

**Examining the Challenges of Content Teachers' Readiness to Educate English Language  
Learners (ELLs)**

by

Kelly Mancuso

August 6, 2023

Supervised by

Dr. Mahmoud Altalouli

A master's thesis capstone project submitted to the Department of Education and Human  
Development of SUNY Brockport in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Science in Education in TESOL

**Table of Contents**

Abstract.....3

Chapter 1: Introduction .....4

Chapter 2: Literature Review.....7

Chapter 3: Description of the Product & Tools.....22

Chapter 4: Conclusion.....30

References.....33

Appendices .....41

Appendix A: This is ME!.....41

Appendix B: Acrostic Poem.....42

Appendix C: English Proficiency Levels.....43

Appendix D: MPSD Lesson Plan Template.....44

Appendix E: ELL Lesson Plan Template.....45

Appendix F: PD Slideshow.....50

### **Abstract**

This project aims to support general education teachers to be prepared to teach English Language Learners (ELLs) in their classrooms. With the increasing number of ELLs in public schools across the United States, teachers who have the background, training, and/or knowledge of how to successfully teach ELLs has increased now more than ever. However, there have been an alarming number of teachers who find themselves unprepared to teach the ELLs being placed inside their classrooms. Research has identified three reasons that teachers find themselves ill-prepared to teach ELLs: inadequacy of proper training programs for pre-service teachers, insufficient professional development (PD) opportunities for teachers, and a misunderstanding of cultural needs/diversity within the classroom. Solutions to this problem is for colleges to have training programs for preservice teachers, holding mandatory PD meetings for teachers, and to get to know your ELLs. To address these problems, a PD meeting is designed be held at Laddie A. Decker Sound Beach School (LADSBS) to inform and train teachers on how to successfully teach ELLs. The goal of this PD is to provide general education teachers with information, strategies, and additional resources on how to successfully teach ELLs. Recommendations for future research include training pre-service teachers before getting into the classroom on how to omit preconceived ideas on ELLs, to be more compassionate towards ELLs and to learn how to co-teach effectively with other ENL teachers.

*Keywords:* English Language Learners, general education teachers, professional development, language acquisition, culturally responsive teaching

## Chapter 1: Introduction

One of the most important tasks of an educator is to not only teach our students, but to also witness and recognize different realities and challenges within the education system so that we can try to change them and create a better future. During my undergraduate career on my journey to becoming a teacher, I had the opportunity to step into the role of a student teacher in an English as a New Language (ENL) classroom. This opportunity not only offered me a profound insight into the unique challenges faced by English Language Learners (ELLs) on a daily basis, but it also provided me with a firsthand glimpse into some of the challenges faced by the educator's responsible for their instruction. Having witnessed the struggles and triumphs that ELLs face inside the classroom firsthand, I became extremely aware and educated of the critical role that teachers play in helping foster ELLs' linguistic and academic growth.

Teachers of ELLs are challenged with teaching material and meeting the needs of a diverse group of learners from a variety of linguistic backgrounds. However, many teachers, despite their best intentions, find themselves ill-equipped and unprepared to meet the unique needs of these language learners. According to the Education Commission of the States (2023), at least 28 states provide for specific qualifications or pre-service and in-service training and professional development for classroom teachers and only 39 states provide for training and professional development for EL teachers.

My cooperating teacher at the time addressed her concerns on the lack of preparedness she had to effectively teach and address the unique needs of ELLs inside her classroom. This concern made me self-reflect on my own experiences, which helped me realize that I too was unprepared to effectively teach and meet the needs of ELLs, the fastest growing population of students in U.S. public schools. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2023),

the ELL population in the U.S. public schools increased from about 9% or 4.5 million in the fall of 2010 to about 10% or 5.0 million during fall 2020. With the increasing number of ELLs in public schools, teachers are finding ELLs being placed in mainstream classes now more than ever before (Baker & Wright, 2021; Davenport, 2021). However, this alarms teachers because they feel ill-prepared to teach the ELLs that are placed inside their mainstream classrooms.

The three influential factors that affect a teachers' preparedness when teaching bilingual students includes inadequacy of proper training programs for pre-service teachers and insufficient professional development (PD) opportunities for teachers (Kim, S. & Morita-Mullaney, 2020), which result in teachers lacking knowledge on how to effectively teach and work with ELLs. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2018), among teachers who teach ELL students, 12.5% received more than eight hours of training over a three-year period. As a result, many teachers are not qualified or hold the knowledge or certifications to be able to provide ELLs with adequate instruction (Ruiz, 2020). To ensure preservice teachers are ready to teach ELLs, colleges have started to include pre-professional preparation programs for teachers to help bridge the huge gap that exists in understanding and meeting the academic needs of ELLs (Li & Peters, 2020).

Little to no training for teachers can lead to significant impacts on the language learner's educational experiences and outcomes. For example, ELLs tend to have a lower achievement test scores in reading and mathematics than their peers (Soland & Sandilos, 2021). This is due to a lack of teachers' training to properly support ELLs in learning a new language and gaining a second language proficiency. ELLs who aren't being supported on how to read and write a second language have been seen to have a large achievement gap from their English speaking peers. This gap can be seen in certain academic test scores where ELLs score lower than their

English speaking peers (Soland, 2019). Therefore, it is crucial that all teachers receive proper training on how to effectively teach ELLs as they may be placed inside their classrooms.

Motivated by these experiences, this paper explores the reasons behind this unpreparedness and proposes strategies that can help educate teachers on how to better serve the unique needs of ELLs inside their classroom in order to provide a more inclusive and equitable education system for bilingual students. This paper also aims to rectify the lack of training for teachers and empowers teachers to support ELLs effectively. Next, Chapter 2 will review the literature that emphasizes the importance of teachers being adequately prepared to instruct ELLs. In Chapter 3, I will describe the PD that I have created to help address the lack of proper training for teachers who teach ELLs, equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively support ELLs, improve academic outcomes and opportunities for ELL and help foster an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment. In Chapter 4, I will conclude with implications for teaching and preparing educators to teach ELLs.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

As described in Chapter 1, many teachers feel unprepared to teach ELLs despite the increase of ELL population in U.S. public schools. This feeling is a result of insufficient training for ELL teachers. In this Chapter, I review the literature that explores the factors contributing to the lack of teacher preparedness, as well as the effects on ELLs' educational outcomes. This review also presents strategies that can improve teachers' preparedness to support ELLs. The three themes emerged from the literature include: inadequacy of proper training programs for pre-service teachers, insufficient professional development (PD) opportunities for teachers, and a misunderstanding of cultural needs/diversity in the classroom.

Before I discuss each of these themes, I first present Language Acquisition Theory (Krashen, 1982) and Culturally Responsive Teaching (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1994). These two theoretical constructs provide an explanation for the limitations in teacher preparation and training to effectively teaching ELLs.

### **Understanding Language Acquisition and Culturally Responsive Teaching**

Language acquisition for ELLs is a complex process that involves many factors such as exposure to meaningful language input, social interactions with others, and cultural contexts. According to Krashen's (1982) input hypothesis theory, ELLs can acquire language through comprehensible input, i.e., the language that is slightly beyond an ELLs current proficiency level but one that they can still understand. This theory also suggests that ELLs learn best when they are exposed to language that is challenging yet one that they are able to understand, as this allows ELLs to gradually expand their language skills (Oller, 1988).

According to Ellis (2020), ELLs who receive comprehensible input learn the language more effectively because it allows them to gradually increase their language development. Since

comprehensible input can be effective to an ELLs' language development, it is important for teachers to provide comprehensible input throughout their lessons. Comprehensible input can be executed in two ways: linguistic and non-linguistic. To teach comprehensible input linguistically, teachers can decrease their rate of speech to students and talk in a clear, concise tone (Ellis, 2020). Teaching information at a slower speed with great articulation allows more time to process the new information and helps ELLs acquire the language. To teach comprehensible input non-linguistically and not rely solely on verbal language, teachers can use visual aids, realia, and non-verbal cues with prompts (Krashen, 1982).

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is an educational approach that helps teachers not only recognize, but value, the different cultural backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives that their students have (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1994). This concept is beneficial to teachers of ELLs because it allows them to promote inclusive learning environments within their classroom that helps to affirm and support students from a wide variety of cultures and backgrounds (Echevarria et al., 2020). To ensure CRT is happening inside the classroom, teachers can acknowledge and appreciate the diverse cultures inside their classrooms by learning about the different identities and backgrounds of their students. This will help them build an inclusive classroom environment, one that fosters learning while valuing and respecting various cultures (Gay, 2010) as well as significantly improve ELLs' academic outcomes, language proficiency, and engagement in the classroom (Echevarria et al., 2020). To do so, teachers can integrate culturally relevant content that incorporates students' cultural backgrounds into instruction.

### **Insufficient Training for ELL Teachers**

Many educators who are expected to teach ELLs lack the necessary knowledge and skills due to two main factors. First, during their college courses or undergraduate education, they



often do not receive sufficient training or coursework that specifically addresses the needs of ELLs (Cramer & Ryan, 2023). In recent years, we have seen ELLs being placed in both bilingual education classrooms, as well as mainstream classrooms. Inside these classrooms, students need extra support, guidance and motivation to achieve their learning goals (Collier & Thomas, 2017). However, there is a shortage of bilingual teachers despite the increasing number of bilingual students (Collier & Thomas, 2017; Cramer & Ryan, 2023; Darling-Hammond, 2000), and as a result many general education teachers find themselves teaching more and more ELLs in mainstream classrooms.

Many teachers expected to instruct bilingual students lack the required training, skills, and knowledge necessary to effectively address the unique needs of ELLs. These teachers are finding themselves ill prepared to teach ELLs due to the lack of pre-service classes or courses during their undergraduate education (Cramer & Ryan, 2023), which would have provided them with the necessary foundational knowledge. Additionally, many ELLs are being placed in general education classrooms with general education teachers who are not qualified to provide ELLs with adequate instruction (Lin, 2018).

In the 2017-2018 school year, about 9.6% of public-school teachers in the United States reported having to teach ELLs inside their mainstream classrooms; however, only about 10% of those teachers had a bilingual or English as a second language (ESL) certification (NCES, 2022). With such a small number of teachers who have a bilingual or ESL certification, it is important that colleges train their pre-service teachers before graduating and entering the classroom. In their study of pre-service college courses, Guerrettaz et al. (2022) took a look at these teacher programs at a local college to study how these courses helped pre-service teachers become better teachers to ELLs. During this study, participants in an undergraduate TESOL survey course took

part in an ELL lesson through classroom discourse, focus groups, written reflections, and background questionnaires. After completing the ELL lessons, it was found that pre-service teachers tend to feel a sense of empathy towards ELLs, and how effective training programs help pre-service teachers gain proper training, knowledge, and experience that is needed to effectively teach their bilingual students (Guerrettaz, 2022 et al., 2023).

Training programs for pre-service teachers will also help allow teaches to gain certification. Since bilingual students are three times more likely than non-ELL students to have teachers that lack experience of credentialing, these training programs that lead to certification would decrease this statistic. It is important that preservice teachers receive training and support well after graduation, such as professional development meetings, collaboration with co-teachers and staff and administration support (Davidson, 2006). Teachers who receive the proper training and staff support will be better educators and ELLs will produce greater efficiency.

Second, even after becoming teachers, they may have limited access to professional development opportunities (PD) that focus on ELL instruction (Collier & Thomas, 2017; Cramer & Ryan, 2023). However, PD sessions are essential for ongoing teacher growth and improvement, particularly when it comes to understanding and effectively teaching ELLs (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Without access to relevant PDs, teachers may feel ill-prepared and struggle to meet the unique needs of their ELL students, leading to potential challenges in their academic development and overall success. In fact, General education teachers who are not prepared to teach ELLs put those students at risk and is no doubt a contributing factor to the persistent achievement gap in educational outcomes between ELLs and non-ELL students (NCES, 2020).

Multiple studies have shown that ELLs who are placed in regular education classrooms tend to perform poorly on assessments because general education teachers are not equipped with the proper knowledge of appropriate instructional strategies to support both the academic and linguistic needs of ELLs (Alegria, 2014). The National Assessment of Educational Progress ([NAEP], 2016) collected data that showed an achievement gap among ELLs and their non-ELLs counterpart (NAEP 2016). On this reading assessment, a student must score a 232 out of 500 points to be considered a proficient reader. However, ELLs scored 43 points below the proficient level on the reading assessment (189 out of 500 points), while English native speakers scored at the proficient (level 232 out 500 points) in the reading assessment (NAEP, 2016). The NAEP (2016) reading assessment scores show that only 8% of ELLs performed at the proficient reading level while 39% of non-ELLs performed at the proficient reading level. This achievement gap is attributed to general education teachers delivering core subject lessons in English, a language that ELLs may not fully understand yet (NAEP, 2016).

Overall, insufficient training for ELL) teachers can result in teachers misunderstanding the cultural needs and diversity of their students within the classroom. In turn, this misunderstanding can create barriers to effective communication and hinder the students' academic and social progress (Echevarria et al., 2020; Gay, 2010). Thus, there is a clear necessity for offering training programs for pre-service teachers, which I discuss next.

### **Offering Training Programs for Pre-service Teachers**

One way to enhance teachers' readiness to support ELLs is by offering training programs for pre-service teachers. Among those programs, it is ideal that colleges offer training to teach ELLs and embed it into their curriculum in undergraduate programs. As the number of ELLs in today's classroom continue to rise, there has been tremendous attention and focus on how

prepared preservice teachers are to work with ELLs inside the classroom (Hutchinson, 2013).

Colleges all across the United States are focused on helping preservice teachers facilitate their learning on who ELLs are and how to teach them effectively. Offering training programs to preservice teachers gives them three different benefits: omitting pre-conceived ideas on ELLs, being compassionate towards ELLs, and ways on how to effectively co-teach with other educators.

### **College Courses That Omit Preconceived Ideas on ELLs**

With the increase of students whose primary language is not English it is crucial that all teachers understand and practice working with ELLs. This is especially true for preservice teachers who have not had any opportunities to work with ELLs yet and therefore may have formed preconceived ideas about bilingual students. Before entering the field, preservice teachers need the support in order to nurture their developing abilities in both pedagogy and knowledge of bilingual students while they try to navigate the many complexities of the bilingual classroom (Wall & Hurie, 2017). Teachers hold many misconceptions about second language learning and feel underprepared to teach ELLs (Pettit, 2011).

To ensure preservice teachers are ready to teach ELLs, mandatory college courses are offered to help not only bridge the gap that exists in understanding and meeting the academic needs of ELLs, but also to omit any negative thoughts on ELLs prior to classroom experience (Hutchinson, 2013). Colleges all across the United States are focused on helping preservice teachers facilitate their learning on who ELLs are and how to teach them effectively to help omit those misconceptions.

College courses are being offered to help pre-service teachers to omit any negative feelings that they may have regarding ELLs before entering the classroom. These courses focus on helping preservice teachers identify and omit any misconceptions or preconceived ideas they

might have. It is important to squash these misconceptions because the assumptions and negative ideas can shape the starting point for teaching in the classroom (Markos, 2012). One big misconception that teachers have when teaching bilingual students is that they shouldn't use their first language (L1) when learning a second language (L2). Teachers believe that using an L1 hinders the learning of an L2 for ELLs because they use their L1 as a "crutch" (Hutchinson, 2013). However, having bilingual students use their L1 to learn an L2 can be extremely beneficial. According to De La Campa and Nassaji, (2009), using the L1 to learn an L2 helps connects new concepts to preexisting knowledge which helps to create better chances for language learning success.

During one study at a college in Pennsylvania, researchers studied 25 pre-service teachers in a mandatory college course that focused on language acquisition. These teachers expressed that students' L1 should not be used to help learn an L2. During this study, teachers were given a Language Attitude of Teachers Scale (LATS) survey and were also required to complete a field experience in a bilingual classroom. Prior to the course, preservice teachers LATS survey showed that they believed that learning English should be a priority for non-English-proficient students even if that means they lose the ability to speak their native language (Hutchinson, 2013). At the conclusion of the semester, the data collected were reviewed and it was found that through observations in the ENL classroom and a decrease in score from the LATS pre and posttests, there was an increased tolerance in the preservice teachers' beliefs about ELLs using their L1 to help learn the L2 (Hutchinson, 2013). Students who use their L1 in an L2 classroom aid in comprehension and language development (Debreli, 2016). This finding shows that preservice teachers who are exposed and educated on ELLs change their assumptions and learn how to effectively teach, engage and welcome ELLs into their future classrooms.

Since many preservice teachers believe that use of L1 within L2 classrooms have a limited role on L2 learning progress (Almohaimed & Almurshed, 2018), another study was conducted on educators teaching at an Indonesian University to help understand their views on using students' L1 in the L2 classroom. During this study, the preservice teacher educators participated in surveys throughout their college course that focused on linguistics, research, and English for your learners; language skills, such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing for academic purposes; as well as teaching practices and community service program (Abid, 2020). Applying a qualitative research approach with semi-structured interviews and multiple classroom observation field notes, results yielded that teachers believe using an L1 played a limited role in learning a second language (Çelik & Aydın, 2018). Results show that at the end of the course, teachers learned a great deal of knowledge and changed their perceptions on using L1 to learn an L2. Preservice teachers found that using an L1 to learn their L2 helps students understand specific concepts or instructions, with L2 linguistic breakdowns, and the L1 use helps in creating an enjoyable and stimulating L2 classroom (Abid, 2020).

This college course allowed preservice teachers to change their misconception of students using their L1 to learn an L2 and how the use of the L1 in the L2 classroom is particularly beneficial. Using the L1 eases the transition and serves as a bridge to learning the L2, enabling students to develop L2 proficiency and learning in both languages (Bruen & Kelly, 2017).

### **College Courses that Prepare Pre-Service Teachers to be Compassionate**

It is no surprise that preservice teachers lack the readiness to teach ELLs (Halpern & Aydın, 2021). Preservice teachers are feeling lost because they have had little to no undergraduate preparation in their degree programs on how to facilitate or truly connect with the diverse student population among their classroom (Zhang, 2016). Due to this, pre-service

teachers find it hard to truly connect with their bilingual students and be more compassionate towards them as they navigate learning an L2. Colleges across the United States offer a wide variety of college courses that pre-service teachers are required to take to ensure that they learn how to be more compassionate towards the ELLs in their classrooms.

Colleges offering pre-service teachers mandated courses on how to effectively learn, and teach, bilingual students is so important because it helps them understand ELLs and diminishes preconceived feelings or ideas which can affect their teaching. Once preservice teachers can identify those preconceived ideas, they need to be guided on how to change those assumptions since those negative ideas can shape the starting point for teaching in the classroom (Markos, 2012)

One specific study was conducted at the Southwest Florida Public University and included 37 pre-service teachers. This study aimed at researching if an upper-level undergraduate course for preservice teachers could help prepare the teachers to be culturally aware and compassionate towards ELLs. In Florida, the state ranks third in the ELL population in the country and is home to 20.5% of foreign-born citizens (Florida Department of Education, 2019).

During this study, pre-service teachers completed many assignments to help them learn more, and observe ELLs. Such activities included: in-class and online discussions, group projects about bilingual education, constructing a book report about bilingual students, wrote a research-based paper about the challenges that ELLs face in public schools, and engaged in a 12-week field experience in a local school district under a cooperating teacher where they were also expected to self-reflect often and take notes during their field experiences (Halpern & Aydin, 2021). The self-reflection questions helped preservice teachers to critically reflect on their attitudes and feelings concerning bilingual students and helped them develop culturally

responsive teaching skills and strategies that could be applied to a future classroom (Sue & Sue, 2013).

After collecting the data, there was an increase of compassionate competence that the preservice teachers had gained during the course of the study. Preservice teachers noted that they had become more compassionate towards bilingual students by learning about how difficult school and home life could be for ELLs and the struggles that ELLs can face in the United States as well as in the classroom (Halpern & Aydin, 2021). When teachers are able to put themselves in the shoes of the ELLs in their class, the teachers will be more conscious of the students' challenges, frustrations and feelings (Steward, 2010 as cited in Zhang, 2016). Results also showed that preservice teachers understood the students' instructional and emotional needs in the classroom more by learning to be more patient, understanding and supporting the emotional needs of ELLs in the classroom.

This study was successful in that it allowed preservice teachers to learn how to be more compassionate and empathetic towards ELLs in the classroom which led to the teachers understanding ELLs' emotional and educational needs. Thus, the preservice teachers were able to gain compassionate competence towards ELLs which better prepared them to be superior teachers in the future.

Since preservice teachers received little to no undergraduate training, preservice teachers often lack compassion, empathy and understanding in ELLs. However, it is extremely important for preservice teachers to learn to be compassionate and understanding towards bilingual students. Many research studies have been conducted to assess the effectiveness of preparation programs for preservice teachers on the importance of connecting with bilingual students.



Another study conducted by Zhang (2016) included preservice music teachers who were college education majors and aimed at studying the importance of teachers having empathy and compassion for their students and what could happen if preservice teachers don't have empathy or understand their students. In this study, Zhang designed a classroom cultural immersion experience among several preservice music teachers to help develop their empathy and increase their awareness of the importance of providing meaningful connections with ELLs (Zhang, 2016). When teachers are empathetic and create meaningful connections with their students, it helps to support an inclusive learning environment that considers the unique challenges and experiences of ELLs (Wassell et al., 2017).

Zhang started off his undergraduate class with a language shock choral rehearsal. As soon as he entered the room, he taught for 20 minutes in Mandarin, only using some visual aids, leaving the preservice music teachers to be immersed in a classroom where Chinese was the only language being spoke. However, although the preservice teachers did not speak or understand Mandarin, they were still able to follow some directions given, because Zhang used hand gestures to invite them to participate and respond to him (Zhang, 2016). At the end of class Zhang had asked the teachers how they felt about the cultural immersion experience. He found that many pre-service teachers felt overwhelmed, confused and a sense of helplessness when they were unable to understand the teacher's instructions (Zhang, 2016). After this challenge, the preservice teachers were able to become more culturally and linguistically responsive as they experienced what it must feel like to be an ELL inside a mainstream class.

This study helped preservice teachers feel the certain challenges, difficulties and frustrations ELLs might feel and how important it is to be sensitive and understanding to ELLs specific feelings and learning needs (Zhang, 2016). Teachers who fail to have an empathetic

relationship with his/her students, often misunderstands the students' needs for learning (Zhang, 2016). This could pose a problem because educators need to be knowledgeable about students' culture so they can use appropriate instructional materials and engage them in different activities to meet their needs (Karkar, 2022).

### **College Courses that Prepare Pre-Service Teachers to Co-Teach**

With the increasing rise of ELLs in our school district, it comes as no surprise that many of the mainstream classrooms include ELLs in them. A mainstream classroom contains both general education students and ELLs, so co-teaching between both the general education teacher and ENL teacher is imperative. Co-teaching is a recognized approach to ensure that the teachers are meeting the needs of all the students in the classroom while also ensuring that they provide tailored, timely language support for ELLs (Li & Sun, 2023).

Since co-teaching is so important in today's classrooms that contain ELLs, there is a pressing need for colleges to teach their preservice teachers the implications and barriers that co-teaching brings (Bauler & Kang, 2020). According to Li and Sun (2023), ESL teachers cannot be used as a resource, a teaching aid, or an ELL dumping ground, but rather they are an equal educational partner in sharing the responsibilities of ELL teaching with the general education teacher. Therefore, it is important that colleges educate preservice teachers on the positive effects that co-teaching has on ELLs, so that all preservice teachers will gain the correct knowledge and tools to effectively co-teach with the general education teacher.

Today, many school districts use co-teaching and it is a "recognized approach to addressing the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) in schools around the world as a way to include ELLs in the mainstream classroom while granting these students access to grade-level content (Davison, 2006). There are many advantages to having ELLs inside the mainstream

classroom and not in traditionally practiced bilingual programs, such as the pull-out method.

However, it is imperative that both the general education teacher and the ENL teacher co-teach with one another.

In one particular study, researchers conducted a three-year long study on 7 ESOL teachers in a linguistically diverse K-12 school district located on Long Island, New York. This school district contained 6,900 students and 18% were considered ELLs (NYSED, 2023). All 7 ESOL teachers were paired with a content teacher and co-taught both general education students, as well as ELLs, in a variety of subject areas. During this research, data was collected through surveys, field notes, informal interviews and language test scores. From all the data collected, researchers found that co-teaching was successful when the teachers shared and implemented ideas with one another (Bauler & Kang, 2020). Teachers who openly communicated, shared ideas with one another and were on the same page found that the lessons went more smoothly and thus ended up being more effective.

Another finding from the study was that a total 79.2% of teachers found that all students' academic language was improved while co-teaching (Bauler & Kang, 2020). ELLs' language development improved when they received content teaching from both the general education teacher as well as the ENL teacher. These numbers suggest that "teachers viewed co-teaching as beneficial to both ELLs and non-ELLs alike with respect to academic language development, peer collaboration, and oral and written discourse" (Bauler & Kang, 2020, p. 350). This is seen in a similar study done by Ferrand & Deeg (2021) where they researched the effects that co-teaching had on ELLs' language development. During this study, one ENL teacher and one general education teacher implemented various co-teaching models to support all students in developing English and Spanish literacy skills.

One co-teaching model that was used was the 'team-teaching' where two teachers teach the same concept (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2018). Both teachers taught vocabulary words during mathematics instruction and through video recordings and focus groups, data was collected that showed how students' progress in literacy development had increased (Ferrand & Deeg, 2021). This data shows that when both teachers co-taught with one another students' vocabulary and literacy skills improved. Pre-service teacher preparation programs are vital to help guide teachers and gain skills to effectively collaborate and gain efficiency in teaching ELLs (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2018).

ELLs not only benefit from collaborating with one another, but they benefit when their teachers collaborate with each other in the planning and delivery of instruction (Rodriguez, 2013). Researchers have found that collaboration between teachers improve ELLs academic achievement, behavior, and overall relationships (Rodriguez, 2013). When teachers co-teach and collaborate one another, it has an overall positive effect on the academic achievement of the ELLs in the classroom. Therefore, it is important that preservice teachers can learn how to co-teach in their college courses.

### **Summary**

In essence, teachers often lack the necessary preparation to effectively educate ELLs. This deficiency stems from several critical factors, including the lack of teacher preparation programs, limited professional development (PD) opportunities, and an inadequate understanding of diversity and cultural nuances within the classroom. These issues can impact ELLs' academic performance and contribute to the achievement gap between ELLs and non-ELLs. One way to decrease the achievement gap in ELLs is for teachers to become more knowledgeable in how to successfully teach ELLs.

Studies have been conducted that show how important PD sessions are for our teachers. Professional development sessions allow teachers to learn important knowledge and experiences that can help sustain learning and applicability to their classrooms (Kenny et al., 2020). In order to improve the quality of our schools and teaching abilities of our teachers, it is important to hold effective and impactful professional development meetings. These PD meetings can ensure that schools are educating teachers on different instructional methods on how to effectively teach our ELLs. Mullins et al. (2020) suggest that one of the key elements of effective and impactful PD is when teachers spend a significant amount of time engaging in the PD. This corresponds with other research about the elements of what makes for a high-quality PD. In Chapter 3, I describe to provide general education teachers with information, strategies, and additional resources on how to successfully teach ELLs.

### **Chapter 3: Description of the Product and Tools**

In this Chapter, I will present a professional development session that aims to provide all K-12 teachers, regardless of content-area, information that can help them feel more prepared to teach ELLs at Laddie A. Decker Sound Beach School (LADSBS), in the Miller Place School District (MPSD). In the MPSD there are 6 ENL teachers and there are currently 35 students who are considered to be ELLs in K-12<sup>th</sup> grade (NYSED, 2023). One ENL educator at LADSBS, Vita Guadagno, works with general education teachers during her push-in services. Mrs. Guadagno expresses her concerns regarding her colleagues' struggles to provide and support the ELLs in their classroom (personal communication, 2022). In addition, I have personally observed some of these teachers stating that they do not know how to properly teach and support the ELLs inside their classroom, or that they are not provided with the appropriate instruction, materials, and training to successfully teach these bilingual students.

In this Chapter, I will describe the professional development (PD) that will target educators that work with ELLs, such as general education teachers, special education teachers, content-area teachers, and ENL teachers. In the following segments, solutions to the problem of the lack of preparation teachers have to teach ELLs will be presented. First, I will provide a detailed overview of the professional development plan that will be followed by a short activity that will help me gain a better understanding of the participants' prior knowledge on ELLs. This will then be followed by a discussion that is centered on the important role that teachers have on ELLs in order to be successful both academically and socially. Then, newly-developed tools for faculty to use, such as ELL lesson plan templates, will be described. The PD will be concluded with a final activity reviewing what the participants have learned from this PD training.

### **Description of the Professional Development**

The professional development will be held at LADSBS in the month of August, right before school is set to start. Prior to the beginning of the school year, teachers are required to attend a mandatory school meeting with all school personnel. The PD will be presented at this mandatory meeting and aims to get teachers started and equipped with the right knowledge before the school year starts. This professional development will take one session and will run for an hour and a half. The duration of this professional development is a little constrained for time as there is other information to discuss and teachers will be required to get their classrooms ready for the first day. However, this hour and a half is more than enough time and there will be even time for questions at the end.

This professional development will be given through PowerPoint and I will be giving out additional materials and handouts to help guide the instruction and conversation. The materials can also be used for teachers if they need an artifact to return to at any point in time during the school year. Each separate component of this professional development will be discussed independently and will cover the following: teacher's prior knowledge on ELLs, the teacher role, newly developed tools for faculty (ELL lesson-plan templates and monthly in-house meetings) and information that has been learned from the professional development in respect to some literature that has been reviewed.

### **Teachers Prior Knowledge on ELLs**

Getting to know ELLs is a paramount importance for teachers because it helps foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment. According to Martin and Collie (2019), teacher-student relationships are an important part of students' interpersonal context at school that impacts their academic development. When teachers build meaningful connections with their

ELL students, it allows them to gain insight into their individual learning styles, strengths, and challenges, which enables them to provide personalized guidance and support. One activity that I would have teachers complete is to first think about their own students and if they truly know who their students are. Then, I would have teachers fill out the identity worksheet (Appendix A) that I have handed out.

This identity worksheet allows students to fill out some of their most favorite things that will help the teacher get to know them a little better. This identity worksheet provides some insight on students' favorite food, number, color, how old they are, and a picture of themselves. Afterwards, teachers will share with a partner some of their thoughts and their identity worksheets. If they want, teachers can share their discussions and worksheets with the rest of the group during whole group instruction. This identity worksheet is a great activity that teachers can use to get to know their ELLs better. In addition, it is a great way to create an inclusive learning environment for ELLs since everyone can share with one another and all feel comfortable inside the classroom.

The next activity I will have the teachers complete that will help them get to know their students better is an acrostic poem (Appendix B). This activity allows students to write their name vertically and then have to fill out each letter with a word that describes them. This is a great activity for students to not only share a little bit more about themselves, but also allows them to practice their L2 and the vocabulary within it. According to Garcia-Sanchez and Roca-de-Larios (2019), the use of poetry helps ELLs with language acquisition as it allows them to practice and reinforce vocabulary in a wide variety of contexts.

After the two activities have been completed, I will debrief with a few questions. Some of the questions I will ask are, "Do you think these activities are beneficial to use in your



classrooms?" and "How do you think your ELLs would feel when asked to complete these two activities: Would they find it fun? Bothering?" Asking questions after the activities is a chance for teachers to reflect back on what they learned and find ways to apply them into their own classrooms.

These two activities that I chose relate back to my literature review in Chapter 2. Getting to know who your students are can be a daunting task but is very beneficial. Teachers who take the time to get to know their students help them both academically and socially. It allows teachers to build a strong bond between classmates and creates a great community within the classroom. As stated in Chapter 2, it is important for teachers to use culturally responsive teaching (CRT) inside their classrooms (Ladson-Billings, 1994). However, many teachers do not use culturally responsive strategies to instruct their ELLs (Rizzuto, 2017).

Implementing CRT strategies can help teachers build an inclusive classroom environment, one that fosters learning while valuing and respecting various cultures (Gay, 2010). The idea of learning about who your bilingual students are will allow teachers to gain knowledge and insight on their students' likes and dislikes, where they come from, their ideas and religion, and family members. Once teachers can better understand and relate to their ELLs, their communication will also improve (Gay, 2010). In a study done by Cho et al. (2020), there has been a decrease in the amount of teachers that are able to communicate with ELLs. However, both the identity worksheet and acrostic poem are two activities that can foster and improve communication between the teacher and the ELLs.

### **Teacher Roles**

As explained in Chapter 2, the increasing rise of ELLs are causing them to be moved into mainstream general education classrooms, forcing those teachers to now be teachers to ELLs

(Bauler & Kang, 2020). It is important that these general education teachers understand the different levels and stages of ELLs and how they are categorized. To do this, I will put up the different categories of ELLs up on the Smartboard (Appendix C). After I am done reviewing the different explanation and categories of ELLs, I will ask teachers to write on their index card what categories the ELLs in their class may be at. This activity not only reviews the different categories that ELLs are placed in, but also forces teachers to understand that not all ELLs are the same. Some ELLs can understand little to no English, while others may speak fluently English but may struggle in their grammar.

As discussed in Chapter 2, most mainstream teachers struggle to understand how to successfully teach ELLs because they aren't equipped with the knowledge of how to teach each different stage. According to Fredricks and Warriner's (2016) study, teachers believe that ELLs should only speak English inside the classroom and that the use of students' home language can interfere, or ruin learning a second language. Understanding the categories of ELLs and where they are placed can show teachers the benefits of including a students' L1 to help act as an aid when learning an L2.

### **Newly Developed Tools for Faculty**

#### **ELL Lesson-Plan Templates**

Studies have shown that pre-service teachers are not equipped with the knowledge needed to feel fully comfortable teaching ELLs due to a lack of training (Brown & Endo, 2017). Teachers should feel comfortable when teaching ELLs so that they can successfully support them both academically and socially. Creating valuable and useful lesson plans is one of the most important things teachers can do. When creating lessons for ELLs, teachers can use a different lesson plan template than they may use for general education students. This is because

ELL lesson plan templates are able to target specific language aspects and requirements that aren't required of general education students. Following this ELL lesson plan template ensures that teachers are hitting those language targets and following through with ensuring that ELLs are learning the L2.

With the rapid increase of ELLs that are placed in general education classrooms, the need for language specialists is at an all-time high. According to the NCES (2023), in fall 2020 ELL students represented 10.0% or more of public school students. This increase has showed that ELLs represent a big percentage inside the classroom and teachers able to support those ELLs are increasing daily. However, Johannessen et al. (2016) found that pre-service teachers are not prepared to best serve the needs of ELLs, even though they had received some formal education and prior training on how to do so.

The rationale of this part of the professional development section is to be able to compare both the lesson plan template that the Miller Place School District uses (Appendix D) compared to the ELL lesson plan template that I have been using in my graduate career at SUNY Brockport (Appendix E). I will begin this section of the professional development by handing out index cards to teachers and have them write down what they think the main sections of a lesson plan are. After some time, I will have teachers share with a partner and then we will review both lesson plans up on the Smartboard in a whole group discussion. I will ask teachers what differences they spot between both lesson plan templates and have them share their ideas with a partner in a think-pair-share method.

The think-pair-share method will allow teachers to share their ideas with one another and gain multiple perspectives with their peers. This strategy is great for ELLs and can be used inside their own classroom. It offers many benefits for ELLs, such as an increase in higher vocabulary

achievement and vocabulary retention (Celik & Baran, 2022). After teachers share with their partners, we will debrief the differences between the two lesson plans during whole group instruction.

### **Resources**

At the end of this professional development, we will look at all of the different resources that teachers can use throughout the school year. As the school year progresses, if they have questions they will be able to look back at the resources that were provided to give them some support. All of the resources that I have covered during this PD can be accessed through the ENL Faculty Google Classroom that all teachers at LADSBS can access. I will make sure to remind teachers that if they have any other additional questions and concerns, they can reach out to the ENL teachers, other educators and search for any outside resources that the teachers can use. Some of these outside resources can teach educators further how to better support their ELLs as well as find alternate activities on how to better understand and connect with their ELLs.

### **Information Learned From PD**

This professional development will conclude with a brief description of everything that we have covered. I will go back to the beginning of what we covered and ask several open-ended questions of what we spoke about. For example, "What is the role of the content-area teacher with ELLs?" and "Why is it important to get to know your ELLs?" After we have open discussions, I will ask teachers to spend a few minutes with a partner discussing ways that they can implement these strategies, such as the identity worksheet and acrostic poem, inside their classrooms. This brainstorming and sharing ideas with a partner allows them to start thinking about how they are going to implement these activities and ideas within their own individual classrooms.

The overall outcome of this PD is for teachers to leave having a better understanding of ELLs and how to successfully teach them. Teachers will be provided with multiple opportunities and a plethora of knowledge on how to successfully teach and support the ELLs in their classroom. Teachers who are able to see ELLs as individuals and tailor their instruction to meet their needs have seen a performance increase as well as a positive learning environment (Becker & Debris, 2019). Therefore, educators who are willing to take the time to consider ELLs when planning their assessments and interventions, and are committed to learning, will see a more efficient and successful classroom.

## **Chapter 4: Conclusion**

This project has explored how general education teachers are ill-prepared to successfully, and effectively, teach ELLs across public schools in the United States, including the Miller Place School District on Long Island, New York. Teachers feeling unprepared to teach ELLs due to a lack of training for pre-service teachers, a lack of PD meetings for teachers, as well as a lack of diversity in the classroom are all reasons that have been identified and discussed. Throughout this project, I have argued that all teachers, regardless of content area and certification, should be provided with trainings, professional developments, as well as teacher-training, so that they can be better prepared to teach the increasing number of ELLs in schools. In this Chapter, I will first summarize the findings of the project. Then, I will discuss implications for learning and teaching and conclude with recommendations for future research.

### **Summary**

Throughout this project, I have reviewed various studies that have explored teachers' lack of preparedness to support and teach ELLs. All of these studies had several key takeaways that I will be discussing. The first takeaway is that general education teachers do not have the proper knowledge to teach ELLs which causes them to feel ill-prepared and have low self-confidence (Kim & Morita-Mullaney, 2020; Stairs-Davenport, 2021). Findings revealed general education teachers may not have taken any college courses prior to entering the classroom as a teacher. In fact, only about 10% of those teachers had a bilingual or English as a second language (ESL) certification (NCES, 2022). Teachers who are unsure of how to effectively teach ELLs will not feel as confident and will give ELLs less demanding assignments and tasks for them to complete (Kim & Morita-Mullaney, 2020). Therefore, I learned the best way for teachers to feel prepared

to teach ELLs is for colleges to offer courses to their pre-service teachers prior to entering the classroom and working with ELLs.

Another takeaway is that general education teachers lack the opportunity for professional development and training sessions of how to successfully, and effectively, teach ELLs. Many general education teachers have little to no training or PD meetings on how to teach ELLs (Deng et al., 2021; Stairs-Davenport, 2021). Therefore, PD meetings that aim to teach educators about ELLs, and how to effectively teach them, is crucial. During these PD sessions, educators learn how to support ELLs. In these sessions, teachers must learn how to support ELLs' communicative competence and content learning (Deng et al., 2021). If teachers were trained properly and attended numerous PD meetings, they would be able to effectively teach ELLs and they would succeed academically.

### **Implications for Teaching**

All teachers will benefit from this capstone project that I have written. All content area teachers will benefit from the professional development and numerous resources and tools that are found throughout. The PD is a way for general education teachers to acquire the knowledge about ELLs that will be needed to successfully teach them. The PD meeting will also act as a way for teachers to acquire materials and resources that they can try and implement inside their own classrooms. During this PD, educators will receive the knowledge they need about SLA theories and culturally relevant teaching to help them understand the importance of ELLs acquiring a second language (Hiatt & Fairbairn, 2018). In addition to the PD session, teachers will be given different materials and resources that they can try on their own and implement into their classrooms. The given materials and resources will help teachers to understand ELLs,

provide differentiated instruction for ELLs and give them appropriate strategies and that they can use inside their own classroom.

Throughout this PD meeting, general education teachers will be able to participate in discussions and interact with some of the activities to acquire the knowledge of how they can be used inside their own classroom. Examples of the materials will be shown to content teachers such as 'This is me!' identity worksheet (Appendix A) and my acrostic poem (Appendix B). Content teachers will also receive the English proficiency levels (Appendix C) and ELL lesson plan template (Appendix E) to bring back to their classroom for future reference throughout the school year.

### **Recommendations**

The professional development session that I will be holding is the start to solving this problem. However, one professional development session is not nearly enough time for teachers feel prepared and confident to teach the ELLs inside their classroom. This PD session only scratches the surface of what educators need to know but there is more that can be done to ensure teachers feel confident to teach ELLs. First, I would ask the principal/administration for more time to give a session to teachers. If there is not enough time on that specific day, I could request that I meet with them another time during the school year. Ideally, I would like to meet with them once a month to discuss different strategies and what may, or may not, be working. With multiple PD sessions, teachers will learn more and feel more confident when tasked with teaching bilingual students.



### References

- Abid. (2020). Examining Indonesian EFL teacher educators' views on utilizing L1 in L2 classrooms. *Lingua Cultura*, 14(2), 219–224. <https://doi.org/10.21512/lc.v14i2.6703>
- Almohaimeed, M. S., & Almurshed, H. M. (2018). Foreign language learners' attitudes and perceptions of L1 use in L2 classroom. *Arab World English Journal*, 9(4), 433-446. <http://doi:10.24093/awej/vol9no4.32>.
- Bauler, C. V., & Kang, E. J. S. (2020). Elementary ESOL and content teachers' resilient co-teaching practices: a long-term analysis. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 14(4), 338–354. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19313152.2020.1747163>
- Becker, G. & Deris, A. (2019) Identification of Hispanic English language learners in special education. *Education Research International*. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2019/2967943>
- Brown, C. L., & Endo, R. (2017). The challenges of differentiating instruction for ELLs: An analysis of content-area lesson plans produced by pre-service language arts and social studies teachers. *Teacher Education & Practice*, 30(3), 372–385. <https://brockport.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eue&AN=125894885&site=ehost-live>
- Çelik, S., & Baran, E. (2022). Student response system: its impact on EFL students' vocabulary achievement. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 31(2), 141–158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1475939X.2021.1986125>
- Cho, S., Lee, H.-J., & Herner-Patnode, L. (2020). Factors influencing preservice teachers' self efficacy in addressing cultural and linguistic needs of diverse learners. *The Teacher Educator*, 55(4), 411–429. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730.2020.1805835>

- Cramer, G. J., & Ryan, D. (2023). Responding to teacher shortages in bilingual education: A grow-your-own bilingual teacher education program. *The New Educator*, 1–15.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1547688X.2023.2206454>
- Correll, P. (2016). Teachers' preparation to teach English language l (ELLs): An investigation of perceptions, preparation, and current practices. *Theses and Dissertations-Curriculum and Instruction*, 19, 56-120.
- Davison, C. (2006). Collaboration between ESL and content teachers: How do we know when we are doing it right? *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 9(4), 454–475. doi:10.2167/beb339.0
- Debreli, E. (2016). Perceptions of non-native EFL teachers' on L1 use in L2 classrooms: Implications for language program development. *English Language Teaching*, 9(3), 24-32. [http://doi: 10.5539/elt.v9n3p24](http://doi:10.5539/elt.v9n3p24).
- De La Campa, & Nassaji, H. (2009). The amount, purpose, and reasons for using L1 in L2 classrooms. *Foreign Language Annals*, 42(4), 742–759. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2009.01052.x>
- Dewi, U. P., & Setiadi, C. J. (2018). Language attitude and language choice in bilingual academic learning environment. *Lingua Cultura*, 12(4), 369-373.  
<https://doi.org/10.21512/lc.v12i4.4288>.
- Delgado, Y., & Ortiz, G. New York State statewide language. *New York University*.
- Deng, Q., Kiramba, L. K., & Viesca, K. M. (2021). Factors associated with novice general education teachers' preparedness to work with multilingual learners: A multilevel study. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 72(4), 489–503.  
<https://doiorg.brockport.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/0022487120971590>

- Dornyei, Z. (2003). *Questionnaires in second language research: Construction, administration and processing*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Dove, M. G. & Honigsfeld, A. (2018). *Co-teaching for English Learners: a guide to collaborative planning, instruction, assessment and reflection*. Corwin.
- Dubetz, N., & Collett, J. (2020). Studying program effectiveness in preparing teachers for learners. *Action in Teacher Education*, 42(3), 190-211.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.2019.1650400>
- Echevarria, J., Vogt, M., & Short, D. (2020). *Making content comprehensible for English learners: The SIOP model* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pearson Education.
- Education Commission of the States (2023). *50-State Comparison: English learner policies*.  
<https://www.ecs.org/>
- Farrand, K. M., & Deeg, M. T. (2021). Implementing co-teaching with paraprofessionals to provide pre-Kindergarten students with special rights access to dual language. *British Journal of Special Education*, 48(3), 282–300. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.12364>
- Fredricks, D. E., & S. Warriner, D. (2016). “We speak English in here and English only!”: Teacher and ELL youth perspectives on restrictive language education. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 39(3-4), 309–323. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2016.1230565>
- Garcia-Sanchez, S. I., & Roca-de-Larios, J. (2019). The use of poetry to foster English as a second language learning. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, 21(2), 188-205.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Teachers College Press.

- Guerrettaz, A. M., Zahler, T., Sotirovska, V., & Boyd, A. S. (2022). 'We acted like ELLs': A pedagogy of embodiment in preservice teacher education. *Language Teaching Research*, 26(6), 1274–1298. <https://doi-org.brockport.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/1362168820909980>
- Halpern, C., Trunfio, J., & Aydin, H. (2021). "We learned to be compassionate": Preservice teachers' perceptions of teaching immigrant children. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2021.1931252>
- Hutchinson, M. (2013). Bridging the gap: Preservice teachers and their knowledge of working with English language learners. *TESOL Journal*, 4(1), 25-54. <https://doi-org.brockport.idm.oclc.org/10.1002/tesj.51>
- Idrus, F., Ramli, L. N., & Habib, N. J. (2023). Exploring preservice teachers' experiences of implementing culturally responsive teaching in the ESL classrooms. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 13(3), 766–776. <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1303.26>
- Johannessen, B., Thorsos, N. J., & Dickinson, G. (1970). Current conditions of bilingual teacher preparation programs in public universities in the USA.: *Semantic scholar* (3) 87-96.
- Kang, H. (2021). The role of mentor teacher–mediated experiences for preservice teachers. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 72(2), 251–263. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487120930663>
- Karkar, M. (2022). Compassionate love: improving international student online learning through new literacies. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 35(6), 630–654. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2021.1982056>
- Kirkpatrick, L., Searle, M., Smyth, R. E. & Specht, J. (2019). A coaching partnership: Resource teachers and classroom teachers teaching collaboratively in regular classrooms. *British Journal of Special Education*, 47 (1), 24–47

- Kenny, J., Hobbs, L., & Whannell, R. (2020). Designing professional development for teachers teaching out-of-field. *Professional Development in Education, 46*(3), 500–515.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2019.1613257>
- Kim, S., & Morita-Mullaney, T. (2020). When preparation matters: A mixed method study of inservice teacher preparation to serve English learners. *Mid-Western Educational Researcher, 32*(3), 231–254.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*(3), 465–491. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1163320>
- Li, N., & Peters, A. W. (2020). Preparing K-12 teachers for ELLs: Improving teachers' L2 knowledge and strategies through innovative professional development. *Urban Education, 55*(10), 1489–1506. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916656902>
- Lin, P. A. (2018). The thread that binds: Building on the stories of adolescent English language learners in mainstream social studies classrooms. *Social Studies, 109*(6), 324–336.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00377996.2018.1550045>
- Martin, A., & Collie, R. J. (2019). Teacher-student relationships and students' engagement in high school: Does the number of negative and positive relationships with teachers tatter? *Journal of Educational Psychology, 111*(5), 861–876.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000317>
- Markos, A. M. (2012). Mandated to learn, guided to reflect: Preservice teachers' evolving understanding of English language learners. *Issues in Teacher Education, 21*(1), 39.

- Mullins Jr, R. D., Williams, T., Hicks, D., & Mullins, S. B. (2020). Can we meet our mission? Examining the professional development of social studies teachers to support students with disabilities and emergent bilingual learners. *Journal of Social Studies Research, 44*(1), 195–208. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jssr.2019.01.004>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). *English learners in public schools*. Condition of Education. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cgf>.
- New York State Department of Education (2023). *Miller place UFSD English language learners enrollment*. <https://data.nysed.gov/ell.php?year=2020&instid=800000037613>
- Oller, J. W. (1988). [Review of *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*, by S. D. Krashen]. *Language, 64*(1), 171–173. <https://doi.org/10.2307/414800>
- OELA (2020). English Learners: Demographic trends (February 2020). *National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition*. <https://ncela.ed.gov/resources/fact-sheet-english-learners-demographic-trends-february-2020>
- Peercy, M. M., & Martin-Beltran, M. (2012). Envisioning collaboration: including ESOL students and teachers in the mainstream classroom. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 16*(7), 657–673. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2010.495791>
- Perez, D., & Johnson, H. (2021). Exploring the impact of culturally responsive pedagogy on the academic performance of English learners. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 20*(2), 167-183.
- Pettit, S. K. (2011). Teachers' beliefs about English language learners in the mainstream classroom: A review of the literature. *International Multilingual Research Journal, 5*(2), 123–147.

- Rodríguez, A. D. (2013). Bilingual and ESL preservice teachers learn about effective instruction for ELLs through meaningful collaboration. *GIST Education and Learning Research Journal*, 12- 34.
- Rizzuto, K. (2017). Teachers' perceptions of ELL students: Do their attitudes shape their instruction? *The Teacher Educator*, 52(3), 182–202.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730.2017.1296912>
- Ruiz, M., (2020). Beyond traditional response to intervention: Helping rural educators understand English learners' needs. *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 39(1), 35–53.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/8756870519894661>
- Sancar, R., Atal, D., & Deryakulu, D. (2021). A new framework for teachers professional development. *Teaching and Teacher Education*.
- Soland, J. (2019). English language learners, self-efficacy, and the achievement gap. *Collaborative for student growth [Research Brief]*. Portland, OR: NWEA. <https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/03/researchbrief-collaborativefor-student-growth-english-language-learners-selfefficacy-and-the-achievement-gap-2019.pdf>.
- Soland, J. & Sandilos, L. E. (2021). English language learners, self-efficacy, and the achievement gap: Understanding the relationship between academic and social-emotional growth. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 26(1), 20–44.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10824669.2020.1787171>
- Soltero-Gonzalez, L., & Chavkin, N.F. (2020). Culturally responsive instruction for English language learners: A review of research. *Journal of Language Identity & Education*, 19(6), 371-384.


- Stairs-Davenport, A. (2021). "Where do I start?" Inquiry into K-12 mainstream teachers' knowledge about differentiating instruction for ELLs in one U.S. school district. *Education Inquiry*, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20004508.2021.1969078>
- Trueswell, J. C. (2023). Language acquisition and language processing: Finding new connections. *Language Acquisition*, 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10489223.2023.2216689>
- Villegas, A. M. (2018). Introduction to 'preparation and development of mainstream teachers for today's linguistically diverse classrooms'. *The Educational Forum*, 82(2), 131-137. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131725.2018.1420848>
- Wall, D. J., & Hurie, A. H. (2017). Post-observation conferences with bilingual pre-service teachers: Revoicing and rehearsing. *Language and Education*, 31(6), 543–560. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2017.1340481>
- Wassell, B. A., Hawrylak, M. F., & Scantlebury, K. (2017). Barriers, resources, frustrations, and empathy: Teachers' expectations for family involvement for Latino/a ELL students in urban STEM classrooms. *Urban Education*, 52(10), 1233–1254. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085915602539>
- Zhang, Y. (2016). Walking a mile in their shoes: Developing preservice music teachers' empathy for ELL students. *International Journal of Music Education*, 35(3), 425–434. <https://doi.org/10.1177/025576141664719>



Appendix A

'This is ME!' Worksheet


**THIS IS ME!**



Draw a picture of yourself!



My favorite color \_\_\_\_\_



I like \_\_\_\_\_

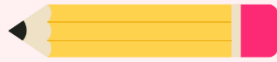


My favorite food \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B**

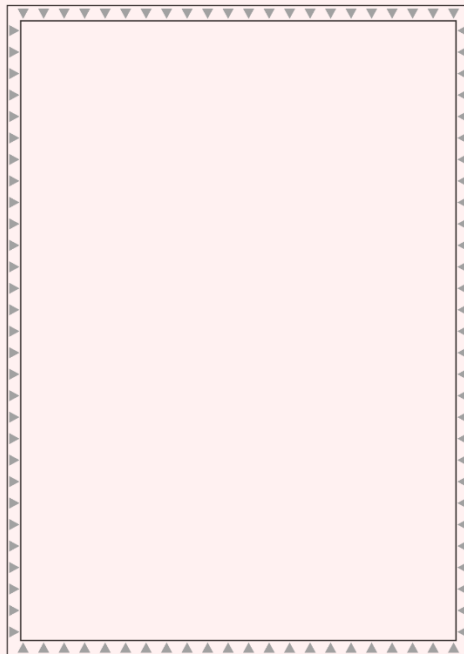
**Acrostic Name Poem Activity**

# ACROSTIC NAME POEM

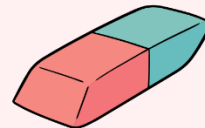


In the space provided below, create your own acrostic name poem. Using the first letter of your own name, describe yourself with an adjective. Please see the example below!

## MY ACROSTIC POEM



**M**arvelous  
**A**ctive  
**R**esponsible  
**K**ind



## Appendix C

### English Proficiency Levels

#### English Proficiency Levels

The following table represents the different English proficiency levels and descriptions for each different level.

<b>English Proficiency Level</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Entering</b> (Beginning)	A student at the entering level has great dependence on supports and structures to advance academic language skills and has not met the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts.
<b>Emerging</b> (Low-Intermediate)	A student at this level has some dependence on supports and structures to advance academic language skills and has not yet met the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate the English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts.
<b>Transitioning</b> (Intermediate)	A student at this level shows some independence in advancing academic language skills but has yet to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts.
<b>Expanding</b> (Advanced)	A student at this level shows great independence in advancing academic language skills and is approaching the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate English language proficiency in a variety of academic contexts.
<b>Commanding</b> (Proficient)	A student at this level is designated as a Former ELL, and entitled to receive two years of continued ELL services. A student at this level has met the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate proficiency in a variety of academic contexts.

\*Adapted From - Delgado, Y., & Ortiz, G. New York State Statewide Language. New York University

**Appendix D**

**MPSD Lesson Plan Template**

<b>Week of:</b>									
	<b>Period 1</b>	<b>Period 2</b>	<b>Period 3</b>	<b>Period 4</b>	<b>Period 5</b>	<b>Period 6</b>	<b>Period 7</b>	<b>Period 8</b>	<b>Period 9</b>
Monday									
Tuesday									
Wednesday									
Thursday									
Friday									
<u>Meetings</u>									
<u>Notes</u>									

**Appendix E****ELL Lesson Plan Template**Lesson Plan Template for Language Learners\*Adopted from SUNY Brockport

Teacher Name \_\_\_\_\_ Subject Area &amp; Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Topic \_\_\_\_\_ Lesson Topic / Title \_\_\_\_\_

Language(s) used in lesson \_\_\_\_\_ Lesson length \_\_\_\_\_

**Content Area the Lesson Addresses:***What content area(s) will this lesson include (e.g. math, science)?***Lesson Goals:***Why are you teaching this lesson and why is it important?***Understanding - "Big Ideas":***What are the "big ideas" and understanding you'd like students to leave with that will be applicable in future learning beyond this lesson?*

**Essential Questions:**

*What questions might you ask that will “foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning” (Wiggins & McGighe, 2003, p. 2 - Overview of UbD and the Design Template)?*

**Objectives:**

**Language Objective:**

**Content Objective:**

**Standards Addressed in this Lesson:**

*What NYS and National Standards and /or performance indicators will be addressed through the lesson?*

*How are the standards in the lesson connected to the objectives of the lesson?*

**Assessment Evidence**

**Performance Task(s):**

*How will students “demonstrate the desired understandings” and how will this be measured?  
(Wiggins & McTighe, 2003, p.2)*

**Other Evidence:**

*“Through what other evidence (e.g. quizzes, tests, academic prompts, observations, homework, journals, etc.) will students demonstrate achievement of the desired results?” and  
“How will students reflect upon an self-assess their learning?” (Wiggins & McTighe, 2003, p. 2)*

**Building Background Knowledge (Connect Prior Knowledge)**

*How will the lesson draw upon/connect to students' prior knowledge and relevant experiences? (“Funds of Knowledge?)*

**Building and Being a Member of a Classroom Learning Community:**

*How will you build a learning community within the classroom and also be a member of that learning community (sharing and learning with others) during this lesson?*

**Teaching & Learning Activities**

*What will happen in the lesson (imagine this as a script - what will happen at each moment)?*

*What will be presented, practice/applied, reviewed, and assessed and how will it al play out?*

*What are some backup plans in case the lesson does not go as planned?*

*It can be helpful to put information in the table format below:*

<b>Time</b>	<b>Teacher/Student Activity</b>	<b>Differentiation/ Scaffolding</b>	<b>Resources</b>
mins.	What are the teacher and students doing at this point in the lesson?	What are some scaffolding and differentiation techniques that will be used ot help all students to participate?	What materials or resources are needed for this part of the lesson? (list)

**Supporting Materials / Resources:**

*What supporting materials / resources will be used to enhance the lesson and students' achievement of the objectives? How will these materials and resources be used to enhance the lesson and student learning?*

**Key vocabulary:**



*What is some key vocabulary students will need to know for the lesson? Please focus on the most important vocabulary they should walk away knowing and being able to use.*

**Accommodations for Diverse Levels of Proficiency (Additional Strategies) / Differentiation of Instruction:**

*How will you differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students with varying abilities, learning needs, and language proficiencies?*

*\*Adopted from SUNY Brockport*

**Appendix F**

**Professional Development Presentation**

<https://voicethread.com/share/23273957/>