

Building Capacity to Ensure English Language Learner Academic Success: Strategies and Tools
for Pre-Service and In-Service Teachers

by

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August 2021

A capstone project submitted to the Department of Education and Human Development of The College at Brockport State University of New York in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education

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Abstract

There is an evident need for teacher preparation programs to offer pre-service and new teachers' effective strategies and tools to ensure ELLs academic success. The increasing number of ELLs in our schools only increases this demand. The overarching question is how can new teachers build capacity to gain the knowledge and methods needed to ensure academic success for ELLs? The research in this literature review focuses on the tools and strategies that both new and in-service teachers can use to build capacity in which they can effectively teach ELLs. The PD created offers research-based strategies and tools which focus on teacher collaboration, multimodal learning, classroom management, equity, inclusion, and having empathy. The most important aspects of these categories have been condensed for easier understanding and immediate implementation into their classrooms. The educational success of ELLs depends on teachers' being able to support their linguistic and academic needs effectively.

Keywords: English Language Learners (ELLs), Professional Development (PD), pre-service and in-service teachers, teaching strategies

Chapter 1: Introduction

Problem Statement

During my student teaching practicum, I became aware that general education elementary classroom teachers were unsure of exactly how to provide effective tools and strategies for the ELLs in the classroom. This was due in part to the lack of ELL training offered during teacher preparation programs. I decided to enroll in a Master of Education- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages program. It was during my coursework that I decided I wanted to create a PD for pre-service teachers that provided strategies and tools to effectively teach ELL students in mainstream classrooms. Therefore, the overarching research that guides this capstone project is how new teachers can build capacity to gain the knowledge and methods needed to ensure academic success for ELLs.

There are many legalities in place to ensure that ELLs are appropriated an education that matches the academic rigor and formality of their peers. The Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 requires school districts to provide equal educational support to all students and this required removing language barriers. The No Child Left Behind Act and Policy passed by Congress in 2001, and signed into law by President Bush in 2002, increased the federal government's role in holding schools accountable for students' academic achievement. The problem continues to be that many classroom teachers do not feel comfortable, confident, or capable when teaching ELL students. Hadjioannou et al. (2016) noted that “unfortunately, significant numbers of teachers have had little preparation for working with these diverse learners and feel ill equipped to support their academic development” (p. 1). The unavailability of teacher information and support severely effects ELLs in the classroom.

Significance of the Problem

ELL students' academic success in school is dependent on the delivery of instruction provided by the teacher. Just as teacher's go to college to become teachers of native English speakers, mainstream classroom teachers should also be given effective teaching methods and strategies to teach ELL students. Learning any new language is a complex, interwoven process that requires multiple methods of instruction. ELL students are no exception, and they deserve to have teachers who have had the proper training in delivering these methods. Anderson (2013) stated that although new teachers were prepared to expect a multicultural and multilingual population into their classrooms, they did not always feel ready to meet the challenges of the diverse linguistic needs of ESL students. Another factor concerning ELL education is that teachers often feel ill equipped to teach ELLs in specific content areas such as math, science, and social studies, and as a result, tend to narrow their instruction and leave out important information. As a result, ELLs continue to score lower on standardized tests. All these aspects effect ELL students' being provided a fair and appropriate education.

Purpose

To mitigate the problem of lack of teacher preparedness to teach ELL students, I will be delivering a PD that focuses on multiple strategies and tools that mainstream and special area teachers can implement into their instruction. This 2-day training will begin with introducing ELL students as vital members of the classroom. Next, I will provide the teachers with a platform from which they can teach from by sharing the top ELL teaching strategies. I will provide tools and resources for teachers to take with them to use immediately in their classes. Teachers will have time to work in groups and apply concepts in their instruction. In addition, I

will show a powerful video from the perspective of an ELL student with hope that it will initiate teacher empathy and understanding.

Summary

The ability to feel comfortable, capable, and confident when teaching ELL students will help teachers to provide the best instructional practices. In chapter 2, I will present a review of the literature on new teacher preparation and research-based strategies that show teachers how to build capacity to effectively encourage ELLs academic success. In chapter 3, I will present a PD with detailed strategies and tools. I will include all materials for the appendices. Finally in chapter 4, I will present conclusions and implications for the future.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

With the rapidly changing linguistic and cultural demands in today's classrooms, there is a need for all teachers to be adequately provided with strategies and tools to teach all students with diverse needs. Teacher preparation programs have been scrutinized for providing minimal training on the ways in which ELL students should be taught to ensure academic success. This literature review will provide supplementary information to be used by pre-service and in-service teachers to help acquire the knowledge needed to effectively teach ELL students. The categories in this review discuss the importance of collaboration and co-teaching, which help to clarify both the teacher and student roles in the classroom; elaboration on specific teaching strategies that use multimodalities for learning; classroom management techniques that contribute to having a welcoming, safe learning environment that fosters risk-taking and participation; building student and parent relationships that help to gain trust and respect with the teacher; developing empathy to help gain a better understanding of the thoughts and feelings of ELL students; and promoting equity and inclusion in the classroom through instruction that embraces cultural differences.

According to Daniel (2014), there have been college courses on teaching ELLs offered to specific candidates, but these were considered to be add-ons to pre-existing education programs and were not offered to all students. The primary purpose for this literature review was due in part to the realization that there is a need to have strategies and methods for teaching ELLs, intended for pre-service and in-service teachers who did not receive adequate training in teacher preparation programs.

Pre-Service Teacher Preparedness

Although teachers may be flexible and accepting of the multicultural and multilingual students in their classrooms, this does not mean that they feel prepared to meet their linguistic needs. A recent study by Anderson (2012) suggested that education major graduate students acknowledged an issue that they each saw repeatedly; that there were a very large number of ELLs who were not at the same reading and writing levels as their peers. The graduates felt overwhelmed and underprepared to teach the multiple needs that were present within their classrooms. Anderson claims that many teachers have personally purchased books and other training materials to teach themselves how to effectively teach ELL students.

While in elementary schools, the focus for learning is more on language acquisition and grammar specifics. When these skills are not mastered at the elementary level, ELLs then enter secondary school at alarmingly lower academic levels than their native English-speaking peers. Many ELLs who enter U.S. classrooms have had completely different educational experiences in their homeland. Rubenstein-Alvia and Lee (2014) note that a student who enters into the 10th grade may have only had an education up to 4th or 5th grade in their country of origin. As a result of secondary teachers primarily teaching the specific content areas (math, science, social studies, etc.), attention to language acquisition is often overlooked. This leaves a giant gap in learning that somehow needs to be filled to ensure ELLs academic success.

ELL students bring rich backgrounds and unique experiences to our classrooms. There are currently five language proficiency levels to which ELLs are placed for learning purposes. These levels are entering, emerging, transitioning, expanding, and commanding. Proficiency levels are determined by the scores of the NYSELAT exam, given to all ELL students annually. These tests provide the state, schools, parents, and teachers a better idea of where the students

are with their language abilities. Teachers should be aware of what level ELL students in their classes are currently placed in.

Kilic (2020) conducted a study in Turkey with pre-service teachers as an English as a foreign language (TEFL). Kilic wanted to assess how the college curriculum was preparing teachers to teach ELL students and interviewed 10 pre-service teachers who were enrolled in a local university. Kilic reports in the findings that teachers were not prepared to be effective language teachers, and that the teacher education curriculum needed a complete overhaul. It was also evident that these pre-service teachers were not successful in their ability to make use of instructional strategies, to manage classrooms, and to use technology in the teaching of English.

These components, along with the diverse needs of every student, require a confident, secure teacher who has strong pedagogical and linguistic knowledge. Kilic also insists the teachers in this study, did not feel secure in their own teaching abilities and there was an overwhelming agreement that pre-service teachers should have more hands-on, in the classroom experiences. Pre-service teachers who are given the opportunity to participate in actual teaching practice feel more prepared when they are eventually presented with their own classrooms. The chance to work with students and learn their linguistic needs allows teachers to gain experience and confidence.

A study conducted by Faez and Valeo (2012) surveyed 115 U.S. novice teachers online and had 66 of them participate in a follow-up interview on TESOL teacher preparedness. The findings consisted of a common theme, classroom experience increased feelings of preparedness. The participants who did not feel adequately prepared to teach adult ELL students had less than 3 years of teaching experience. However, when given the survey after completing 3 years of experience, the results pertaining to preparedness increased. Over half of the participants found

that the practicum with which they participated in provided a sense of what it was going to be like, as well as gave a smooth transition into the TESOL classroom. On the contrary, the participants agreed that the least helpful aspect to their TESOL program were the courses on theory instruction. Although learning about different language acquisition theories was helpful, having concrete learning tools that could be used in the classroom were seen as more useful. Regardless, teacher preparation requirements should include teacher-student interaction.

The need for ENL teachers in schools is steadily increasing however, the number of teachers fully prepared to teach ELLs has not. According to Ramanayake and Williams (2017) teacher preparation programs include the essentials for teaching diverse students but often this does not include ELL students. One teacher who was interviewed stated that she did not feel that the ELL course would be relevant to her and therefore, she was not engaged in the readings and minimally participated in the activities. Therein lies the troubling issue of teachers feeling unprepared to teach ELL students. Despite not feeling as prepared to teach, or receiving the proper preparation education, the strategies and functions provided in this literature review discuss multiple ways in which teachers can build capacity to help the ELL students in their classrooms achieve academic success.

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is a term used to describe a teacher's thoughts about their mastery and achievements as an educator. Durgunoğlu and Hughes (2010) performed a study with 62 pre-service teachers from a mid-Western University who were currently doing their student teaching. The focus of the study was on the personal views of self-efficacy the participants had when teaching ELL students. The authors found that the higher the feelings of self-efficacy the teachers had, the more comfortable and confident they were in the classroom, they were more

willing to try new methods of instruction, be open to suggestions, and find alternative ways in which they can help their students be successful. Durgunoğlu and Hughes also noted that novice teachers showed a significant drop in their self- efficacy views when they were put into real classrooms. The authors stated that participants did not feel adequately prepared to teach ELLs, and their student teaching experiences did not add any additional information about ELL pedagogy.

The overall conclusion to this study consisted of three major themes: neglect of the ELL students, obligatory peer-to-peer support, and very little mentoring on teaching ELLs from supervising teachers. The negligence of ELL students within the classroom from both the pre-service teacher and the classroom teacher (positively) resulted in peer-interaction that allowed ELLs to participate in peer-instruction. With cooperative learning support, ELLs were more apt to ask their peers for help, as well as participate in group activities. The study also negatively concluded that cooperating teachers who were supervising and modeling for the student teachers, were not providing any further instruction on to how to teach ELLs, due in part to their own lack of education on how to do so.

Building Capacity

When educators are provided with useful tools that allow them to help their students be successful, they build capacity within themselves that ultimately improves their teaching abilities, pedagogical skills, and educational expertise as teachers. It is noted in the NYSED Blueprint for ELL Success (n.d) that districts and schools provide meaningful PD opportunities for all teachers to participate in that specifically address the needs of ELLs/MLLs home and new language development.

In an article by Rubenstein-Avila and Lee (2014), secondary teachers were asked about their attitudes towards teaching ELLs. Overall, the teacher's attitudes were welcoming but there was the recurring issue of the lack of training on specific instructional strategies for ELLs. It was even reported that 87% of teachers included in the study had little to no training or PD related to teaching ELLs. This has negatively affected the ways in which teachers prepare instruction and materials for ELLs. Rubenstein-Avila and Lee found that most secondary teachers see differentiation of instruction that addresses the needs of ELL students in their classes as overwhelming and very time consuming.

Collaboration with Colleagues

One of the most important aspects to ELL's success is the collaboration that occurs between the ENL teacher and the mainstream classroom teacher, as each brings expertise and knowledge that ELL students require to learn effectively. Creese (2010) conducted interviews with a classroom teacher and an ENL teacher. Both were asked to describe their roles in the classroom. The general education teacher explains having expertise with the curriculum, course syllabus, units, and lesson planning to meet academic goals. Creese indicates that the general education teachers presented little focus on the language rather, the focus was more on what the content being taught will be. From the same interview, the ENL teacher described a totally different approach by needing to assess the language and content demands to scaffold the lesson, rendering the knowledge accessible to ELL students. Although the teachers in this study collaboratively teach within the same classroom, they each have completely different views as to their role in teaching ELL students.

Teacher collaboration requires each participating teacher to know what is going to happen and what their specific role is going to be during the lesson. In a study conducted by

Peercy et al. (2017), two teachers were selected from a title 1 elementary school in the mid-Atlantic United States to participate in and reflect upon collaboration and co-teaching with the ESOL teachers in their building. Both participants agreed that when given consistent pre-planning time as a part of their daily routines, they had a clear understanding of their role in the classroom during each lesson. Reliable collaboration alleviated any confusion and allowed the needs of the ELL students to be met. Successful collaboration among ESOL teachers and content teachers requires a shared commitment to the achievement of *ALL* students.

Multimodalities for Learning

Research has proven that ELL students learn best through multimodal means of instructions. The commonly known multimodalities for instruction include visual, auditory, kinesthetic and reading/writing. In addition, multiple modes of learning and delivery of instruction can include the use of technology in the classroom, hands-on materials, performance-based projects, and providing various texts. According to Meskill and Oliveira (2019), research has shown that when science content is learned using digital visuals, such as pictures and videos, ELL students are able to make meaning of the content without necessarily understanding the specific scientific language. The authors also believe that ELLs need opportunities to negotiate the meaning of the content while connecting the new language for comprehension to occur. Simple instructional practices and lack of focus on the academic language used in the instruction are not effective (2019). Teachers should conduct frequent formative assessments and checks for understanding during instruction to ensure ELL students comprehend the concepts being taught along with the content language being used within the lessons.

In another study, Yi and Choi (2015) surveyed 25 pre-service teachers who incorporated multimodalities into their content instruction. The authors argue that developing multimodal

lessons takes a significant amount of time to plan, producing an additional burden on already stressed teachers. In addition, Yi and Choi also contend that multimodal pedagogy can be less academic or rigorous than the traditional print-based teaching and learning. Although multimodal instruction can appear to be motivating, appealing, and stimulating, Yi and Choi indicate the need for further research on multimodal instruction and learning. In particular, to determine if this is a more effective means of teaching ELL students.

By contrast Wright (2015) provides strategies for incorporating multimodalities into teacher lessons to help ELL be successful. One approach is cooperative learning with peers. This includes Think-Pair-Share with a partner to allow for low-risk language usage and answering wait time, roundtable discussions that include brainstorming ideas, concentric circles where each student shares an idea or an answer to another student until they have gotten to share with each student in the class. Wright also suggests role play and acting out to incorporate movement and word pronunciation practice in literature, description and drawing activities to practice visual and listening, and traditional class discussions that are also critically important in ELLs oral and academic development. All of these social and informal activities encourage ELLs to participate and practice their linguistic abilities.

Berg et al. (2012) encourage peer learning through interaction. ELL students often seek out other native speaking students to help them with comprehension. However, if there is guidance given on how to work within a group with native English-speaking students, there will be exposure to the language and ELLs will become more comfortable with participation. According to Garcia (2017), restricting the use of ELL student's native language in the classroom minoritizes bilingualism and limits knowledge. Garcia suggests the use of translanguaging (a way in which language is intended to serve as a means for social

communication) in the classroom fosters bilingualism and recognizes and values the histories and cultures of all students. Teachers who develop a translanguaging mindset can focus on educating students bilingually, allowing the use of both languages to help make meaning of the knowledge. Garcia insists that translanguaging instruction is a way to scaffold the learning for ELL students, thus providing students a deeper understanding of the content, promoting knowledge retention.

Classroom Management

Classroom management should be proactive and not reactive to the varied situations that can occur when teaching. Teachers should have a plan in place prior to stepping foot in the classroom. The core of this plan begins with the knowledge teachers' have acquired in education programs about student and educational psychology, teaching theories, pedagogy, and methodology. Classroom management also requires what Sánchez-Solarte (2019) refer to as a commanding, authoritative presence. Sánchez-Solarte explain that a commanding presence requires that teachers be aware of their posture, are comfortable with role of authority and most importantly, demonstrate their enjoyment for teaching. According to Sánchez-Solarte, being prepared for instruction is important in classroom management. In other words, having lessons prepared and the required materials ready, as well as having a clear understanding of what the linguistic targets and content objectives are for each lesson, since these are key components to effectively teaching ELLs. The authors also recommend posting the content and language targets on the board for students to see and then explaining them in detail. This will allow students to feel informed of and involved in the learning. This will also bring awareness to the language skill that will be the focus of the lesson.

Classroom routines help students feel safe in the classroom. Sánchez-Solarte (2019) suggest including a clear goal, explicit transitions among stages, and specific roles for learners in each stage of the lesson. Routines allow students to predict what will happen next and alleviate any anxiety or doubt. The feeling of having a safe place is essential for ELL student's willingness to learn and take linguistic risks. Routines also important for decreasing the likelihood of classroom chaos and teacher stress. Incoming ELL students who may not know what to do or when to do it, can really benefit from clear, predictable routines. They may also benefit from pictures that are posted throughout the classroom and the hallways that are labeled in English and their native language. Once the expectations have been explained and understood, the students can move freely and confidently throughout the classroom.

Teachers should be aware of their own use of language as they teach ELL students and implement a classroom management plan. According to Berg et al. (2012) teachers need to speak slowly and take breaks that allow for language processing time and frequent checks for understanding. Previewing the vocabulary that will be used in the lesson prior to teaching will allow teachers to adequately prepare to provide definitions, visuals, and/or relative examples to help with comprehension. Another technique would be to write key words onto the board for students to see. Often there is a language overlap between certain words in English and other languages and even if ELLs do not know a word when they hear it, it may be recognizable in resemblance when visualized. Another awareness is the use of idioms by teachers. Teachers should avoid the use of idioms as they are often culturally irrelevant to ELLs. Idioms can be confusing and difficult to explain to ELL students.

Build Relationships with Students and Parents

One of the most important facets to teaching is building relationships with your students. Teachers and students need to develop respect and gain trust with each other to ensure a positive experience. The June 2021 OBEWL journal discusses transformative social emotional learning throughout the school community. OBEWL indicates that according to NYSED, the goal of transformative SEL is to create an educational environment that is inclusive, free of bias, and that places value on all races, cultures, languages, and economic differences. NYSED (n.d) suggests the following pedagogical strategies to ensure these elements are recognized by teachers, students, and school staff. The first is differentiation of instruction using prior knowledge as the steppingstone for learning. Activating student's prior knowledge helps to make the content relatable and easier to understand. Another suggestion is to provide multiple opportunities for review and re-teach of content to empower student learning and build content mastery. Another recommended strategy is to make the learning student driven so they see the teacher as a knowledge facilitator, not just the provider. Teachers can include personal narratives within lessons in the form of stories or examples to help students build trust and embrace risk taking. Extended wait time for students to answer questions during the lessons allows for processing time and reflection. These are just a few effective strategies teachers of ELL students can implement immediately into their classroom routines.

Another strategy for building relationships is having a school-to-home connection. Sibold (2011) recognizes the importance of parent participation in developing ELL student's academic vocabulary. Sibold suggests that teachers and parents become partners in their efforts to assist students with the learning. Teachers can provide parents with a list of the content vocabulary with definitions in both English and the home language to help with comprehension. Sibold also

recommends clarifying any questions parents may have regarding their child's education. If parents are not proficient in English, an interpreter should be provided to ensure full participation in the conference. Building relationships and having open communication between teachers, parents and the student will improve the overall educational classroom experience for all.

Equity and Inclusion in the Classroom

A study by Coady et al. (2016) found that teachers of ELLs need to follow a framework for learning that consists of including ELL students in all classroom activities, alongside their peers, to provide an inclusive classroom environment. This can include one-to-one instruction, small group, and whole group instruction with the students. The goal for each lesson should be to provide ELL students with comprehensible language presented throughout the content. Teachers should pay particular attention to vocabulary and stopping when needing to clarify an unknown word. The readily available modification and use of visuals, graphic organizers, and other nonverbal tools such as simplified or embedded text, glossaries, or pictures, can also help ELL students effectively learn academic vocabulary and content.

Incorporating ELL students' culture and customs into lessons is also another means of promoting inclusion and equity in the classroom. Folkes et al. (2020) states that students with linguistic and cultural differences learn best when teachers are more culturally responsive, and who embrace cultural diversities within their classrooms. Having exposure to and gaining knowledge of multiple cultures and customs will help all students to be more accepting and tolerant of diversity. Teachers who are able to connect content to student's cultures create an encouraging and engaging learning environment. Berg et al. (2012) provided examples of American education cultural norms that may seem overwhelming or uncomfortable to ELL students. One example includes asking students to raise their hands to provide an answer to a

teacher-asked question. This can be very confusing and intimidating. In other cultures, remaining silent is one of the first stages of learning a language, whereas learning English consists of practicing sounds and reading words aloud. Teaching ELLs expected school and classroom behavior is another important, often assumed, cultural discrepancy that is the responsibility of teachers. Something that is considered a “norm” in one culture, may not be considered the same in another.

According to Acevez and Orosco (2014) providing ELL students with culturally responsive feedback is a strategy that provides individual support regarding their performance in a way that is sensitive to the student’s needs. The feedback can be immediate, or it can be a one-to-one conference between the student and the teacher to discuss behavioral or academic concerns. This method validates ELL students concerns and provides teachers with the opportunity to provide instruction for students who may be struggling. Providing students with feedback also increases their self-esteem and challenges their thinking.

Assessments are critical samples of content mastery, and these can be very helpful in determining ELL student’s skill set and ability. Berg et al. (2012) note that assessments are a test of the content and the English language, making them more difficult for ELLs. Teachers can modify assessments in ways that allow ELLs to show their understanding of both content and language. One option Berg et. al suggests is limiting multiple choice answers to 3, keeping the wording simple. The same simple word usage should be considered for true and false questions. Fill in the blank questions with a word bank are also an option. Lastly, matching and list choices are other less stressful assessment types that ELL students would find favorable. Providing shorter tests, or extended test taking time, are other factors for teachers to take into consideration

when giving ELL students an assessment. Overall, when assessing ELL students, the focus should be on the progression of the language and the content mastery.

Have Empathy

Learning a language is a difficult, and often daunting task for some students. In a study conducted by Zhang and Pellitari (2014), 150 undergraduate and graduate education program students engaged in a basic classroom lesson, but in a language that they had never learned before. Data was then collected in the form of three questions:

(1) What are the emotions the teacher candidates experienced through the 15-minute mini-lesson in Dutch? (2) What strategies did the teacher candidates notice the professor using during the mini lesson to help better understand the content of the lesson? (3) What did the teacher candidates conclude as the most critical needs for ELLs in the classroom settings? (p. 182)

The top answers to question number 1 regarding the emotions experienced were, confusion and frustration. The top answers to question number 2 discussing strategies noticed were gestures, repetition, board, hand, facial, writing and body language. Finally, the top answers to question number 3, as to what is the most critical for ELLs to understand content were patience, understanding, repetition and help. The participates in the study also developed a greater sense of empathy for ELL students. Along with feelings of confusion and frustration, some also reported feeling stupid and having mental fatigue from having to concentrate so hard. This study was a reminder to the teacher participants to keep an open mind and heart when it comes to teaching ELL students.

Conclusion

The preparedness and self-efficacy of pre-service teachers, to teach ELL students remains an issue. The methods and strategies provided in education preparation programs offer suggestions and ideas for teaching ELLs, but the overall conclusion is that hands-on, in classroom experience is the most effective and valuable way to gain the knowledge needed to teach ELLs. When preparing to teach ELLs, teachers should have a baseline understanding from which they can then develop their own techniques and build capacity to ensure ELL student's academic success. Teachers need to be confident and comfortable when teaching, with the focus on increasing their self-efficacy and building capacity through learned teaching strategies and techniques specific for ELLs. Collaborating with colleagues serves as a way in which teachers can feel confident by knowing their role in the classroom and how to effectively meet the needs of the ELLs in their classrooms. Serving the diverse learning needs of every student can be done by offering multimodalities for learning using technology and other means of pedagogical tools. Effective classroom management starts with creating an inviting learning environment that encourages risk-taking and offers plenty of opportunities for participation. Students and parents who feel respected and heard are more willing learners and become partners in their education. The relationships built between the teacher, student and parents are critical for ELL students' success. Inclusion and equity are also elements that will encourage and foster ELLs self-efficacy for learning. Finally, for teachers to develop empathy as they help to guide ELLs through their educational journey, as this can be a daunting, intimidating task.

In chapter 3, the strategies and tools provided in this literature review will be broken down and presented in a PD that can be used by education preparation programs for pre-service teachers, as well as a training for all teachers who need to gain self-efficacy when it comes to

teaching ELL students. Chapter 4 will be the conclusion and final thoughts to building capacity to help pre-service and in-service teachers gain the knowledge to ensure ELLs success through effective strategies and tools.

Chapter 3: Professional Development

Introduction

A common recurring issue amongst pre-service teachers is the lack of training they receive in teacher preparation programs on how to teach ELL students. I decided to design a PD that would include teaching strategies and tools for new teachers to help them gain the knowledge and methods needed to ensure academic success for ELL's. The PD will be one whole day (session 1) and then one-half day (session 2) approximately three months after the initial PD. The participants will have an assignment that they will need to bring with them to the half day follow up PD.

Session 1

Set-Up

Each participant should have a paper copy of the slide show printed in handout mode to take notes from the slide discussions. The facilitator should also provide lined or blank paper for the participants exit tickets and assignments. The facilitator should have access to a computer and projection screen to display the PowerPoint Slide Show.

Agenda (see Appendix A)

Welcome and Activate Vocabulary

The facilitator will provide time for welcome and introductions. Next, the facilitator will ask the participants to reference the vocabulary worksheet and write down what comes to mind when they see or hear the following words (see Appendix B). Giving the participants 5-10 minutes to fill in the worksheet. The facilitator will ask the participants to share out their ideas (group discussion.)

Slide Show Presentation

The facilitator will begin the slide show, sharing the five main teaching strategies and techniques with the participants, answering any questions along the way.

First, collaboration with colleagues' places emphasis on how important it is for teachers to work together to support ELLs in the classroom. The general education teacher's focus is on the curriculum, course syllabus, units, and lesson planning to meet the student's academic goals. The ENL teacher assesses the language and content demands to scaffold the lesson, making the knowledge accessible to ELL students (Creese, 2017). Each teacher should have a clear understanding of their role in the classroom.

Second, multimodal learning provides ELL students with multiple ways in which to acquire the learning. These include the use of technology, hands-on manipulatives, and frequent checks for understanding. Providing simple instructional practices with a lack of focus on the academic language used in the instruction is not an effective method. ELLs learn best when they are provided opportunities to negotiate the meaning of the content while connecting the new language for comprehension (Meskill and Oliveira, 2019). They also do best when given options for cooperative learning with peers.

Third, ELLs success is also dependent on the classroom management strategies and implications provided by the teacher. The teacher should have a commanding, authoritative presence and be comfortable with role of authority and most importantly, demonstrate their enjoyment for teaching (Sánchez-Solarte, 2019). Teachers should establish routines and have explicit expectations, sometimes modeling for ELLs to understand what is expected of them.

Fourth, one of the most important facets to teaching is building relationships with your students. The second most important component is the relationships you create with your

student's parents. Sibold (2011) suggests that teachers and parents become partners in their efforts to assist students with the learning. By establishing a school-to-home connection from the start of the school year, parents will feel included in their student's education and be more apt to ask the teacher questions.

Lastly, equity and inclusion in the classroom depend on the teacher's attitudes and perspective on linguistic and cultural diversity. Coady et al. (2016) found that teachers of ELLs need to follow a framework for learning that consists of including ELL students in all classroom activities, alongside their peers, to provide an inclusive classroom environment. Teachers who are able to connect content to student's cultures create an encouraging and engaging learning environment.

Next, during the empathy video, the facilitator will ask the participants to write down any thoughts or feelings that they have during the viewing of the video. The facilitator will then play the video. Once the video is over, the facilitator will ask the participants to fill out the exit ticket (see Appendix C). The facilitator will collect all of the exit tickets to keep as a reference for the participants to review at the follow-up PD.

Closing Thoughts

The facilitator will end the session by presenting the assignment for the follow-up PD (see Appendix D) in approximately 3 months. The participants will be asked to implement 2 of the 5 choices with example lessons and student work illustrating the use of the building capacity options and return to the next PD session with their assignment completed.

Session 2

Set-Up

There should be 5 numbered tables with at least 5 participants at each table. Place a sheet of chart paper on each table. Write the following themes, one per piece of chart paper:

“Collaboration with Colleagues”, “Multimodalities for Learning”, “Classroom Management”, “Building Relationships”, and “Inclusion and Equity” (see Appendix E). The chart paper may also be attached to a wall if no tables are available.

Welcome and Agenda (see Appendix F)***Group Activity***

The facilitator will ask the participants to reference the sheet of paper on each table (see Appendix E). Notice the large sheets of chart paper at each table and the word that is in the center of each sheet. The groups will be given 5-10 minutes to write down any words and/or phrases that they associate with that word. After the 5-10 minutes, each group will move together to the next table. The purpose of this activity is to activate the learned information from the previous PD and to collaborate the participants thoughts and ideas. Once the groups have returned to their original table, the facilitator will ask the groups to “present” (share) their capacity option chart. The facilitator may choose to display each chart at the front of the room while the groups present.

Assignment Share Aloud

Next, the facilitator will ask the participants to share the assignment that they were asked to complete at the last PD (see Appendix D). Each participant will have the opportunity to share, followed by the facilitator-lead group discussion about each one. At this point teachers will have the opportunity to share how they implemented the strategies in their lessons, what worked and what needs to be revised for next year.

Exit Ticket Review

The facilitator will pass back the completed exit tickets from the previous PD (see Appendix C). The participants will be asked to review their answers and if they would keep, change, or add to their answers now that they have had time to implement the building capacity options. They can take the exit tickets with them after today's session.

Closing Thoughts

The facilitator will review the information from the session. The facilitator will ask the participants if they have any questions or comments that they would like to ask or share before ending today's PD.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

Introduction

Learning a new language is a complex process that requires multiple methods of instruction and for ELL students this task can be daunting and seem impossible. This can also be said for the teachers who have not had the training to teach the ELLs that are in mainstream classrooms. Research has found that many pre-service teachers feel inadequately trained to teach ELLs and this greatly effects their self-efficacy as a teacher. There is also evidence that ELL students who do not have instruction provided by an adequately trained teacher are less likely to feel, or prove to be, academically successful.

Conclusions

It was through the research that I presented in chapter 2 that I decided to create a PD that provides teachers with strategies and tools to effectively teach ELL students. ELLs academic success depends on teachers who know a range of approaches and instruction techniques to help support their diverse language needs. The need for adequately trained teachers reaches across many of the school districts within the United States. This is particularly important with the ever-growing population of ELLs in our classrooms and the necessity is only going to increase. It is my hope that this literature review and PD will help teachers who need additional training to mitigate the linguistic, social and assessment challenges ELLs face in our schools.

Implications for Student Learning

ELL students' presence in United States classrooms is expected to grow to over 40% by the year 2030 (Berg et al., 2017). Along with the diverse learning needs of all of the students in a classroom, ELLs also have linguistic needs that require specific pedagogical strategies. Not only are ELLs expected to learn the content, but they are expected to learn the content in a language

unfamiliar to them. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that ELLs have the proper tools provided to them so that they too can be successful. However, according to Rubenstein-Avila and Lee (2014), many secondary teachers feel differentiation of instruction for ELL students is too time consuming and overwhelming. Although their attitudes toward ELLs is welcoming, the lack of training to teach ELLs directly affects lesson plans and instructional scaffolds.

Implications for Teaching

ELL students will benefit from my research and PD as I try to bring awareness to the lack of training provided in teacher preparation programs. According to Berg et al. (2017) only 12.5% of teachers in the U.S. have received eight or more hours of training to teach ELLs. ELL students' academic success in school is dependent on the delivery of instruction provided by the teacher. Without the recommended teacher training, teachers feel inadequately prepared to teach ELLs and do not have the knowledge to effectively differentiate instruction to meet ELLs linguistic needs (Durgunoğlu & Hughes, 2010). The benefits of my research and PD should reach in-service teachers as well.

Recommendations

Research has not yet shown how best to prepare pre-service teachers for teaching ELLs. More research into why teacher preparation programs continue to dismiss the importance of how to teach ELLs. The neglect of colleges is clear as there are few opportunities to implement active, hands-on experiences for pre-service teachers. The course work offered is often theory based and non-effective. Notice should also be given to in-service teacher's abilities to teach ELLs, as they are also unprepared and struggle to offer ELL supports. Another suggestion would be for pre-service teacher's practicum placement be in classrooms where ELL students are present. This would allow teachers to practice their linguistic knowledge and relationship

developing skills with ELLs. I would also very highly suggest schools require a PD for in-service teachers that specifically focuses on teaching strategies and tools for teaching ELLs. District ENL teachers can also provide new and existing teacher colleagues with methods and information to effectively teach ELLs.

Final Thoughts

Building capacity to teach ELLs ensures our teachers feel adequately prepared and able to provide an appropriated education that matches the academic rigor and formality of their peers. As the population of ELL students in classrooms increases, all teachers, including new and in-service, should be provided with adequate training and opportunities to learn the specific linguistic and pedagogical methods, strategies, and tools to ensure ELLs academic success.

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Appendix A

Session 1 Agenda

Session 1- Whole Day Agenda

Welcome and introductions

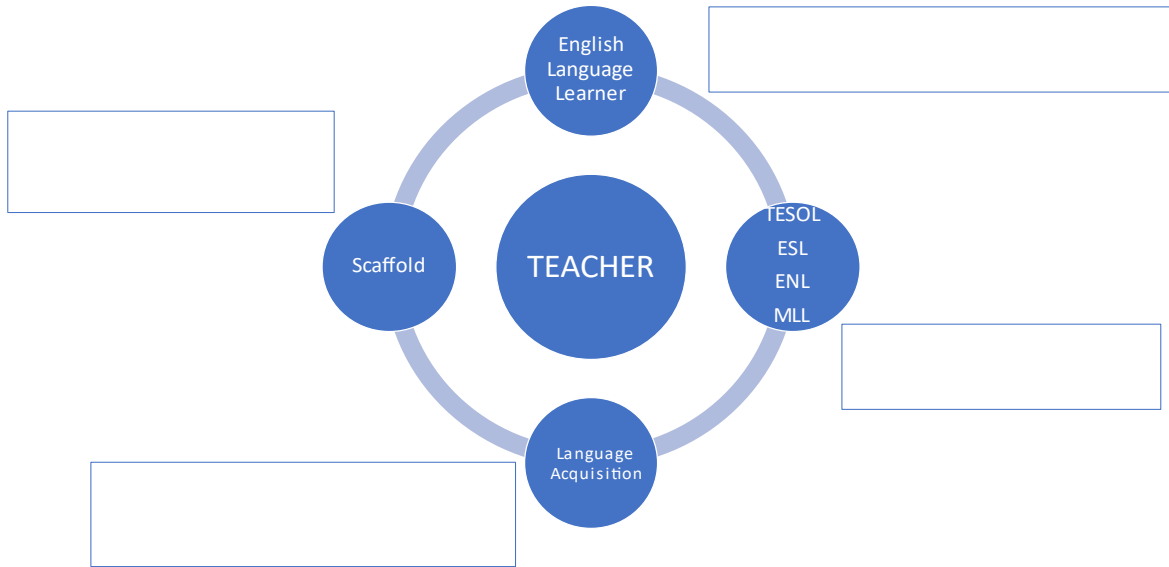
Tools and Strategies

1. Collaboration with Colleagues
2. Multimodal Learning
3. Classroom Management
4. Building Relationships
 - With students
 - With Parents
5. Equity and Inclusion
6. Having Empathy (watch video)
 - Exit ticket

Closing Thoughts

Appendix B

Vocabulary Activity



Appendix C

Exit Ticket Session 1

EXIT TICKET: After viewing the “Immersion” video, what are some strategies and tools you could use to support Moises and the other ELL students?

Appendix D

Assignment for follow-up PD:

Directions: Choose 2 of the building capacity options from today's learning.

1. Write down real examples of how you used the strategies and tools for the capacities you chose to support the ELLs in your class.
2. Bring a differentiated lesson plan that was created to support the learning for the ELLs in your class. What multimodal learning tool did you use?
3. Write down/bring with you a parent-teacher example showing your effort to inform and include your ELLs parents in their child's learning.
4. Bring with you other models that you have implemented into your instruction or routines that support the ELLs in your classes.

Appendix E

Chart Paper Template

**Collaboration
with
Colleagues**

**Multimodalities
for Learning**

**Classroom
Management**

**Building
Relationships**

**Inclusion and
Equity**

Appendix F

Session 2 Agenda

Session 2- half day Agenda

Welcome and introductions

Group Chart Activity

Assignment Share Aloud

Exit Ticket Revise and Share Aloud

Closing Thoughts