Search* stage or even giving up in this stage of the cycle. One teacher described: “Every once in a while, I have a student whose language levels are very low, and I’ve tried to explain it quite a few different ways, and I personally just can’t make that connection for them.” In other words, everything she tried didn’t work. When a teacher spent a long period of time in the *Emotional Reaction* stage

and the *Solution Search* stage to no avail their frustration levels increased, negatively impacting their ability to support EL students.

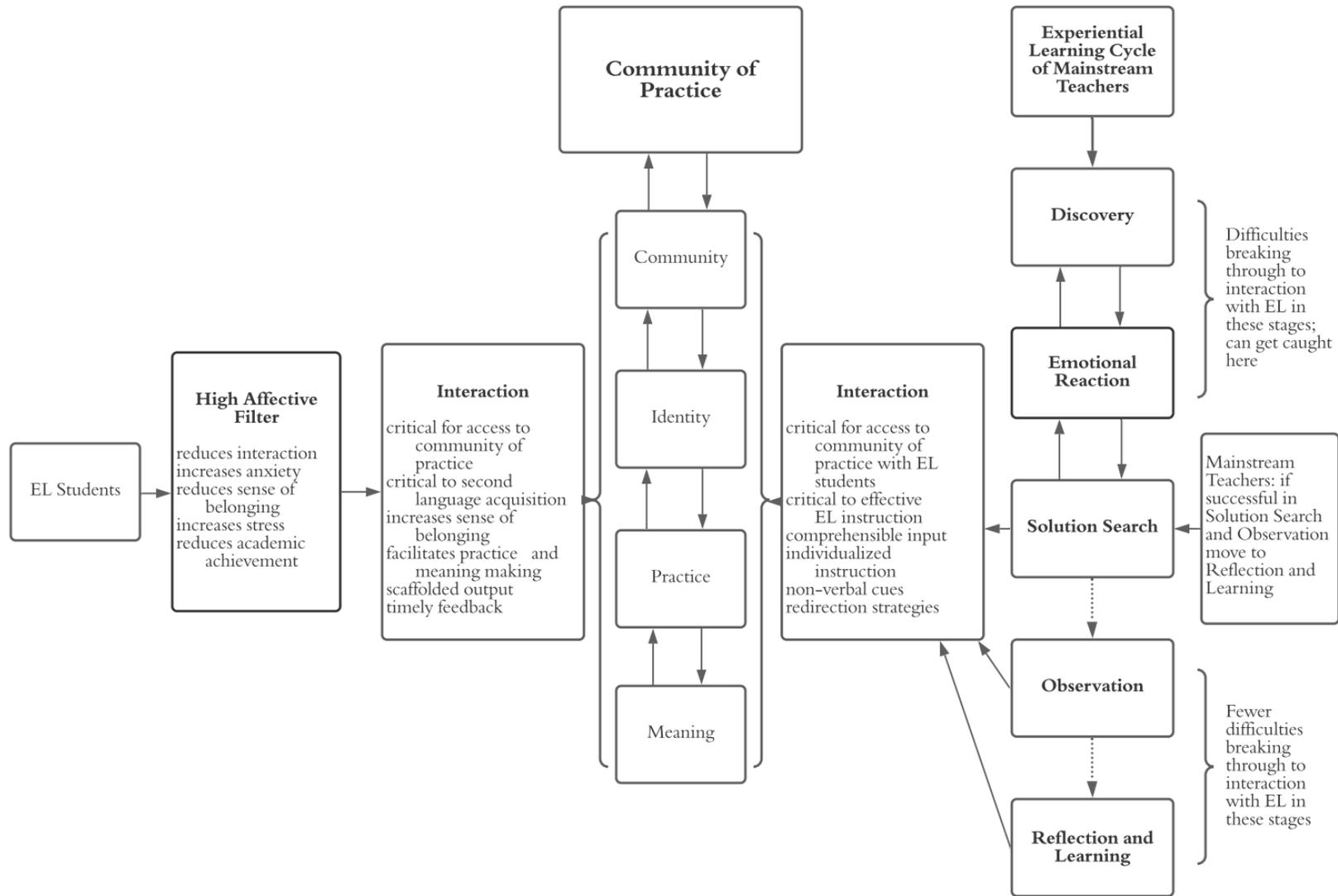
Of the 14 participants, 11 wanted EL students to advocate for themselves in class. They needed the EL students to help them understand the cause of their breakdown in understanding, “When they don’t understand something, we (teachers) do not know whether or not they don’t understand because of language barrier or the concept itself, but when they speak up, we can get them the right help.” (Participant 1, Follow up to Question 8). Another teacher discussed the amount of time it took to try and figure out the specific needs of the EL students: “The unfortunate truth is that teachers don’t often have the time or capacity to check in consistently with every student in a meaningful way; of course, we monitor their work and ask if they need help but we rely on students to be forthcoming about what they are confused about.” (Participant 6, Follow up to Question 8).

Participants explained how they had to make assumptions because students did not self-advocate, “If a student doesn’t speak up the teacher must run on assumptions made.” (Participant 7, Follow up to Question 8). EL student self-advocacy was a major element embedded within the *Solution Search* stage of the ELCMT. When teachers implemented solutions, they observed their EL students for understanding and content proficiency. When they saw something was successful, they would remember the solution and keep it in mind for the next time they were assigned to teach EL students. Learning how to effectively work with EL students occurred through the *Solution Search* and *Observation* stages of the ELCMT and allowed EL students to successfully access the learning Community of Practice. The teacher knew how to facilitate, support, and ensure their access.

This study was the first step towards understanding the different elements of the ELCMT, *Discovery, Emotional Reaction, Solution Search, Observation, and Reflection/Learning*, and how much time teachers spent in each stage, how they functioned within each stage, and how instructional leaders supported their movement between the stages. I also discussed how teachers want their EL students to self-advocate, why they do, and how self-advocacy fit into the ELCMT in the *Solution Search* stage. Figure 4 displays the impact of the EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers on teachers and their attempts at interaction and access to the Community of Practice with EL students.

Figure 4

Conceptual Framework With the ELCMT



Implications for Practice and Policy

The identification of the EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers gave insight into interactions that occurred between mainstream teachers and their English Learner students. The five stages of the cycle will help school system leaders support teachers working with EL students. Teachers expressed a desire for EL students to speak up when they needed help, ask for clarification, and take advantage of the resources available. The major findings, the ELCMT and EL Student self-advocacy, will influence practice and policy which I explain in more detail below.

Implications for Practice.

Understanding the EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers and its impact on EL students who are included in their learning Communities of Practice is an important step towards helping secondary EL students succeed in public education. Studying the five steps of the ELCMT (*Discovery, Emotional Reaction, Solution Search, Observation, Reflection/Learning*) with the intention of discerning the complexities and their influences on teachers and students accessing the learning Community of Practice will enable school system leaders to effectively intervene with professional learning, resources, and effective staffing models.

The ELCMT begins with teachers discovering an unanticipated issue, their EL students lacked the necessary background knowledge or had lower language levels than teachers thought. The type and strength of emotion in the *Emotional Reaction* step is based on the professional learning and previous EL teaching experiences participants had with ELs. If they were experienced EL teachers and had appropriate supports, the transition from *Emotional Reaction* to

Solution Search and then *Observation* of implemented solution was quick. Participants who were new teachers, had little experience teaching EL students, or did not have a co-teacher, expressed high levels of frustration, and spent more time in the *Emotional Reaction* and *Solution Search* stages.

Recommendations. School systems should maintain the approach of inclusive education for EL students but consider the following practices to support mainstream teachers who are experiencing the *Emotional Reaction* and *Solution Search* stages of the ELCMT. First, school leaders need to prepare mainstream teachers prior to the beginning of their class, by sharing a comprehensive educational history, and the implications on content attainment, for every EL student placed in their mainstream courses. Secondary EL students come to the mainstream classroom with a variety of rich experiences but may not come with the same course sequencing and content as native speaking peers due to a difference in home country educational systems. Understanding their educational history is a powerful tool to supporting their current growth and development.

Secondly, every teacher should receive and understand their EL students' current, English language proficiency level. Proficiency levels in each language domain (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) is an important starting point for monolingual, English speaking teachers to understand. Every EL students' rate of English language proficiency growth is unique to the individual. A basic understanding of the progression of language acquisition is important for mainstream teachers in their quest to be successful with EL students. This knowledge will mitigate chances of surprises in the classroom and help teachers choose effective teaching strategies. Empowering teachers with the knowledge of EL students' current level of proficiency will remove a significant variable contributing to the *Emotional Reaction* stage of the ELCMT.

Thirdly, mainstream teachers required to teach EL students must participate in high quality, focused, professional learning about second language acquisition, the meaning of English language proficiency levels, the assets of multilingual learners, and effective pedagogical approaches to enable all students access to the learning Community of Practice. If a mainstream teacher and an EL teacher are in a co-teaching situation the pair should participate in professional learning together. Providing space for co-teachers to build relationships with each other and develop a plan for co-planning and co-instruction will result in a strong experience for all. Preparing teachers will facilitate EL student and teacher interaction which increases a sense of belonging for both parties resulting in language and content learning. We are setting our EL students and our teachers up for failure when we neglect to prepare them for the unique students they are teaching.

Implications for Policy.

In the state where Community County resides, pre-service teacher preparation programs do not have an English Learner requirement. Teachers who graduate with degrees in education may do so without learning how to effectively support English Learner students in their classrooms. They may not be prepared with the strategies and insights they need to help them be successful.

Recommendations. Due to the growth in population of EL students in public schools, the unique nature of working with EL students, and the push towards inclusive education, I recommend policy makers adjust their pre-service teacher requirements. If we increase the amount of time spent learning about EL instructional practices, we are helping pre-service teachers be better prepared for their first, independent teaching experiences.

Another policy change to consider would be reviewing the qualification requirements for becoming EL certified. In the state where Community County resides there are currently two pathways. In the first, a current certified teacher can study for and take an exam which adds an EL certification to their teaching license. The exam tests surface-level knowledge of second language acquisition theory and instructional practices. The second method of becoming an EL certified teacher is a master's degree level program. Programs such as these require coursework in brain and language development, cross cultural communication, second language acquisition theory, specific instruction on teaching the four language domains, assessing second language acquisition, and grammar instruction. In addition to coursework, master's programs require a student teaching component. The discrepancy between the two pathways to EL certification may contribute to underqualified, EL certified teachers who require extra support to learn how to effectively meet the needs of their students.

Future Research

There is little research on effective instruction for secondary English Learner students yet the population of middle and high school students needing English language supports and instruction in the United States is growing rapidly. EL students with lower English language proficiency levels are placed in mainstream courses to learn language and content at the same time. This supports EL students earning credits needed for graduation in a timely fashion. The classroom is a Community of Practice facilitated by a teacher. Students interact with each other and the teacher to practice content, make meaning of learning, build their identities, and become through community. Teachers are the nexus of the learning Community of Practice. Studying their perception of EL students will enable educational leaders to make research based

programmatic decisions supporting teachers working with EL students. I recommend continued research in the following areas.

The mainstream teachers' perspective is one lens on the Community of Practice. There is a need to study the perspectives of English Learner students. What do they think of the Community of Practice? What do they view as obstacles to academic achievement? What do they need from their teachers to feel like they belong and feel confident in self-advocating? There is also a need to study native speaking peers of EL students. Learning about their thoughts and views on EL student inclusion could give unexpected insight into the workings of the learning Community of Practice. Finally, there is a need to continue to study the efficacy of inclusive education for English Learner students.

A second area of study I recommend should focus on effective programming for EL newcomers at the high school level. What pathways to English proficiency and content learning are best? How can public education leaders support effective language instruction and graduation credit acquisition for EL students who are newcomers in the upper grades? Educators need to focus on a specific type of newcomer EL student who are students with interrupted formal education or SIFE students. Many SIFE students enroll in comprehensive high schools yet have a strong desire or need to work during the school day. What is the best type of programming for this unique population? How can educators balance the educational and economic needs of EL students?

There is much to learn about effective education for EL students. Currently, there is not a good system to identify EL students who need acceleration and access to advanced coursework. How can educators assess for content knowledge and advanced skill levels in multiple languages? How can educators provide accelerated coursework for students who are

linguistically diverse? Educators need to study how to meet the needs of linguistically diverse learners but also gifted and talented linguistically diverse learners.

Lastly, there is a need to continue to study effective instruction and communication between diverse English Learners and their monolingual mainstream teachers. In many areas the teaching staff is monolingual, White, and teachers who identify as female. There is a need to study the interaction that occurs in the classroom, and what supports are effective for teachers who work with diverse learners. Educators should continue to learn and listen to teachers' perspectives so educational leaders can be proactive when supporting their staff. How does empowering teachers with the information they need about their English Learners impact their interaction in the learning Community of Practice? What are their perspectives when they know their learners' stories, backgrounds, and meaning of their language levels? Does that influence their interactions and facilitation of the Community of Practice?

Conclusion

All children—regardless of language, culture, and documentation—have a right to access education in the United States. This was defined and supported by the Supreme Court in multiple policy forming rulings. One ruling, *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) stated: “Education has a fundamental role in maintaining the fabric of our society, it provides the basic tools by which individuals might lead economically productive lives to the benefit of us all.” The ruling relied on the Equal Protection Clause, which stated the denial of any person life, liberty, or property residing within its jurisdiction was unconstitutional. The laws granted access to education but did not give guidance on *how to* successfully educate children. Cohen et al. (2007) stated: “Substantial autonomy is given to states and districts in implementing policy, creating a risk of a gap between the intent of federal policies and actual classroom practice.” Public education systems must meet

the linguistic, cultural, and content learning needs of their English Learner students, who come with linguistic diversity, in the best way they can, yet states have the autonomy to decide how to educate their English Learner students. There is little research supporting the development of efficacious EL programs for older, high school aged, English Learners and therefore little guidance for states to use when making EL programmatic decisions.

According to the Migration Policy Institute (n.d.) reports, there were over 4.8 million students in the U.S. public education system requiring English Language services. Yet mainstream teachers who were called upon to work with EL students often had minimal prior experiences and professional training about teaching English Learners which negatively affected their ability to serve their students. Research showed mainstream teachers with minimal knowledge about effectively working with EL students taught in schools where large numbers of immigrant children attended (Pettit, 2011; Callahan, 2005; Verplaetse, 1998). How do mainstream teachers perceive and interact with EL students in the learning Community of Practice? How do they feel about inclusion practices and overcome linguistic challenges?

This study analyzed teacher perception, interaction practices, self-perceptions, and feelings about EL students in inclusive classrooms. I identified similarities between teacher experiences and identified a cycle of learning teachers go through when faced with an unplanned for obstacle in the learning environment. The EL Experiential Learning Cycle of Mainstream Teachers highlighted areas of need for policy and practice. There is a need for professional learning on how to work with EL students for current teachers and a need to embed second language acquisition theory and practices into pre-service teacher education programs. This study also demonstrated the need to intervene with support for teachers during the *Discovery*, *Emotional Reaction* and *Solution Search* stages of the ELCMT. School system leaders must help

teachers find solutions to linguistic obstacles through evidence-based resources, staffing supports, and co-planning time with EL teaching experts. There is also a need to give teachers in-depth profiles for the EL students mainstreamed into their courses. Providing academic and linguistic profiles to all teachers working with EL students will decrease the chances teachers will be faced with unplanned obstacles. Knowing EL students' areas of strength, knowledge gaps, current linguistic abilities, interests, and goals allows teachers to plan comprehensively and better prepare to meet the needs of their students.

“Human differences are normal and learning must be adapted to the needs of the child, rather than the child fitted to the process” (Salamanca Statement, UNESCO, 1994)

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Appendix A

Survey Instrument

English Learner Students in Mainstream Classrooms—A Survey of Teachers (Reeves, 2006)

Section A

Please read each statement and place a check in the box that best describes your opinion.

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. The inclusion of EL students in subject-area classes creates a positive educational atmosphere. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. The inclusion of EL students in subject-area classes benefits all students. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. EL students should not be included in general education classes until they attain a minimum level of English proficiency. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. EL students should avoid using their native language while at school. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. EL students should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Subject-area teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of EL students. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. It is a good practice to simplify coursework for EL students. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. It is a good practice to lessen the quantity of coursework for EL students. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. It is a good practice to allow EL students more time to complete coursework. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Teachers should not give EL students a failing grade if the students display effort. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Teachers should not modify assignments for the EL students enrolled in subject-area classes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. The modification of coursework for EL students would be difficult to justify to other students. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. I have adequate training to work with EL students. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. I am interested in receiving more training in working with EL students. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. I would welcome the inclusion of EL students in my class. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 16. I would support legislation making English the official language of the United States. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

English Learner Students in Mainstream Classrooms—A Survey of Teachers
(Reeves, 2006)

1. How many EL students were enrolled in your classes during the (2019-2020) school year? _____
2. Approximately how many EL students have enrolled in your classes throughout your teaching career? _____

Section B

Which, if any, of the following are descriptive of your classes when EL students are enrolled? Please indicate the extent to which each of the following apply in your classes.

| | Seldom or never | Some of the time | Most or all of the time |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Classroom Practices | | | |
| 1. I allow EL students more time to complete their coursework. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I give EL students less coursework than other students. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I allow an EL student to use their native language in my class. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I provide materials for EL students in their native language. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Effort is more important to me than achievement when I grade EL students. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Impact of Inclusion | | | |
| 6. The inclusion of EL students in my classes increases my workload. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. EL students require more of my time than other students require. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. The inclusion of EL students in my class slows the progress of the entire class. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Teacher Support | | | |
| 9. I receive adequate support from school administration when EL students are enrolled in my classes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. I receive adequate support from the EL staff when EL students are enrolled in my classes.
11. I conference with the EL teacher.

Section C

1. Please list what you consider to be the greatest benefits of including EL students in subject-area classes:

2. Please list what you consider to be the greatest challenges of including EL students in subject area classes:

Section D

Please answer the following questions. Your answers will assist in the categorization of the responses.

1. What subject areas do you teach? (If more than one, please list your primary area first.)
2. How many years have you been a public-school teacher (including this year)?
3. What gender do you identify with?
4. Is English your native language?
5. Do you speak a second language? Yes No
 - a. If yes, please estimate your highest ability level attained:
Beginner Intermediate Advanced
6. Have you received training in teaching EL students? Yes No
 - a. If yes, please describe the type of training (i.e., college coursework, school based professional learning)

7. Please write any additional comments you may have concerning the inclusion of EL students in subject-area classes.

Thank you for completing this survey!

Appendix B

Interview Protocol

Date:

Location:

Participants Pseudonyms:

Time:

Greeting: Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study on EL student interaction in the classroom. I know the time constraints of teachers and am grateful you have dedicated some of your time to this work. I am trying to understand teachers' perspectives of English Learners in their classes, and how that perspective influences EL student interaction.

1. What subject do you teach and how long have you taught it? (*Warm up question*)
2. Have you participated in professional learning about working with English Learner students? (*R₁*)
3. How did you feel about the PL? (*R₁*)
4. How did having EL students assigned to your class impact how you prepared for your lesson? (*R₃, R₄*)
 - a. Probe: If you made changes, what were they?
5. Describe a lesson that worked well for your English Learners and why you think it worked well. (*R₂*)
6. How do you think other teachers feel about teaching English Learners in their mainstream classroom? (*R₂*)
7. How do you think English Learners feel about being in your classroom? (*R₃, R₄*)
8. Imagine you could speak every language your EL students could speak. What advice would you give them about going to high school in the United States? (*R₁, R₂*)
9. Recall a positive interaction that occurred with an EL student during one of your lessons. What led up to the event? Why was it positive? How did you feel afterwards? (*R₁, R₂*)
10. Is there any other information about English Learner students and mainstream teachers you could add that would help me better understand how teachers perceive EL students in their classes? (*R₁*)

Appendix C

IRB Approval Letter



November 18, 2020

Ms. Katherine Gull
401 Rosemont Ave.
Frederick, MD 21701

Dear Ms. Gull,

The Hood College Institutional Review Board reviewed your revised proposal for the study entitled “*English Learner Engagement through Interaction in the Classroom*” (Proposal Number 2021-6). The committee approves this study for a period of 12 months. This approval is limited to the activities described in the procedure narrative and extends to the performance of these activities at each respective site identified in the IRB research proposal. This approval does not authorize you to recruit participants or conduct your study on site at other institutions. Should you decide you would like to systematically recruit participants and/or conduct your study on location at other institutions or facilities you will need to receive IRB approval from those organizations *prior* to any recruitment activities or data collection.

In addition, due to the current COVID 19 precautions, Hood’s IRB is restricting all in-person (e.g. face-to-face) data collection with participants at this time. You may only recruit participants and collect data online. You are not authorized to meet with your participants for the purpose of data collection until notice from this IRB. In accordance with this approval, the specific conditions for the conduct of this research and informed consent from participants must be obtained as indicated.

All individuals engaged in human subjects research are responsible for compliance with all applicable Hood Research Policies:

<https://www.hood.edu/sites/default/files/Hood%20IRB%20Policy%20revised%20September%202013.pdf>.

The Lead Researcher of the study is ultimately responsible for assuring all study team members review and adhere to applicable policies for the conduct of human sciences research.

The Hood College IRB approval expiration date is November 18, 2021. As a courtesy, approximately 30-60 days prior to expiration of this approval, it is your responsibility to apply for continuing review and receive continuing approval for the duration of the study as applicable. Lapses in approval should be avoided to protect the safety and welfare of enrolled participants.

No substantive changes are to be made to the approved protocol or the approved consent and assent forms without the prior review and approval of the Hood IRB. All substantive changes (e.g. change in procedure, number of subjects, personnel, study locations, study instruments, etc.) must be prospectively reviewed and approved by the IRB before they are implemented.

Sincerely,

Diane R. Graves, PhD
Chair, Hood College Institutional Review Board

Appendix D

Sample Coding Scheme for Interview Question 4

| Participant Number | Question 4: How did having EL students assigned to your class impact how you prepared for your lesson? (R_3 , R_4) | Data | Themes |
|--------------------|---|--|--|
| P1 | <p>EL students in the classes I feel that I have to be a lot more careful about the vocabs. I'm teaching the course which is very vocabulary heavy so for EL students I have to be extremely careful about providing lots, lots of pictures to help students understand the terms, the definitions.</p> <p>Um, you know, that kind of goes back though to my personal experience like I don't learn from simply listening to the teachers. I mean, I'm a visual learner, so I tried to provide as many pictures and, you know, ways where students can kind of receive the concept by looking at a picture in addition to the words explanation.</p> | <p>I feel that I have to be a lot more careful about the vocabs</p> <p>I'm teaching the course which is very vocabulary heavy so for EL students I have to be extremely careful about providing lots, lots of pictures to help students understand the terms, the definitions</p> | <p>Emotion</p> <p>Reaction to Emotion</p> |
| P2 | <p>So, it's been interesting because I have a couple of different experiences to draw on. Last year I had a yearlong EL class and it was, you know, strictly an EL class.</p> <p>So that class, obviously I had a lot of huge changes that I made to lessons that I had taught previously in general education classes that and that was a huge deal and then this year I have some EL students.</p> <p>In fact, I have a couple students who are in my yearlong class last year, currently in a general education class, and I've had some eye-opening moments because I feel like because they were placed in my general education class. I feel like I had this impression that they were further along than maybe they were as far as their English development and it's really hard like One day I was working with a student, one on one on a Google meet on, and I was walking through imperialism with him, and I was asking him what I felt were some pretty basic guiding questions. You know, let's work on a definition for imperialism, when a strong nation takes over a weak nation. And he said, Well, what's his weak mean?</p> <p>That kind of stopped me in my tracks. I was like, Whoa, I you know, this was our second unit and I was like, Wow, I have done a disservice to these kids because I in my head I'm like, Well, this is a general</p> | <p>It's been interesting</p> <p>Obviously, I had a lot of huge changes that I made to lessons that I had taught previously in general education classes and that was a huge deal</p> <p>I've had some eye-opening moments because I feel like because they were placed in my general education class.</p> <p>I feel like I had this impression that they were further along than maybe they were as far as their English development and</p> <p>It's really hard</p> <p>That kind of stopped me in my tracks.</p> <p>I was like, whoa, I you know, this was our second unit and I was like, wow, I have done a disservice to</p> | <p>Feeling/Emotion</p> <p>Finding solutions</p> <p>Emotional Reaction to something unknown</p> <p>Discovered unknown information</p> <p>Emotion—reaction was surprise</p> <p>Reaction, feelings, unknown, assumptions about students</p> <p>Feeling/Emotional Reaction</p> <p>Went to colleague and regrouped solutions</p> <p>Reaction to discovering something</p> |

| Participant Number | Question 4: How did having EL students assigned to your class impact how you prepared for your lesson? (<i>R₃</i> , <i>R₄</i>) | Data | Themes |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| | <p>education class with EL students in it rather than I need to really be planning my lessons differently for the EL students so that that have really hit me and a friend of mine that I co- plan with a lot. I was like, whoa, we need to look at what we're doing because, like, this is what we're looking at, like this is the language barrier that still exists even though these students are in our general education class. Um, so that was that was, like, really big.</p> | <p>these kids because in my head I'm like,</p> <p>Well, this is a general education class with EL students in it rather than I need to really be planning my lessons differently for the EL students so that that have really hit me and a friend of mine that I co- plan with a lot. I was like, whoa, we need to look at what we're doing because, like, this is what we're looking at, like this is the language barrier that still exists even though these students are in our general education class.</p> <p>Um, so that was that was, like, really big.</p> | |
| P3 | <p>So, um it caused me to be more thoughtful about the lessons and how they were scaffolded for access to the curriculum. I also was very conscious more conscious of the vocabulary we were using, for example and points of reference.</p> <p>So, our points of reference, uh, in some of our math word problems were not things that we could even translate well or give EL students. Um, access to. It was very difficult even to translate to give them the concepts. And then it got in the way of the mathematics.</p> <p>So just having that point of view helped me rewrite things, make things clearer. Plainly worded, um, and variance of activities where all students could access. So usually using more visuals, using more technology. Um, using more sentence structures and sentence starters. I had not done that before in a math class.</p> <p>Prior, I would give models of things but never frequently used those. And that was something that sentence starters when I create things for my teachers and when I teach in the classroom I frequently use.</p> | <p>So, um it caused me to be more thoughtful about the lessons and how they were scaffolded for access to the curriculum.</p> <p>I also was very conscious more conscious of the vocabulary we were using, for example and points of reference</p> <p>So, our points of reference, uh, in some of our math word problems were not things that we could even translate well or give EL students.</p> <p>So just having that point of view helped me rewrite things, make things clearer. Plainly worded, um, and variance of activities where all students could access.</p> | <p>Reflecting on information</p> <p>Reflecting or observing, aware of self</p> <p>Awareness of what wasn't working—observing or reflecting? Learning</p> <p>Learning after reflecting and shift</p> <p>Reflecting on previous strategies</p> |

| Participant Number | Question 4: How did having EL students assigned to your class impact how you prepared for your lesson? (<i>R₃</i> , <i>R₄</i>) | Data | Themes |
|--------------------|---|--|---|
| P4 | <p>I try to do as much planning as possible and formative assessment as possible.</p> <p>So, what I mean by that is in the beginning of the semester, specifically with my co-taught course. I've also tried to gauge some of their reading levels and comprehension with vocabulary that I can make decisions and instructionally based on interest based upon their reading levels and meet their needs that day and I am much more intentional with the information I collect from students in the beginning of the semester. more than the other classes.</p> | <p>Prior, I would give models of things but never frequently used those.</p> <p>I try to do as much planning as possible and formative assessment as possible.</p> <p>So, what I mean by that is in the beginning of the semester, specifically with my co-taught courses I am much more intentional with the information I collect from students in the beginning of the semester more than the other classes.</p> | <p>Observing—gathering data</p> <p>Learned from past experiences</p> |
| P5 | <p>I do have a high percentage of EL students in my class. I will say that sometimes it makes me rethink some of the texts that I've selected and maybe change those. They still uses some of the beautiful poetic language that is, uh, simplifies it as well. So, they still get the themes. They still get some poetry of it, but it's not quite as complicated. And quite frankly, that certainly benefits my EL students and could probably benefit all of my students.</p> <p>I just I couldn't see a way to do it. But I also tried really hard to make sure that I had audio recordings of what we were doing in class. Um, you know, there was just a text that we were reading because I know that and again, this is the EL students with other students as well for many of them they truly benefit from hearing someone reading the text and then seeing the words and reading them on the screen as well.</p> <p>That's hugely challenging because it's not usually something students could do easily, either the simple or simplified version. It's very hard for them to go home and read and understand on their own.</p> | <p>I will say that sometimes it makes me rethink some of the texts that I've selected and maybe change those.</p> <p>I just I couldn't see a way to do it. But I also tried really hard to make sure that I had audio recordings of what we were doing in class.</p> <p>That's hugely challenging because it's not usually something students could do easily, either the simple or simplified version. It's very hard for them to go home and read and understand on their own.</p> | <p>Reflecting on text choice</p> <p>Couldn't find solution</p> <p>Emotional reaction to student ability</p> |
| P6 | <p>I previously taught at a school that was um probably like, 98% white. And now I teach at a school that's you know very diverse. And, When I first started like that first at first, like that first year, um, it was really difficult realizing that students weren't understanding everything that I said. And so, things that I changed is I changed is well I'm a very quirky teacher. I would like to make up words I so I don't make up</p> | <p>When I first started like that first at first, like that first year, um, it was really difficult realizing that students weren't understanding everything that I said.</p> | <p>Emotional</p> <p>Attempting to help—solution</p> |

| Participant Number | Question 4: How did having EL students assigned to your class impact how you prepared for your lesson? (<i>R₃</i> , <i>R₄</i>) | Data | Themes |
|--------------------|---|---|---|
| P7 | <p>words on the fly with my kids. You can't make up words with kids you know that don't even understand English very well. Yeah. What do you know? Your personality shines through other ways. So, it's okay. It's a little loss.</p> <p>Um virtual learning has been really hard, like in the classroom I would try to be I would try to work with the students and show them by doing side by side math with them, rather than just using my words to explain the steps. I would model it next to them. Things like that.</p> <p>I tried to I have tried various like seating arrangements and having students make sure that are, isolated by themselves away from peers who might be able to help them understand that the EL community, like the students, are very helpful with each other, you know?</p> | <p>I would try to work with the students and show them by doing side by side math with them, rather than just using my words to explain the steps.</p> <p>I would model it next to them.</p> <p>I have tried various like seating arrangements and having students make sure that are, isolated by themselves away from peers who might be able to help them understand that the EL community, like the students, are very helpful with each other, you know?</p> | <p>Strategy use—observe</p> <p>Solution search—EL students make up their own sub CoP?</p> |
| | <p>Uh, well, yearlong is a strange animal. The yearlong class. You know, if I were to put percentages on it, I would say that 85% of the kids are EL and the other 15% we're dealing with uh kids with learning disabilities, primarily uh, dyslexia and dysgraphia. And among those, three are autistic. Us, so I've got, I've got a strange mix going on because you want to meet the needs of the EL kids and, however, the kids who are autistic are, you know, a couple miles down the road. You kind of have to bring them back. and you know, try to meet their needs.</p> <p>So it's an interesting balancing act now. Regular ELs, when I say regular, these are EL kids who have passed whatever requirements or tests they've had to and they've been placed either in honors or in merit classes. And it's a little easier, to meet the needs of the EL kids in merit class. you can do group work with them. You know, you can do break outs with them. and you know remote has been its own animal too? I think if my EL my year longs were together, we could break them out a little better and meet their needs better just because they're physically here. But in merit, I need to, uh, you know, break it out, maybe give them a parallel assignment. But in a different lexile uh however the problem, so in the honors, there has been more difficulty just to get them engaged. So, I think that is a question that we have. I think that is a concern amongst my peers that EL kids in the remote</p> | <p>So it's an interesting balancing act now.</p> <p>We've done our due diligence and the phone calls and getting, you know, their administrators, and their guidance designated guidance person involved, but there are still three I've never seen. And that that bothers me. And I'm one of those that that will bother me, you know, time rolls on. And that bugs me so there you go</p> | <p>Learned from experience</p> <p>Emotional reaction to efforts not working</p> |

| Participant Number | Question 4: How did having EL students assigned to your class impact how you prepared for your lesson? (<i>R₃</i> , <i>R₄</i>) | Data | Themes |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| P8 | <p>situation. I send notes home through talking points in the language of the household.</p> <p>We've done our due diligence and the phone calls and getting, you know, their administrators, and their guidance designated guidance person involved, but there are still three I've never seen. And that that bothers me. And I'm one of those that that will bother me, you know, time rolls on. And that bugs me so there you go</p> <p>So, I've had two very different kinds of experiences. So, the first experience was when I've taught solely every kid in the room out of 20 was EL and I had, I think, two students that spoke pretty fluent English and the rest not so much. Um and so was really tailored information. But it was tailored as a whole group, right? Uh, for everybody, because we're all in that class at a pretty specific level. So, for those students at a lot of your basics, uh, sorry. And then the experience I meant now because students in this intervention course have trouble reading and writing and are below grade level, there are usually two grades below when they come into our program. And a lot of the same EL supports that you would do to accommodate for those students you are also doing for students who had reading and writing issues in general or reading and writing disabilities.</p> <p>So, I'm not necessarily tailoring anything different in my current experience for my EL students, uh, because a lot of the same interventions as providing white space, uh, getting out extraneous information, taking time to define and talk about the vocabulary that's in a problem that might not even have to do with that. Using visuals for word problems, uh, providing a visual providing pictures and seeing, making it as real world as possible.</p> <p>Uh, so that we're not getting into, like, weird. Sometimes its inauthentic, so weird, word problems that have nothing to do with the student's life.</p> <p>I find that technique really helpful with EL students, students who have trouble reading and writing.</p> | <p>And a lot of the same EL supports that you would do to accommodate for those students you are also doing for students who had reading and writing issues in general, or reading and writing disabilities</p> <p>Getting out extraneous information, taking time to define and talk about the vocabulary that's in a problem that might not even have to do with that. Using visuals for word problems, uh, providing a visual providing pictures and seeing, making it as real world as possible</p> <p>Uh, so that we're not getting into, like, weird. Sometimes its inauthentic, so weird, word problems that have nothing to do with the student's life.</p> <p>I find that technique really helpful with EL students, students who have trouble reading and writing</p> | <p>Accurate? Should EL be different?</p> <p>Learned from observation—sounds like reflection</p> <p>Discovering word problems don't work for students</p> <p>Observed and learned</p> |
| P9 | <p>It's a whole different, I guess, thought process that I try to go through because I try to think. OK, well, here's what I would normally do.</p> | <p>OK, well, here's what I would normally do. What roadblocks are</p> | <p>Learning what works</p> |

| Participant Number | Question 4: How did having EL students assigned to your class impact how you prepared for your lesson? (<i>R₃</i> , <i>R₄</i>) | Data | Themes |
|--------------------|--|--|---|
| | <p>What roadblocks are going to hinder their ability to understand what I'm trying to teach. Because, really, science is like a foreign language in itself for students, not only are they trying to comprehend and, you know, switch dialects to English. But then they're also trying to learn science, which is again like a foreign language.</p> <p>So, I really have to I'm trying to consider. What are they going to look at and say, Okay, I don't understand? And then trying to almost guess, what is going to be a problem for them. And I do have grading groups. So, the assignments are slightly modified. Some of the text is simplified and things like that not necessarily that it's a different question. Um, but then I try to simplify the text.</p> | <p>going to hinder their ability to understand what I'm trying to teach.</p> <p>So, I really have to I'm trying to consider. What are they going to look at and say, Okay, I don't understand. And then trying to almost guess, what is going to be a problem for them.</p> | <p>Solution search, observe, learn</p> |
| P10 | <p>So, I think one of the biggest things with having a SIOP training is changing the way I thought about and displayed my objectives. So having language objectives as well as a learner outcome objective, parceling it out based on not just, like content specific how and why, but language related goals, like by writing or by speaking or by listening, including those goals, and adding to my objectives in that way. So, I always put them on the board, but now I include them in a shorter form, usually at the top of my documents. So, the students are aware of not only their content goals, but they're their language goals as well.</p> <p>So that's just one of the biggest maybe changes I add a lot more picture clues like if we're going to be doing analysis or summarizing.</p> <p>I have little picture icons that I include in my documents now. So, they know that this section they should be demonstrating understanding in writing or in this section, they should be turning and talking to a partner in this section they should be, um, calculating or, you know, whatever, whatever it maybe so. I try to include the picture clues like on the margin of their documents. Now they kind of know what the expectations are as they're working. And I do a lot more front loading of vocabulary. But those words those root words can be used throughout the semester to help them break down big new works that they see and we refer back to those roots often.</p> | <p>So, I always put them on the board, but now I include them in a shorter form</p> <p>So that's just one of the biggest maybe changes I add a lot more picture clues like if we're going to be doing analysis or summarizing.</p> <p>I have little picture icons that I include in my documents now. So, they know that this section they should be demonstrating understanding in writing or in this section</p> | <p>Learned so adjusted</p> <p>Adjusted to experiential learning</p> <p>Strategies based on experience with EL</p> |
| P11 | <p>I focused on vocabulary and word walls, I focused on language and content objectives. I slowed down my rate of speech. I looked at my</p> | <p>I focused on vocabulary and word walls, I focused on language and</p> | <p>Strategies for EL, Learned</p> |

| Participant Number | Question 4: How did having EL students assigned to your class impact how you prepared for your lesson? (<i>R₃</i> , <i>R₄</i>) | Data | Themes |
|--------------------|---|---|---|
| | word choice and chose words they would understand. I highlighted important pieces of information so they could focus on the important things and not all of the extra details. I did station rotation so I could work with them in smaller groups, I adjusted my expectations for writing. I changed what I expected from my ELs. | content objectives. I slowed down my rate of speech. I looked at my word choice and chose words they would understand. I highlighted important pieces of information so they could focus on the important things and not all of the extra details. | |
| P12 | <p>I would say the time I was most impacted was last spring. When I had a class of, I think it was 12 or 13 seniors who were all EL and needed English 11 to graduate. And then I had another class. That had a significant EL population and they were in the same situation. And I did find myself more, kind of like one of the modifications I made was for vocabulary. I relied more heavily on pictures and having them write about the pictures or find pictures to um represent their understanding of the word and use the word in a sentence or something like that. That's probably my biggest and then overall pace</p> <p>And but again, like, it's hard for me because I've taught the lowest readers for so long. A lot of what I do and all of my classes is because of my teaching special ed. I like the scaffolding chunking and assignments and stuff like that.</p> | <p>And I did find myself more, kind of like one of the modifications I made was for vocabulary. I relied more heavily on pictures and having them write about the pictures or find pictures to um represent their understanding of the word and use the word in a sentence or something like that.</p> <p>It's hard for me because I've taught the lowest readers for so long. A lot of what I do and all of my classes is because of my teaching special ed.</p> | <p>Searched for solutions, made modifications, observed, learned</p> <p>Feelings/Emotions</p> |
| P13 | <p>I think if you chunk things into smaller bits, uh, units are you know, things are a lot more, uh, I don't know the word I want to use here, is concise, compacted. Rather, you might do something I might do two days might take three or four days just to make sure that we're, uh, making sure they understand it. You know a lot of them are really, you know, really have low skills in English. Uh, some of them are, you know, to the point where they're ready to be released into mainstream with an honest, but it's a real diverse group. I have 18,19,18 19 to 28 are EL . And you know I would say 8 or 10 of them really, Uh, yeah.</p> <p>I have a co teacher who's incredibly wonderful to translate things into Spanish to them a lot. She speaks in Spanish. some of them are just, they don't understand the whole lot I'm saying you know you know the ones that actually come into the building now, a few look at me like I don't get what you're saying. and then sometimes they really want to do really well. So, it's a real gamut in the building</p> | <p>I don't know the word I want to use here, is concise, compacted. Rather, you might do something I might do two days might take three or four days just to make sure that we're, uh, making sure they understand it.</p> <p>A co teacher who's incredibly wonderful to translate things into Spanish to them a lot. She speaks in Spanish. some of them are just, they don't understand the whole lot I'm saying you know you know the ones that actually come into the building now, a few look at me like I don't get what you're saying.</p> | <p>Adjusted lessons</p> <p>Grateful for translation— not using strategies?</p> |

| Participant Number | Question 4: How did having EL students assigned to your class impact how you prepared for your lesson? (<i>R₃</i> , <i>R₄</i>) | Data | Themes |
|--------------------|--|--|--|
| P14 | <p>I wasn't really cognizant of some of the verbiage that I would use even in just like basic questions.</p> <p>I think I pay attention to not just like what I write inside that are very content specific. But even with the questions that I'm asking students on formative and summative assessments i have to make sure the vocabulary is very accessible. My main focus over the last year is really making sure that you know the terminology being used in the academic language, not just as it pertains to my content, but even just like directions or basic questions, really making sure that that language makes sense for everyone.</p> | <p>I wasn't really cognizant of some of the verbiage that I would use even in just like basic questions.</p> <p>I think I pay attention to not just like what I write inside that are very content specific. But even with the questions that I'm asking students on formative and summative assessments</p> <p>My main focus over the last year is really making sure that you know the terminology being used in the academic language, not just as it pertains to my content, but even just like directions or basic questions.</p> | <p>Reflection</p> <p>Reflection</p> <p>Adjusted for EL, Learning</p> |