

Preparing Mainstream Teachers to Teach ELLs

by

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Abstract

This capstone aims to prepare mainstream teachers with the knowledge and skills to teach the culturally and linguistically diverse population of English language learners (ELLs). ELLs are highly prevalent within the United States and require teachers who are prepared with specialized knowledge and skills to aid their English learning experience. Most mainstream teachers are unprepared to teach ELLs and doubt their academic capabilities. These academic inequities increase ELLs' risk of dropping out of high school, ultimately sabotaging ELLs' opportunities for successful futures. Solutions to the identified problems of mainstream teachers include learning strategies like creating language objectives, building background, and frontloading vocabulary with native language support to aid ELLs' academic learning and language development. Conclusions have found that ELLs improve their abilities to access content and acquire a new language through the implementation of these learning strategies as they scaffold upon students' existing knowledge and bridge academic and language learning gaps. Recommendations include identifying clear language objectives that align with the content objectives, building background in the beginning of instruction through connecting students' personal lives to the content, and explicitly pre-teaching/frontloading vocabulary while allowing students to utilize their native language to translate unfamiliar words or concepts.

Keywords: English language learners, mainstream teachers, drop-out, language objectives, building background, frontloading, L1 support

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Chapter 1: Introduction

ELLs struggle to achieve academic equity and advance towards successful futures due to their difficulties with content learning and second language development, which are intensified by inadequate teacher preparation. ELLs face educational barriers like comprehending abstract and complex academic vocabulary terms, which are exacerbated by mainstream teachers who lack training in integrating cultural or linguistic references into instruction to help ELLs more deeply connect with the content. Furthermore, ELLs are already at an academic disadvantage as many of their mainstream teachers perceive them as unintelligent and incapable to keep up with the grade-level curriculum. Already possessing limiting attitudes towards ELLs' academic capabilities inevitably leads to lower academic expectations and compromised student performance. From personal experience, many mainstream teachers openly share their deficit beliefs about their perceptions of ELLs' abilities to achieve grade-level expectations, and how their education can be saved if the responsibility of educating ELLs is designated to the ENL teacher. Some mainstream teachers, with whom I have collaborated, have demonstrated helpless attitudes regarding not knowing how to help ELLs participate with the grade-level content due to their language or background knowledge barriers. None of these teachers had consistently included culturally or linguistically responsive instructional practices into their pedagogy to proactively address ELLs' learning obstacles. This is problematic since ELLs spend the majority of the day with their mainstream teachers, making a large part of ELLs' education as the mainstream teacher's responsibility. Mainstream teachers can mend ELLs' academic and language learning gaps through attending professional development trainings that prepare them with resources that can shift their perceptions of educating ELLs through learning how to leverage ELLs' linguistic and cultural resources.

ELLs are a growing population within the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), approximately 20% of 18 million American residents were born outside of the United States. California, Texas, New York, and Florida had been identified as states with the largest immigrant populations (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The National Center for Education Statistics (2020) reveals that almost 5 million ELLS attended public schools in 2017. Although numerous ELLs are receiving public school educations, research demonstrates how ELLs are struggling to attain academic equity. ELLs, especially with limited English proficiency, are struggling to attain sufficient grade point averages, leading them to be a population at high-risk for dropping out (Rodriguez et al., 2020; Rumbaut, 1995). In 2016, the graduation rate for ELLs in New York was only 37.8% (Education Week, 2017). Rodriguez et al. (2020) noted that the areas recognized for affecting ELLs' abilities to achieve a high school diploma include ELLs' levels of academic language and proficiency, abilities to learn content and English simultaneously, capabilities of comprehending and retaining academic vocabulary and complex concepts, as well as capacities to pass high school tests and content tests. ELLs will especially struggle to succeed academically in high school if their academic issues were unaddressed starting early in their educational careers within primary school. To minimize the drop-out rate, teachers must be equipped with specialized knowledge and skill to aid ELLs' proficiency and core content acquisition. Mainstream teachers, especially, must be equipped with the skills and knowledge to support ELLs' language proficiency development and content acquisition considering ELLs spend the majority of their day within the mainstream class.

In comparison to mainstream peers, ELLs tend to lag academically in their abilities to learn content (Rodriguez et al., 2020). ELLs often have low grade point averages and score lower on reading assessments compared to their non-ELL counterparts (Cuba, 2020). Part of

what contributes to this educational complexity is ELLs' requirement to learn content while simultaneously expanding their linguistic repertoire in the target language. Their academic inequity fails to consider, however, the lengthiness of the second language learning process which delays ELLs' content learning. It takes ELLs 1-3 years to develop their basic interpersonal communication skills and 5-7 years to develop their cognitive academic language proficiency skills related to school (Cummins, 1979). Rodriguez et al. (2020) found that not only are ELLs at high risk for dropping out since it takes time to learn English, but also due to other considerable factors like being disadvantaged, poor, and coming from immigrant born families. By the time they finally learn English, they have lost a lot of academic ground, leading them to feel discouraged and desire to drop-out (Cole, 2008). Additionally, their abilities to apply complex content conceptual knowledge on content tests and their levels of English proficiency affect their abilities to achieve the desired high school diploma. As a result, ELL drop-outs will struggle to retain jobs and escape minimum wage or low socio-economic statuses, leaving them to be trapped in a cycle of poverty. Moreover, dropouts are vulnerable to unideal conditions like incarceration or obesity. Since ELLs' academic difficulties hindering their academic success are linked to their levels of academic English, content knowledge, and their performance on content tests, it is sensible for teachers to be trained on how to help students enhance their language proficiency and academic knowledge (Rodriguez et al., 2020). In the United States, however, most mainstream teachers are inadequately prepared to teach ELLs as they lack professional knowledge and credentials (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). Mainstream teachers can help combat academic inequities for ELLs by receiving proper training that addresses the language and academic needs of the diverse learners within their classes and shifts their view from cultural and linguistic differences being a hindrance to a resource for L2 learning (Coady et al., 2016).

Thus, the purpose of this project is to identify effective teaching strategies for mainstream teachers to implement into their instruction to ensure ELLs' academic equity with language and content-area learning. Chapter 2 reviews studies and research linked to the identified problem of mainstream teachers lacking preparation to effectively teach ELLs and how their negative perceptions of ELLs interfere with successfully instructing ELLs, as well as solutions of pedagogical practices that will help mainstream teachers successfully teach ELLs. The literature review aided me in developing my final product, discussed in chapter 3, which will aid mainstream teachers in learning how to preplan and lead instruction for ELLs as their cultural and linguistic capitals are leveraged to bridge academic gaps and ensure educational success.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter includes a review of literature that pertains to how mainstream teachers can support English language learners (ELLs) with accessing content and acquiring language within a culturally responsive environment to minimize drop-out rates and enhance equity for ELLs. Proficiency acquisition and core content acquisition are considered to be two important factors that can influence dropout rates amongst ELLs if not given the proper attention (Rodriguez et al., 2020). The scholarly articles and research dated back from 1992 discusses challenges faced by mainstream teachers regarding teaching content to ELLs, and how academic gaps can be bridged through making instruction more culturally relevant.

Theoretical Framework

Gloria Ladson-Billings (1992) defined culturally relevant teaching (CRT) as:

A term I have used to describe the kind of teaching that is designed not merely to fit the school culture to the students' culture but also to use student culture as the basis for helping students understand themselves and others, structure social interactions, and conceptualize knowledge (p. 314).

CRT was a pedagogical tool created to empower African Americans to embrace their unique identity and culture, since the dominant narratives within the curriculums do not prompt teachers to challenge the status quo or the way society categorizes and ranks people (Ladson-Billings, 1992). The goal of CRT is for diverse students to critically examine the society they are within and to advocate for social change, which can be accomplished through possessing several literacies like language-based, mathematical, historical, cultural, economic, social, political, etc. CRT also encourages building upon students' linguistic abilities and their knowledge of language. Ladson-Billings' (1992) CRT study noted how a teacher's linguistic ability to speak both standard English and Black English allowed her to enter students' worlds, while also

providing them with access to standard forms of English. Sociolinguistics suggested that students are more likely to experience academic success when their home languages are incorporated into class (Ladson-Billings, 1995). By scaffolding academic knowledge upon student's lived experiences and existing knowledge, learning can become more meaningful, easy, and thorough, and have higher interest appeal. Academic achievement for diverse students improves as they are taught through their own cultural and experiential filters (Gay, 2000).

Rationale for Culturally Relevant Teaching

English language learners are expected to demonstrate competency with content and academic vocabulary comparable to their mainstream peers, although they are not afforded equitable educational opportunities in their L1 [native first language of the student]. The pressure has intensified amongst ELLs and teachers considering ELLS are expected to participate in state-mandated assessments, and teachers and school are held to high accountability standards based on standardized assessment systems (Cuba, 2020). The high-stakes system may result in ELLs being proactively pushed out of schools to prevent the lowering of schools' scores (Reyes & Villarreal, 2016). ELLs can even be misclassified as in need of special education services due to their low performance on the standardized tests. Many fail to take into account that curriculum and assessment contains cultural and linguistic bias, and ELLs are not often included in the norming sample while these assessments are designed (Abedi, 2014). Furthermore, ELLs have extensive learning needs as their time must be dedicated towards learning morphology, phonology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and academic vocabulary (Mitchell, 2012). Because of the cultural and linguistic biases that exist, it has led to the misperceptions of ELLs that fails to address their unique learning needs which could be aided from proper training.

Challenges Faced by Mainstream Teachers When Teaching ELLs

ELLs spend the majority of their days in mainstream classes; however, a large number of mainstream teachers are untrained to work with ELLs (Reeves, 2006). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2002), only 12.5% of teachers received 8 or more hours of training to teach English language learners. As indicated by the 1997 National Center for Education Statistics, 2.5% of teachers of ELLs possessed a TESOL or bilingual degree (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997b). Furthermore, ELLs are not well supported in their mainstream classrooms due to mainstream teachers' misunderstandings of their roles and responsibilities with teaching ELLs, and/or misperceptions of ELLs and their needs (Yoon, 2008). Mainstream teachers struggle to assist their ELLs in accessing content due to their negative perceptions towards teaching ELLs, and/or lack of preparedness with teaching ELLs (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016a; Guler, 2020).

Mainstream Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching ELLs

Mainstream teachers' negative attitudes towards ELLs harmfully affect ELLs' academic success and the general classroom environment (Guler, 2020). Mainstream teachers have expressed that teaching ELLs is overwhelming and believe that ELLs cannot perform well in the mainstream class (Walker-Dalhouse et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2008). Mainstream teachers, who possess negative perceptions of ELLs and perceive them through a deficit view, believe it is someone else's responsibility to teach the ELLs (Feiman-Nemser, 2018). Throughout classrooms in the country, phrases like "He has no language" and "She needs help" are frequently expressed (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016a). These distinctions do not recognize ELLs' rich linguistic resources and their wide linguistic repertoires, nor their language learning potentials considering they are bilinguals or multilingual learners (García & Kleifgen, 2010).

Furthermore, this deficit perception fails to acknowledge that it takes ELLs 1-3 years to acquire basic interpersonal communication skills to showcase conversational fluency, and 5-7 years to develop their cognitive academic language proficiency to comprehend and express ideas concepts linked to school (Cummins, 1979). Mainstream teachers tend to overlook the rich linguistic and cultural capital and needs of ELLs, especially when there is a limited number of ELLs in the mainstream setting (Coady et al., 2016). Mainstream teachers can shift their deficit perceptions of ELLs to a vision of possibility through reflecting, checking their implicit biases, and/or working with English learners directly (Feiman-Nemser, 2018). Educational research notes that teachers' beliefs are linked to instructional decisions. Therefore, content area teachers' negative beliefs about ELLs can have consequences and can negatively affect their educational opportunity (Polat & Mahalingappa, 2013). A survey administered by Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) NYC to teachers, counselors, and administrators required participants to respond to a questionnaire containing problems related to school services, academic and instructional challenges of high school ELLs. Question two on the questionnaire asked participants about the instructional changes that could minimize ELL dropout rates, and teachers immediately suggested more small group opportunities and hiring assistants to help ELLs. It was notable, however, that no participants perceived difficulty with delivering instruction, nor expressed that the quality of instruction is a significant factor related to ELL drop-out rates (Rodriguez et al., 2020). Similarly, a study by Polat and Mahalingappa (2013) analyzed pre-service and in-service content-area teacher's beliefs about English language learner's (ELLs) inclusion in mainstream classes, the instructional support they should have, and who is responsible for ELLs' language and academic achievement. As indicated by the questionnaire, in-service teachers indicated that it was the ESL teacher's responsibility to teach

the ELLs. In-service teachers demonstrated strong agreement with the statement that “Content area teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of ELLs” (Polat & Mahalingappa, 2013, p. 66). In-service teachers also indicated that “Until students have learned to speak English, they shouldn’t be expected to do much in regular classes” (Polat & Mahalingappa, 2013, p. 66). On the contrary, pre-service teachers indicated that the ELLs’ academic success and language development was the content-area teacher’s responsibility since they spend the most time with ELLs in a day. Interestingly, the survey indicated a variance linked to participants who had been exposed to ELLs and linguistic and cultural diversity, and their beliefs about instructional support and who is considered responsible for ELLs’ education. Therefore, it is recommended that pre-service teachers engage in study abroad or field experience opportunities with ELLs to influence their beliefs about working with ELLs. Differently, in-service teachers’ beliefs about their lack of time and lack of responsibility for teaching ELLs could be best targeted through professional development or continued educational requirements that target beliefs (Polat & Mahalingappa, 2013). Polat, Mahalingappa, Hughes, and Karayigit’s (2019) study shows how pre-service teachers who had participated in an experiment where they had received an English language learner pen pal, with whom they exchanged letters, demonstrated a shift of perception towards responsibility of teaching ELLs after working directly with ELLs. Teachers were asked to rate items on the Teacher Beliefs about Responsibility for ELLs’ Education Survey from 1 to 7. The scoring scale ranged from 1, which indicated a strong disagreement, to a 7, suggesting a strong agreement. The pre-service teachers who undergone the pen pal experiment had exhibited a pre-test mean of 6.77 to the indicator that “ESL teachers are responsible for ELs’ academic development”, and the mean decreased to 5.86 by the post-test score (Polat et al., 2019, p. 229). The pre-test score indicated that initially the pre-service

teachers strongly agreed with the idea that ESL teachers are responsible for ELL's academic development, but their perception of the ESL teacher being the only teacher solely responsible for teaching ELLs decreased by the post-test (Polat et al., 2019). For ELLs to achieve more academic success in mainstream classrooms, mainstream teachers must consider how to meet ELLs' diverse needs and take responsibility for ELLs' educational needs (Yoon, 2008).

Mainstream Teachers' Lack of Preparation with Teaching ELLs

Mainstream teachers' frustration and negative attitudes towards teaching ELLs stems from the students' varying academic and language proficiency levels, as well as the perceived lack of resources to aid teachers with teaching ELLs (Gandara et al., 2005). As indicated by a survey conducted by Reeves (2006), about 80% of secondary teachers reported feelings of lack of preparedness for teaching ELLs. Additionally, a study by Karabenick and Noda (2004) for mainstream teachers teaching ELLs reported that teachers lacked foundational knowledge about English language learner (ELL) problems, although 88% of the teachers in their survey who participated in the survey had taught ELLs. Mainstream teachers may even use the wrong accommodations to teach ELLs due to their lack of knowledge with ELL education (Guler, 2020). Although it is commonly suggested that mainstream teachers receive formal education with teaching ELLs, many mainstream teachers fail to take classes due to their busy teaching schedules (England, 2012). However, online classes can help teachers more flexibly address time constraint barriers, and access education from any location due to its features of discussion boards, uploading assignments, etc. (Guler, 2020). In Guler's (2020) study, mainstream teachers enrolled in two online courses of "Linguistics for Educators" and the English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Practicum from Midwestern State University as part of an ELL teacher education certification program. One participant, Kimberly, acknowledged that she better

understood the needs of ELLs better as well as the struggles they face after reflecting upon her coursework and teaching practices. Kimberly affirmed, “Without this formal training in teaching ELLs, I have struggled to figure out what to teach my students” (Guler, 2020, p.90). In week 2 of the practicum, one mainstream teacher participant named Kasey, had believed that her instruction for non-ELLs could easily be modified for ELLs simply through slowing her speech. By week 3, she learned more about second language acquisition and ELL education and recognized gaps in ELLs’ knowledge and how additional accommodations may be needed. For example, she learned that some of her ELLs may not know the difference between a letter, word, and sentence after she reflected upon videos available to her through her coursework, and then she identified the strategy of incorporating at least a few minutes towards identify letters, words, and sentences into the beginning of class with the reading interventionist specialist. She also learned that writing lesson plans specifically for ELLs helped her better understand how to teach the students and meet their educational needs as she must include objectives of the lesson, materials, a lesson sequence, and a reflection. Furthermore, Kasey also acknowledged that she could bridge academic gaps by building upon their background knowledge (Guler, 2020). Aside from coursework, schools also began offering PD opportunities to enhance mainstream teachers’ instructional strategies to support the increasing number of ELLs entering schools (Berube, 2000). In fact, Song’s (2016) study demonstrated an increase in 6-12th grade content area teachers’ positive feelings towards teaching ELLs after learning instructional strategies for ELLs through PD. 65 6th-12th grade mainstream teachers participated in sheltered instruction observation protocol (SIOP) PD workshops from August 2008 to May 2011. The SIOP model represents components of effective teaching for ELLs including creating content and language objectives, using students’ L1 as a resource for learning, grouping configuration for

differentiated instruction as well as assessing and planning (Echevarria et al., 2006). Based on responses from 58 participating teachers partaking in the instructional strategy survey, the items that showed great statistical significance that showed mean differences greater than 1 between the pretest and postsurvey were language objectives, content concepts, scaffolding techniques and supported content objectives (Song, 2016). Teachers rated their perceived competence on instructional strategies for ELLs using Likert scales (1–5, with 5 indicating highly evident). The pre-test mean for perceived competence with language objectives was a 2.45, and the post-test mean increased to 3.89. Their perceived competence with scaffolding techniques showed the greatest improvement from a pre-test mean of 2.93 to a mean of 4.19 for the post-test. The pre-test mean for their perceived competence of content concept was 3.48 and the post-test mean was 4.49 as participants went through hands-on PD trainings where they had to identify lesson concepts and topics throughout thematic unit plans. Moreover, 45 of 48 (93.8%) respondents indicated in the Teachers' Attitudes Towards ELLs (TAS) survey that applying SIOP features into their lessons from PD and coaching improved ELLs' participation in content classes. 40 of 48 respondents (83.3%) also indicated that the SIOP PD workshops enhanced their attitudes towards ELLs and their academic behaviors (Song, 2016). To help prepare mainstream teachers to assist culturally and linguistically diverse learners, they need to be exposed to systematic opportunities to learn pedagogical strategies for teaching diverse learners (National Education Association, 2008).

Accessing Content Through Understanding ELLs' Language Needs

ELLs face the challenge of being expected to meet the intense linguistic demands of the Common Core Standards like their mainstream peers (Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO], 2012). Beyond acquiring content, the Common Core standards require that students

can demonstrate their content competency through advanced language skills like developing and using models, analyzing, and interpreting data, using computational thinking, engaging in arguments using evidence, etc. (Committee on Conceptual Framework for the New K-12 Science Education Standards [Committee], 2012). To help bridge the gaps for ELLs with content learning and linguistic demands, mainstream teachers must possess special knowledge and skills to work with ELLs (Lucas & Villegas, 2011). To effectively work with ELLs, mainstream teachers should have a foundational understanding of second language acquisition (SLA) (Bunch, 2013). Mainstream teachers can become more linguistically responsive teachers by focusing on SLA principles like distinguishing conversational and academic proficiency, comprehensible input, social interaction for communicative purposes and transfer from L1 to L2 (Lucas & Villegas, 2011). Research shows that ELLs can better access content and have their language needs met through teachers' setting of language objectives, frontloading, and leveraging ELLs' L1s.

Language Objectives

Well-prepared teachers of ELLs require specialized knowledge and skill to respond to ELLs' unique cultural and linguistic needs, as well as to adapt to the changing classroom context. Mainstream teachers attempt to teach ELLs without specific preplanning in lessons, modifying materials for instruction in advance, or identifying language objectives based on ELLs' language learning needs, which hinders students' language development (Coady et al., 2016). Implementing language objectives, however, assists teachers with identifying specific language goals for ELLS related to the linguistic and content demands that enable ELLs to participate, but can allow for alternative assessment to measure their content understanding in a manner that is appropriate for their needs (Alvarez et al., 2014). Mainstream teachers can learn

how to create language objectives to meet and measure ELLs' content and language learning needs through collaborating with an ESOL teacher, who has specialized knowledge on second language acquisition (de Oliveira & Shoffner, 2016). The collaboration between mainstream and ESOL teachers is beneficial since classroom teachers are so engrossed with learning and teaching the content that they do not recognize the language demands needed to engage with the content (Davison, 2006). Language objectives complement the content objectives and focus upon the essential vocabulary, language functions, language skills and grammar/language structures needed to comprehend the content (Herczog, 2012). While teaching science, mainstream teachers must ask themselves what essential vocabulary and literacy skills students will need to achieve the specific content objectives of the lesson. One common mistake of content-area teachers is focusing only on vocabulary acquisition, but not the structure in which the vocabulary will be used. In a cell inquiry lesson, although the teacher may identify the essential vocabulary as smooth, rough, or rectangular, the teacher must also know how to guide the students in applying the vocabulary in particular language functions. For example, to compare and contrast animal cells, the mainstream teachers may provide a sentence frame of "Animal cells are like plant cells because ____" (Carrier, 2005). Mainstream teachers can help ELLs formulate scientific vocabulary in grammatically correct sentences by providing sentence frames (Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992). Sentence frames act as language function templates in which ELLs can insert appropriate vocabulary words to increase their fluency and communicative competence without getting too involved in the complexity of grammar rules (Wood, 2002). A sample sentence frame related to cell inquiry for science may look like "_____ cells have a _____ shape" (Carrier, 2005). Mainstream teachers must also consider what science literacy skills, specific to the science discipline, students will need to exhibit and

what language supports they will need. If students are learning about cause and effect in science, then they will need to learn how to create if-then statements. The mainstream teacher should have the language objectives posted as a visual aid to give ELLs time to process the goals, but also to measure their progress throughout the unit. Teachers should also have the sentence frames posted and model how to use the sentence frames with oral and written language (Carrier, 2005). A mainstream teacher, who graduated from a 5-year preparation program in Florida, was observed teaching her general education kindergarten-second grade multiage class that had two ELLs. The teacher, Suzy, led students in a whole class lesson on Thanksgiving. However, Suzy did not preplan vocabulary, language structures to utilize, visuals or realia, and instead used gestures to clarify vocabulary when students were confused. Her ELL, Jorge, did not respond to Suzy's questions during whole-group instruction nor had he been asked any questions. Suzy indicated that Jorge had trouble comprehending English throughout the lesson. Her lack of preplanning and accommodations had contributed to Jorge's lack of participation (Coady et al., 2016). Daniel and Pray's (2017) study demonstrate the instructional growth of two teachers who participated in a 1-year, graduate level, add-on certificate program for teaching ELLS. One participant, Lena, had 4.5 years of experience as a primary teacher and is now a literacy coach at the time of this study, and Hannah is a third-grade mainstream teacher. The year program consisted of four courses and one-on-one mentoring. In the fall, the teachers took a course on methods and videotaped their lessons to analyze their teaching of ELLs, and also received feedback from their mentors during classroom observations. Hannah and her mentor reflected upon a videorecorded lesson, and Hannah recognized her students were lost due to the lack of clarity of her content and language objectives. Once per month, the teachers submitted lessons using SIOP criteria, and the data from the SIOP observations of both Hannah and Lena showed

at least one point of growth for content and language objectives (Daniel & Pray, 2017). The teachers could still benefit from more practice with writing language objectives through PD opportunities to maximize their mastery with these skills (Daniel & Pray, 2017). Morel's (2019) study had mainstream teachers participate in a 3-day series of a sheltered English instruction (SEI) PD initiative that consisted over 15 hours of professional learning led by ESL teachers. During the day 1 PD, the mainstream teachers were asked to create language and content objectives for a lesson they recently taught using descriptors of what each ELL should be able to do according to their proficiency level. Social studies teacher, Kathy, participated in an interview after the SEI initiative, reflecting upon her new knowledge and experience with language objectives. Kathy mentioned:

Just the fact that it will help me reach them [ELLs] better, not just what they need to learn [about social studies], but what the kids need [to learn about language]. Just making sure. If I have it [a language objective] in my lesson plan, as I look at my plan during the day [it will help me] stay on track. So, it would remind me to make sure that I give language the attention it needs...Not just...let's practice these words...but what specifically, am I going to hit home today (Morel, 2019, p. 191).

Mainstream teachers can make their teaching more culturally relevant through implementing language objectives to ensure students' language needs and barriers are taken into consideration, and their content learning can be accessed and assessed fairly.

Bridging Contextual Gaps Through Frontloading

There is an obvious linguistic achievement gap between English-proficient students and English learners with academic performance (Thomas & Collier, 2002). In fact, the 1998 and 2002 National Assessment of Academic Progress eighth grade reading tests indicated that ELLs scored an average of 1.2 standard deviations below non-ENL students. It is unknown whether the

low academic achievement of ELLs is due to poor academic preparation or lack of linguistic skills (Lam, 1993; National Research Council, 1993). Swain (1991) described that a goal of the education system is for students to use decontextualized language as a tool for reading and listening, or for conceptualizing, drawing abstract generalizations, or expressing complex relationships in speaking and writing. The language that students, including ELLs, are exposed to becomes increasingly abstract as they advance grade levels (Collier, 1987). Collier (1987) found that students between ages 8 and 12 on arrival were the first to reach norms for native speaking mainstream students on the content-area tests within four to five years. On the other hand, students who arrived at a later age with low English proficiency may need more time spent on developing their basic English skills, which can lead them to miss months or years of content knowledge (Collier, 1987). Explicit vocabulary instruction is needed to help bridge academic gaps for learners who cannot recognize the connection between their background knowledge and academic texts (Cuba, 2020). Teachers can do this through a few means like frontloading or building upon students' background knowledge and experiences. Frontloading refers to the strategy of explicitly teaching students about words and their meaning prior to exposing them to a text. This instructional strategy prepares ELLs for the academic texts and makes the texts more relatable to their lived experiences (Cuba, 2020). Teachers should first identify the content and language objectives for the lesson, determine which vocabulary words and/or skills will be targeted, and then identify appropriate strategies for explicitly delivering the information needed to access the content or activity to help students participate. In Cuba's (2020) study, a teacher of an ELL with a traumatic brain injury and intellectual disability used frontloading to help her class and the ELL meet standards like assessing figurative language and poetic prose. The teacher used Sandra Cisneros' book *The House on Mango Street* as an anchor text as a reference

for explicitly teaching poetic prose. The teacher compared this book to other poetic prose samples since students already background knowledge of this story, which could scaffold their abilities to develop their new understanding of the poetic prose content concept. This was helpful for her ELL student with a disability named Abel since it served as a resource for identifying the relationship between an abstract concept and a story that can be visualized (Cuba, 2020).

Teachers can also frontload through explicitly teaching vocabulary words related to an anchor text, and then offering opportunities for students to recycle these words in oral and written activities, during structured activities with peers, and/or through written activities with their peers (Wanzek et al., 2016). To frontload appropriately, teachers should explicitly introduce new vocabulary words, its pronunciation, how they are used in different sentences, and visual aids to make the meaning more comprehensible (Cuba, 2020). Overall, frontloading has been shown to cause positive outcomes. An 18-week study, that included 346 English language learners, found that frontloading aided ELLs and non-ELLs' assessment performance on a post-test as a result of the instruction with frontloaded vocabulary through a text-based academic language program that included anchor texts (Lesaux et al., 2010). Furthermore, frontloading or pre-teaching vocabulary has been seen to improve students' L2 confidence significantly (Chang, 2007). Frontloading can aid students' working memory and short-term memory skills, which are linked to improved reading abilities (Cuba, 2020). Frontloading promotes culturally relevant teaching as students are explicitly taught information that teachers previously considered may be lacking in ELLs due to linguistic or cultural gaps. Through bridging linguistic and cultural gaps, ELLs can academically achieve.

Building Upon Students' Native Languages

Mainstream teachers can aid ELLs' academic success by incorporating strategies that allow for the incorporation of students' native languages. Students acquiring English as a new language are often perceived as "not smart" or "lacking language" (Stires & Genishi, 2008). Instead, teachers should approach their ELLs with a curiosity of the language capital that they already possess, and question how they can build upon the full extent of the students' linguistic repertoires (Souto-Manning, 2016). This can be done by making space for translanguaging or codeswitching to occur during class, and/or preplanning ways to incorporate students' native languages into lessons. Translanguaging is a pedagogical strategy that encourages the use of students' entire linguistic repertoire for different situations, purposes, and tasks (Wiley & Garcia, 2016). It can be beneficial for students to switch between their native language (L1) and the target language (L2) for different situations, purposes, and/or tasks as they strive to use their full linguistic repertoire to create meaning. If students understand the meaning of L2 words in their L1, then they may be better able to access the meaning of words in their L2 and/or access content in their L2. In fact, some ELLs come to school with a high proficiency in their native language and content knowledge due to previous formal schooling. On the contrary, some ELLs may not have had much or any formal schooling, or their native language may not have a written language (Rodriguez et al., 2020). There are various ways teachers can incorporate translanguaging into their instruction. For example, teachers can incorporate opportunities like creating bilingual or multilingual concepts maps, inviting students to use their full linguistic repertoire during games like charades, and/or creating vocabulary lists with both languages for students to review prior to beginning a new unit (Lou, 2020). Through translanguaging, students can construct their linguistic repertoire of both languages while creating meaning in both languages. Codeswitching, similarly, allows for students to switch between their L1 and L2 to

express themselves, create connections, and make meaning (de Oliveira et al., 2021). In de Oliviera, Jones and Smith's (2021) study, a first-grade teacher named Ms. Cabana had worked with mentors to learn how to implement the language-based approach to content instruction (LACI) framework into her instruction to scaffold learning for all students, especially ELLs. These pedagogical strategies linked to LACI include helping students' access content-specific vocabulary through connection, culture, community and collaboration, challenge, classroom interactions, and code-breaking (code-switching). Ms. Cabana and her students exemplified code-switching to continue conversational fluency and create meaning when she asked, "Has anyone gone away to visit a family member?" This question was intended to have students link their personal connections to the story *Last Stop on Market Street*. Her student Hugo described his trip to Brazil and mentioned, "I slept over with my primo." Ms. Cabana clarified to her class that primo means "cousin" in Portuguese to validate her student's linguistic capital and embrace the student's native language (de Oliveira et al., 2021). Through building upon students' native languages, it can help students access the content in their L2 as the language gaps are bridged, and students can fluidly use the combination of both of their languages to construct meaning and bridge their understandings.

Another way mainstream teachers can build upon students' native languages are through preplanning ways to incorporate students' L1s into instruction. Teachers design lessons that incorporate cognates into instruction. Cognates help students learn target words in the L2 since the words have a similar pronunciation, spelling, and typically the same meaning as it does in their L1 (Lou, 2020). Using cognates represents an assets approach in literacy instruction since teachers are building off the knowledge that students already have, compared to a deficient perspective that focuses on students "lack of English" (Hernández et al., 2011; Valencia, 2010).

Teachers first identify the cognates in a multilingual book, pre-teach the cognates, and return to the cognates in the book to help the students understand them in context. Cognate instruction can help students learn about prefixes, suffixes, or adverbs in their L1. For example, adverbs in English end in -ly, and Spanish adverbs can be transformed by replacing -ly with -mente (finally/finalmente) (Hernández et al., 2016). Cognates are especially helpful for learners who have a Latinate language, since they have an advantage as cognates allow them to access their linguistic background, leading them to engage with the text more effectively (Corson, 1997). Mainstream teachers can also guide students in creating vocabulary notebooks where students write the target vocabulary word, the L1 translation, the synonym/antonym, and a brief example (Lou, 2020). Strong native language skills have been demonstrated to be linked to stronger L2 performance (Proctor et al., 2006). Research has shown that the most effective strategy for language learners with identifying unknown words in the target language is to use an L1 translation (Laufer & Shmueli, 1997). Through incorporating students' L1s in the curriculum, teachers can help bridge academic gaps, develop students' L1s and L2s, and validate students' linguistic and cultural capitals.

Bridging Academic Gaps Through Culturally Relevant Teaching

Mainstream teachers can also help ELLs access content learning through making their curriculum more culturally responsive. Culturally responsive teaching bridges academic gaps by connecting students' unique cultural and linguistic backgrounds to the content taught in school. Students bring their funds of knowledge to school every day, which are their unique linguistic and cultural capitals that can be viewed as resources that can be leveraged to aid their L2 learning (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016). These funds of knowledge, acquired uniquely by each child and their family, represent the rich cultural and historical bodies of knowledge and

skills they have accumulated for functioning and maintaining their well-being (Moll et al., 1992). When mainstream teachers recognize that students possess unique academic and social experiences from in and out of school, teachers can then build upon what students know to help them make connections to the content (Gonzalez et al., 2005).

Research shows that English learners whose funds of knowledge were leveraged by their teacher could better access content learning than students whose funds of knowledge were not tapped into during instruction. In Coady, Harper, and de Jong's (2016) study, a mainstream teacher, who had undergone a 5-year ESOL preparation program in Florida, demonstrated failure with building upon students' funds of knowledge when teaching new content. During the teacher's small reading group, the group was reading an excerpt from the poem "Paul Revere's Ride" by Henry Wadsworth. The ELL appeared to be stifled by cultural and historical references within the poem as well as vocabulary words. The teacher did not preplan for these misconceptions. At one point in the lesson, the ELL asked what the term "lantern" meant, and the teacher invited a peer to orally explain the word's meaning to the ELL (Coady et al., 2016). Teachers must plan scaffolding components for their culturally and linguistically diverse students in advance to ensure effective instruction (de Oliveira et al., 2021). Scaffolding for this lesson may have included identifying a few essential vocabulary words like "lantern", teaching them explicitly, and offering opportunities to recycle the vocabulary orally or through writing. Building students' knowledge on the topic of discussion has been observed to also reduce ELLs' anxiety levels and increase their participation (MacIntyre & Legatto, 2011). Teachers can build upon students' knowledge of the topic by determining questions that students can explore that directly connect the content to their lived experiences. In a study by de Oliveira, Jones, and Smith (2021), a 1st grade teacher referred to as "Ms. Cabana" incorporated opportunities for her

students to make personal and cultural connection to the book *Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt de la Pena. She aimed to help students meet grade-level literacy standards and amplify their comprehension and abilities to participate through inviting them to make connections to the text. She asked students if they had traveled anywhere to visit their family and then directly asked an ELL who responded that he had gone to Argentina. This connected to the grade-level standard of theme since the theme was related to family, and her student was able to make personal connections to family. The teacher also built upon the students' funds of knowledge by engaging in purposeful repetition, which meant she repeated what the ELL had said to validate what they were saying, and to invite them to expand upon their language by adding details (de Oliveira et al., 2021). Teachers can also build upon their students' background knowledge by putting students into diverse groups and asking them to discuss what they already know about a topic or sharing their personal responses to a question linked to the content. To accomplish this, Lou (2020) recommended allowing students to discuss love stories that are prominent in their cultures before reading *Romeo and Juliet* to provide context. Through eliciting students' background knowledge, it will increase engagement for ELLs and help students connect with each other as they discover common themes and values across cultures (Lou, 2020).

Benefits of Culturally Relevant Teaching

Culturally relevant teachers offer endless benefits to students like increasing student achievement through high expectations, building upon students' strengths and existing knowledge to access deeper learning, and creating an inclusive environment that helps students understand the value of their own culture and others' cultures (Byrd, 2016). Since reading is cultural, multicultural literature featuring diverse people or people of color should be included in the curriculum to expand students' perspectives of the world (Souto-Manning, 2016).

Mainstream teachers can find opportunities to incorporate multicultural literature into instruction and use it as foundation for exploring cultural diversity and identity, as well as using it to meet the grade-level standards. In Souto-Manning's (2016) study, mainstream bilingual teacher Jessica Martell exemplified this as she read bilingual books like *René Has Two Last Names/René tiene dos apellidos* by René Colato Laínez and *The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi to her students. She wanted to build background for the students on the topic of name history to prepare them to meet grade-level standards as they write their own name history story. This would help expose students to unique names and their histories, which can help students develop an appreciation for students with unique names and empower students who are embarrassed of their names. Jessica's unit turned into a yearlong oral history project that went beyond Common Core's second grade listening and speaking standards, as it also addressed speaking and listening standards for third, fourth and fifth grade. Jessica proves that teachers find ways to adapt the curriculum to meet grade-level standards while also creating opportunities for students to explore their identities. This links to María Isabel Salazar López's story of her unique name history after unwisely being called "Mary", leading her to not participate in school activities (Souto-Manning, 2016). This literature reveals how ELLs bring unique cultures, stories, and histories to school. Teachers can also incorporate opportunities for students to share their "transportable identities", meaning that they can share personal stories in their L2, trigger their background knowledge, and enhance their willingness to communicate. Overall, building upon students' identities strengthens their engagement, higher-level thinking abilities, comprehension, and even confidence to participate (Shen & Byfield, 2018). Students must practice exploring and appreciating their identities, especially ELLs who are marginalized due to their cultures differing from the dominant American culture of White, English-monolingual, middle-to-upper

socioeconomic class (de Oliveira et al., 2021). If mainstream teachers adopt culturally relevant teaching practices, then students can achieve academic success as their existing knowledge is valued and they develop positive ethnic-racial identities, which will aid them in navigating the world and developing resilience in the face of discrimination (Byrd, 2016).

Conclusion

Through the lens of culturally relevant teaching, it is crucial that teachers receive training to learn how to write language objectives and build upon students' funds of knowledge in order to build upon students' existing knowledge and strengths. Through learning how to create language objectives, mainstream teachers will learn how to modify assignments for ELLs as they become more aware of the essential vocabulary and language functions needed to access the content (Herczog, 2012). By learning how to build upon students' cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge, mainstream teachers will recognize students' existing knowledge and how it can be scaffolded to meet content learning goals (de Oliveira et al., 2021). A review of research from literature and studies has informed my understanding of the challenges faced by mainstream teachers with teaching ELLs and helped me generate pedagogical ideas for the professional development session to aid the unique learning needs of ELLs. My professional development plan will be listed in Chapter 3 to aid mainstream teachers in modifying their instruction to be more culturally and linguistically responsive to ensure ELLs achieve academic success and develop confidence with their unique identities.

Chapter 3: Description of the Product and Tools

Although ELLs spend the majority of the day with their mainstream teachers, a significant number of mainstream teachers have not received proper training on how to educate ELLs (Reeves, 2006). Mainstream teachers tend to delegate the responsibility of teaching ELLs to others like the ENL teachers since they believe teaching ELLs is overwhelming, and that the students are not ready to be educated in a mainstream setting (Walker Dalhouse et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2008). Mainstream teachers fail to preplan their lessons, modify their instruction, or create appropriate language objectives to ensure that content learning is accessible for ELLs, and ELLs' language development suffers as a result (Coady et al., 2016). If mainstream teachers learn how to create language objectives to guide their lessons, then they can better recognize the linguistic and content demands needed to aid ELLs' participation and can create alternative assessments to measure ELLs' content learning in a manner that complements their needs (Alvarez et al., 2014). Furthermore, mainstream teachers have admitted to not modifying or adapting the curriculum to provide scaffolds for ELLs due to pressures of being in alignment with the pacing of the district's calendar (Bauler & Kang, 2020). Although mainstream teachers feel afraid to modify the curriculum due to time constraints, they can leverage students' linguistic and cultural funds of knowledge to aid their English learning through viewing their unique capitals as resources (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016).

To assist mainstream teachers with enhancing their preparedness to teach ELLs, I will be supplying mainstream teachers with two 15-minute professional development videos that target how to create language objectives, and how to make their teaching more culturally responsive through learning strategies to build student's background knowledge, frontload vocabulary, and incorporate ELLs' L1s into instruction. In the language objectives part of the PD, mainstream

teachers will learn how to create language objectives after engaging with a PowerPoint presentation (see Appendix A) that explains the rationale behind language objectives and introduces teachers to tools like the academic language planning organizer, the formula for writing language objectives, as well as examples and non-examples of adequate language objectives. The language objective formula will consist of combining “how” students will use language (language skills, functions, vocabulary, and structures), and “what” the students will be able to know or do with the content using an active verb. Mainstream teachers will be given language objective samples and will work in their groups or individually to identify which language objectives are sufficient or insufficient and why. They will also work with their group members or individually to create language objectives that align with given content objectives, using the ALPO model or language objective formula hand-out, that is relevant to the elementary curriculum (see Appendix B and Appendix C). In the culturally responsive teaching part of the PD, teachers will practice building students’ background by finding opportunities to connect the content to students’ previous experiences and building upon universal knowledge in lessons after mainstream teachers are exposed to a PowerPoint that explains the rationale and strategies for building background and frontloading and contains a model lesson that demonstrates the building upon of students’ background knowledge (see Appendix D). Mainstream teachers will also learn how to frontload vocabulary through pre-selecting and explicitly teaching key vocabulary and offering opportunities for ELLs to clarify their understandings of the vocabulary through utilizing their L1 as a resource. Mainstream teachers will brainstorm ways to connect vocabulary words like seasons, fall, winter, spring, and summer, from *The Four Seasons* book (Readinga-z.com, 2016) to students’ personal lives. Teachers will practice frontloading information through explicitly teaching a vocabulary word, and modeling how to create a

modified version of the Frayer model (1969) using their adapted hand-out (see Appendix E) that requires students to write down the vocabulary word, its definition, an example (potentially accompanied by a visual), non-example, and the L1 translation. This will aid students by preparing the students with more context and understanding to comprehend the challenging vocabulary words within the text.

My choices for educating mainstream teachers on language objectives, building background, frontloading, and use of L1 translations were guided by research-based evidence. When mainstream teachers fail to appropriately teach ELLs without specific preplanning vocabulary supports in lessons, modifying materials for instruction in advance, or identifying language objectives based on ELLs' language learning needs, ELLs' language development suffers (Coady et al., 2016). Academic language is highly prevalent in content-area classes like science and is needed for ELLs to participate fully and authentically engage with content-related activities (Gee, 2005; National Research Council [NRC], 2012). Academic language refers to the specialized language and knowledge that students engage with to read, write, and speak about content in their classrooms (Schleppegrell, 2004). By learning how to create language objectives, mainstream teachers can identify language goals, related to the academic vocabulary, for the students that promote ELLs' participation and allow flexible means to assess students' content learning that are more appropriate for their unique needs (Alvarez et al., 2014). To address the creation of language objectives, students will be exposed to the Academic Language Planning Organizer (ALPO) tool, which will help them identify academic language features, objectives and supports, and ways to translate the supports to the planned activities. Findings indicated that the preservice teachers who utilized the ALPO were able to successfully identify clear language functions and relevant vocabulary terms, as well as translate language supports

into their lesson plans (Jung & Brown, 2016). Teachers will also view sample language objectives following the “Students can use ___1___ to ___2___” model”. In the first blank, they will write how the students will use the language (language skills, functions, vocabulary, language structures), and in the second blank they will write in the active verb that describes what content the students will know or be able to do (Van Borssum, 2021). Creating language objectives and narrowing down language goals and supports is necessary since the second language acquisition process requires ELLs to be exposed to language, practice the language, and then have their language skills assessed. Language objectives can help students be successful as they become aware of the language functions and skills that they will need to execute in order to participate in the lesson and meet grade-level standards (Echevarria et al., 2008).

In the second part of the PD, mainstream teachers will learn how to include the building background strategy into their teaching while connecting to students’ funds of knowledge in a sample lesson. They will reflect upon ways they can connect students’ age, interests, cultural or home country experiences into the curriculum to help bridge academic gaps through building upon students’ existing knowledge. Building background is a strategy that consists of linking students’ cultural and personal experiences to the content to aid students’ content learning. Additionally, the building background strategy helps teachers develop awareness about students’ second language knowledge and language gaps that may exist and must be bridged (Salcedo, 2010). Mainstream teachers must recognize that all students bring funds of knowledge based on their unique cultural and linguistic experiences, in and out of school, to the classroom that teachers can leverage to ensure ELLs’ academic success (Gonzalez et al., 2005; de Oliveira et al., 2021) Teachers can successfully link content to students’ backgrounds by incorporating

factors like students' age, preferences, lifestyle, and religious inclination, and/or real-life concerns faced by students into instruction to make teaching more effective (Calderón Pachón & Jiménez Vargas, 2009). Additionally, teachers can find ways to incorporate students' funds of knowledge by asking students to share their ideas or experiences in their native countries or bring art or music from their culture into class while using their language skills to describe the objects. Teachers may also be proactive with determining ways to link students' funds of knowledge to the content by researching students' native countries, cultures, educational systems, or even their geography, historical figures, or musical and art traditions of their native countries (Robertson, 2021). Through creating opportunities for students to share about their personal experiences, then students are able to “construct” their class experience with their teacher as an active participant compared to being an object of the lesson. Mainstream teachers can build upon students' background knowledge by referencing universal factors they would have all experienced like their feelings as a teenager, sad moments in their lives, challenges they have faced, etc. Using building background strategies have noticeably increased participation of ELLs (Salcedo, 2010).

Mainstream teachers will also learn how to frontload vocabulary and utilize students' L1s to clarify concepts and bridge academic gaps in the second part of the PD. The mainstream teachers will preview a page from a RAZKids book called *Eat Like a Pig* displayed on the Smartboard, choose one abstract vocabulary word that the ELLs should know in order to access the text, and explicitly teach the vocabulary using a modified Frayer model (see Appendix E) that includes the vocabulary word, definition, example, non-example, and L1 translation. Frontloading is a strategy that refers to pre-teaching vocabulary, which prepares students for the textual content and helps make the text more relevant to students' lives as academic vocabulary

is explicitly taught. Frontloading is a necessary strategy for students like ELLs who may struggle to find direct connections between their background knowledge and academic texts. Frontloading allows students to prepare their background knowledge, vocabulary, visuals, and related questions to the topic prior to engaging with the content (Verplaetse et al., 2012). In the PD, teachers will scan a page from the RAZKids text for problematic or essential vocabulary that the students must comprehend to get the overall main idea of the text. The first step with frontloading is to preview the text for problematic vocabulary that may be challenging to understand in context and must be scaffolded (Coffman, 2009). Then, a frontloading strategy to help students access, process and retrieve new academic vocabulary is creating a vocabulary notebook, which can be in the form of a modified Frayer Model, which includes the vocabulary word, its definition, an example, a non-example, the L1 translation, and a visual can be added to strengthen one's understanding of the word's meaning (Folse, 2004; Lou, 2020). The Frayer Model can be a useful graphic organizer for helping students more deeply comprehend confusing or abstract vocabulary words (Barton & Heidema, 2002). Research has shown that non-examples can help students clarify definitions, and their misunderstandings can be revealed as they attempt to create non-examples (Adams 2003; Paulsen 2007). Additionally, frontloading vocabulary has been showed through research-based evidence to improve ELLs' word mastery, morphology, word meaning, and overall comprehension (Cuba, 2020; Stowe, n.d.). As mentioned previously, this modified version of the Frayer Model will allow students to input their L1 translation of the vocabulary word. Meta-analyses have shown that education programs that integrate students' L1s result in academic success and enhanced performance for ELLS with literacy and content-area learning (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2012). Best practices suggest that ELLs benefit academically when they can clarify concepts in their L1s with peers, teachers,

or even through tools like bilingual dictionaries or translators. Clarifying concepts in students' L1s allows students to grasp a truer understanding of the content while learning English (Echevarría et al., 2000). Overall, when students can comprehend the terms within a text, then they can better comprehend the information that they read or hear that is related to the topic (Marzano & Pickering, 2005).

The professional development videos about language objectives, building background, frontloading vocabulary, and utilizing students' L1s can help mitigate the problem of mainstream teachers being unprepared to teach ELLs. Many mainstream teachers perceive that they lack the knowledge and skill to educate ELLs, although various mainstream teachers have previously had ELLs in their classes over a span of years (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). Through learning how to create language objectives, mainstream teachers will be prepared to attend to students' misconceptions due to preplanning challenging vocabulary and academic supports, they will enhance students' participation, and understand how to modify their assessments for ELLs while ensuring they are meeting the linguistic demands (Coady et al., 2016; Alvarez et al., 2014). In the study of Echevarria, Powers, and Short (2006), it was found that students of middle school science teachers, who included language objectives into their instruction, performed significantly better on an expository writing task compared to students whose teachers did not implement language objectives and other components of the SIOP model into their instruction. As mainstream teachers learn to create language objectives, they can address their issue of expecting students to incidentally learn academic vocabulary as they shift their overfocus on content teaching to also promoting language development (Baecher et al., 2014). Teachers will become more prepared to teach ELLs as they practice using the ALPO, since preservice teachers who have used the ALPO tool were able to identify clear language functions, objectives and supports,

and translate their supports into their activities to support their ELLs (Jung & Brown, 2016). Building background will help resolve teachers' lack of preparation to educate ELLs and also help them develop a more productive mindset for working with ELLs since they tend to view ELLs through a deficit perspective (Feiman-Nemser, 2018). If teachers can identify what knowledge and experience students already possess, then they can leverage their background knowledge to aid their L2 learning (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016a). When a mainstream teacher was able to connect a student's experience in their home country to the content, the ELL's participation increased severely (de Oliveira et al., 2021). Through the professional development, the teachers will learn how to connect factors like students' age, interests, cultural experiences, experiences in their home countries, and/or lifestyles to the content learning, since these factors represent universal knowledge (Calderón Pachón & Jiménez Vargas, 2009). Mainstream teachers also struggle with what they should teach ELLs since they are unsure whether ELLs are ready to access grade-level curriculum, and often provide them with unnecessary accommodations (Guler, 2020). Mainstream teachers can help ELLs access grade-level curriculum and academic vocabulary through explicitly teaching vocabulary using the strategies of frontloading and utilizing students' L1s. Explicitly teaching the vocabulary through frontloading and using student's L1s in the Frayer model will resolve teachers' lack of preparation to teach ELLs, since it will aid teachers in bridging academic gaps of ELLS. Through frontloading academic vocabulary words using a modified version of the Frayer model, students will be exposed to academic vocabulary and deepen their comprehension of the words, which will aid their understandings of a given text. When vocabulary words are frontloaded, students are prepared with more textual context to participate with grade-level texts, their L2 confidence increases significantly, and they can more deeply comprehend the meaning of

originally abstract vocabulary words (Chang 2007; Verplaetse et al., 2012; Barton & Heidema, 2002). The modified version of the Frayer model will include a spot for students to incorporate their L1 translation of the vocabulary word. This will help resolve the problem of shifting teachers' deficit perceptions of ELLs to a more resourceful perspective, since mainstream teachers frequently express that the ELLs need help and do not have sufficient language (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016a). By incorporating students' L1s, teachers can recognize that ELLs possess wide linguistic repertoires and resources and have great second language learning potential (García & Kleifgen, 2010). L1 translations can help ELLs clarify concepts and deepen their understandings of vocabulary (Echevarría et al., 2000).

The components of this PD were specifically selected to address mainstream teachers' problems of their lack of preparation to teach ELLs and their misperceptions of ELLs as deficient. For the language objectives section of the PD, I focused upon educating mainstream teachers on how to synthesize language objectives using the ALPO tool or "Students can _____ to _____" model to provide mainstream teachers with specific tools that will aid them in identifying the linguistic demands, language functions, and literacy skills to aid ELLs in accessing the content (Jung & Brown, 2016; Van Borssum, 2021). I chose these tools specifically since it will help teachers recognize that they must recognize the linguistic demands related to the content, language structures the students will need to participate in the content-learning, and what literacy skills students will develop (reading, writing, listening, or speaking). Mainstream teachers may select literacy objectives that relate to the vocabulary acquisition but may fail to identify what language structures need to be used with the vocabulary (Carrier, 2005). The ALPO model requires mainstream teachers to identify the content objective, and then determine the tasks in which language will be used in the lesson. From identifying the task in

which language will be used, teachers can get then get clearer on the function of the language, as well as the discourse, syntax, and vocabulary, which they will input into the graphic organizer. Then, students will synthesize their language objectives through combining the function, discourse, syntax, and vocabulary information to make measurable objectives. Last, they will determine what planned supports can help students in meeting these language objectives and language structures (Jung & Brown, 2016). In the PowerPoint, teachers will be introduced to sentence frames and word bank supports that will aid students in meeting the language objectives. Sentence frames help students express ideas and concepts through a structure that promotes fluency and accuracy without getting over-involved with grammatical rules (Wood, 2002). The ALPO and “Students can ____ to ____” models were chosen because they can help mainstream teachers get a clearer idea of language demands, functions, discourse skills, and planned supports needed for ELLs to access content learning and develop their language proficiency. Pre-service teachers who used the ALPO tool were successful in writing language objectives to meet the language demands and were able to easily translate their language supports into their science lessons (Jung & Brown, 2016). For the building background part of the lesson, I would invite teachers to view a modeling of building background strategies, and then invite them determine ways to connect students’ personal factors, cultural or home country experiences, or interests into a lesson plan. I would show examples of how to build upon students’ funds of knowledge through inviting students to share their own experiences of immigrating to America. For example, in my immigration lesson, I would model how I asked my students how their arrival to America was and what good things was or challenges they remember in order to prepare them for the lesson’s objective of identifying reasons why particular groups like the Irish immigrated to America. This would be helpful since mainstream

teachers may fail to recognize the rich linguistical and cultural resources that students bring to the classroom, and how their capitals can be scaffolded upon to ensure new learning (de Oliveira et al., 2021). Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (1978) suggests students can rise beyond their independent academic achievement levels and reach high learning potentials through the guidance and support of adults and peers. To aid mainstream teachers' perceptions that having ELLs in the mainstream classroom is too overwhelming and they are not suitable for a mainstream class, mainstream teachers would benefit from learning how to use the Frayer model to help ELLs' access grade-level academic vocabulary (Walker Dalhouse et al., 2009, Wang et al., 2008). Within the Frayer model, mainstream teachers will practice leading students in inputting a vocabulary word, its definition, an example, non-example, and the L1 translation. The Frayer model helps students understand more abstract vocabulary and comprehend it more deeply as students are explicitly taught the vocabulary word, its meaning, and examples (Barton & Heidema, 2002). I modified the Frayer model graphic organizer to include a space for the students to write the translation of the target word in their L1, since L1 translations can aid content learning and second language development (Echevarría et al., 2000). To introduce how to frontload academic vocabulary and use L1 translations, I would show a model sample of a completed Frayer model for the word "toppings" based on a leveled text and its definition, example, non-example, and a Spanish translation. Then, I will expose the teachers to the vocabulary word within the given text to help them recognize how the Frayer model provides more context to the student.

Through sharing the PD and the strategies for developing language objectives, building background, frontloading, and utilizing students' L1 as a resource, the intended outcome is for mainstream teachers to develop confidence in their abilities to teach ELLs and learn appropriate

strategies to accommodate to ELLs' learning needs while ensuring they are held to high, grade-level standards. Teachers can change their perceptions about teaching ELLs through acquiring new knowledge and skills to teach them effectively. Mainstream teachers can develop more positive attitudes towards teaching ELLs as they gain confidence, knowledge, and skill with working with ELLs (Feiman-Nemser, 2018).

Chapter 4: Conclusion

This capstone project explored mainstream teachers' feelings of unpreparedness and their deficit perspectives related to teaching ELLs, as well as solutions to enhance ELLs' academic success and mainstream teachers' beliefs in their abilities to teach ELLs. My research question posed, "How can mainstream teachers aid ELLs' content learning and language development within a culturally responsive environment to decrease drop-out rates?" Through their lack of preparation to teach ELLs and their misperceptions of ELLs as being too overwhelming to teach, ELLs may not receive equitable educational opportunities that include high academic standards or appropriate accommodations (Walker Dalhouse et al., 2009, Wang et al., 2008;). This sense of overwhelm and frustration experienced by mainstream teachers stems from their perceived lack of resources and experience to teach ELLs of varying academic and proficiency levels (Gandara et al., 2005). As a result, ELLs' difficulties with accessing the grade-level curriculum while simultaneously learning English causes ELLs to be a population at high risk for dropping out of school (Rodriguez et al., 2021). Mainstream teachers can minimize these academic inequities for ELLs by learning how to build upon students' cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge to help them access L2 learning (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016). Through learning how to incorporate pedagogical strategies like creating language objectives, building background, frontloading, and using L1 supports, mainstream teachers can bridge academic gaps for ELLs as they build upon ELLs' existing knowledge and make their teaching more explicit (Alvarez et al., 2014; Cuba, 2020; Guler, 2020; Souto-Manning, 2016).

Conclusions

Research studies linked to creating language objectives, building backgrounds, frontloading, and using L1 supports demonstrate that implementing these strategies into

mainstream teachers' instruction can help teachers overcome feelings of unpreparedness, and beliefs that ELLs are helpless as they shift their focuses to the strengths and resources possessed by ELLs (Alvarez et al., 2014; Cuba, 2020; Guler, 2020; Souto-Manning, 2016). Since academic vocabulary is highly prevalent in school-settings and is needed to access content-area information, it is vital that teachers are prepared with strategies to help ELLs access grade-level content. Academic language consists of complex language structures, grammatical forms, and vocabulary, which ELLs must be able to access in order to participate and fully engage with content-area lessons (Jung & Brown, 2016). To assist mainstream teachers with accessing academic language and grade-level content, they have been provided with a professional development opportunity to learn how to create language objectives, build background, frontload vocabulary and use L1 supports.

Language Objectives Support English Language Development

ELLs need more time and assistance with developing their academic language repertoire considering it takes 1-3 years to develop basic interpersonal communication skills and 5-7 years to develop cognitive academic language proficiency in another language (Cummins, 1979). Through mainstream teachers failing to preplan their lessons, modifications, or language objectives related to ELLs' language needs, ELLs' language development can suffer (Coady et al., 2016). Planning language objectives requires mainstream teachers to complement the content objectives as they focus on creating language goals that include the essential vocabulary, language functions, language skills and grammar/language structures needed to comprehend the content (Herczog, 2012). Many mainstream teachers have been able to identify the essential vocabulary but failed to identify the structure in which the vocabulary will be used to help students participate in discourse and meet grade-level standards (Carrier, 2005). Therefore,

mainstream teachers can enhance their preparedness to teach ELLs through developing language objectives to help them get clearer on ELLs' language needs and their language development. If they do not preplan language objectives and supports, then they will focus solely on content learning and they will miss rich opportunities for language development (Jung & Brown, 2016). In Daniel and Pray's (2017) study, two mainstream teachers who participated in a 1-year graduate level add-on certificate program for teaching ELLS displayed growth with creating language objectives for ELLs after creating SIOP lesson plans and being mentored. In Morel's (2019) study, mainstream teachers participated in a 3-day series of a sheltered English instruction PD with one session that focused on creating language objectives. One social studies teacher within the PD program, Kathy, declared that through learning how to create objectives, she feels more confident in her ability to meet ELLs' language needs as she identifies what language goals and structures will help her ELLs formulate language related to the content (Morel, 2019). Echevarria, Powers, and Short's (2006) study revealed that students within teachers' classrooms who implemented language objectives into their lessons performed significantly better on expository writing tasks, compared to students in classes that did not include language objectives. In Jung and Brown's (2016) study, preservice teachers were provided with explicit instruction on how to create language objectives using the ALPO, which requires teachers to identify the content objective, the tasks and language function needed to participate in the lesson, as well as the discourse, syntax, and vocabulary needed to clarify a language objective, and planned language supports that can aid ELLs in meeting the language objectives. The preservice teachers who used the ALPO showed success with creating measurable and clear language objectives and translating planned supports into the class activities. Overall, The ALPO model has been shown to be a successful model for helping teachers formulate both language objectives

and planned supports (Jung & Brown, 2016). Language objectives aid ELLs' abilities to participate and engage with content as they are provided with clear language structures and vocabulary related to the content and can view the language goals throughout the lesson to monitor their language progress (Carrier, 2005). This explains my reasoning for including language objectives within my PD and utilizing the ALPO model since it showed significant growth for mainstream teachers with creating language objectives.

Culturally Responsive Instruction Enhances ELLs' Content Learning and L2 Development

Many mainstream teachers believe that ELLs are not ready to perform in mainstream classes (Walker Dalhouse et al., 2009, Wang et al., 2008;). A survey by Karabenick and Noda (2004) found that although 88% of mainstream teachers have had ELLs in their classrooms throughout the years, they reported that they lacked foundational knowledge on educating ELLs. Mainstream teachers can enhance ELLs' L2 and content-learning by making their teaching practices culturally responsive, which entails building upon ELLs' cultural and linguistic resources that they bring to school every day (Gonzalez et al., 2005; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016). The strategies of building background and using L1 supports can assist ELLs' learning through bridging academic gaps by building upon ELLs' existing knowledge, meanwhile frontloading helps aid ELLs' learning through explicit instruction (Cuba, 2020; Guler, 2020; Proctor et al., 2006).

Building Background Improves ELLs' Comprehension as They Connect to Content

My professional development session includes a building background session that requires teachers to create opportunities for students to connect their personal experiences to the content. Many mainstream teachers are fearful to shy away from the curriculum due to the

spacing calendar, however they can enhance ELLs' L2 learning through helping students link their linguistic and cultural resources to the content (Bauler & Kang, 2020; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016). Teachers can create opportunities for ELLs to connect to the curriculum by considering implementing universal factors into lessons like age, interests, lifestyle, and/or real-life concerns (Calderón Pachón & Jiménez Vargas, 2009). Building background also aids teachers in identifying existing language and knowledge gaps that need to be bridged for students' L2 success (Salcedo, 2010). In de Oliveira, Jones, and Smith's (2021) study, a mainstream teacher invited her ELL to share an experience about a time he traveled with his family in preparation to read the story, *Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt de la Pena. The student shared how he traveled to Argentina to see his family, which helped him connect to the target theme of family (de Oliveira et al., 2021). In contrast, a first-grade mainstream teacher failed to build her student's background knowledge prior to leading a lesson on Thanksgiving which led her ELL to be confused and withdrawn (Coady et al., 2016). For that reason, in my PD, I offer teachers an opportunity to determine how to connect vocabulary from a book about the four seasons to students' personal experiences, while considering universal factors or shared experiences that they may have experienced. Then, I provide mainstream teachers with sample questions that they could have posed to students that connect to their personal or cultural experiences to help build students' background and prepare for the reading. Although it may take a few minutes away from the curriculum to build background, this time is valuable and will enhance ELLs' L2 success (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016a.)

Frontloading and L1 Supports Aid Content-Learning and L2 Development for ELLs

The professional development includes a session where mainstream teachers learn how to frontload using the Frayer model that integrates L1 support. Frontloading refers to explicitly or

pre-teaching vocabulary and providing students with the background information, visual aids, and vocabulary to engage with the text and navigate the textual content. Frontloading is helpful for students who are struggling to make direct connections to vocabulary or the content as teachers can explicitly teach them the vocabulary and provide more context needed to understand the meaning (Verplaetse et al., 2012). The Frayer model represents a frontloading strategy as it helps students learn the vocabulary term, its definition, and examples through explicit instruction (Barton & Heidema, 2002). The Frayer model within my PD includes opportunities for students to write the vocabulary word, its definition, examples, non-examples, and L1 translation. Identifying non-examples has been helpful for students to have a fuller understanding of a vocabulary word as they identify what the word does not mean (Adams 2003; Paulsen 2007). Giving students an opportunity to translate the word into their L1 is helpful since L1 translations aid content-learning and language development for ELLs. L1 translations assist ELLs with more deeply understanding vocabulary and clarifying concepts in their L2 (Echevarría et al., 2000). Overall, frontloading has been found to be linked to several benefits like improving ELLs' word mastery, morphology, word meaning, and overall comprehension (Cuba, 2020; Stowe, n.d.).

Implications for Student Learning

The PD tool created for ELLs based on research-based evidence was shared to enhance ELLs' learning and academic success. Considering it takes ELLS 5-7 years to develop cognitive academic language proficiency at a rate comparable to their mainstream peers, it is important to consider what supports can be implemented to ensure students can access academic vocabulary and content learning, while developing their language proficiency (Cummins, 1979). In the first part of the PD, mainstream teachers learn how to create language objectives for ELLs. Language objectives can benefit ELLs since it helps them develop awareness around what are the language

goals for the lesson, and what language skills they will need to possess to participate in the lesson (Echevarria et al., 2008). When the language objectives are posted and students are aware of the objectives, they can more clearly monitor their progress with meeting these language goals throughout the lesson (Carrier, 2005). Language objectives force teachers to become clearer about what language structures must be used with vocabulary, which helps ELLs' enhance their L2 development as they are being exposed to new vocabulary, practicing the vocabulary, and can have differentiated assessments to measure their language progress (Carrier 2005; Echevarria et al., 2008). Language objectives help teachers identify what language structures ELLs will need to use to express their understandings and aid them in planning supports like sentence frames to access the language, which will ultimately enhance students' fluency and accuracy (Wood, 2002). ELLs' L2 learning will be strengthened through incorporating building background strategies into their instruction since students can relate to the curriculum through making personal connections to the content. Building background has been found to increase ELLs' participation. Building background allows ELLs to become active participants in co-constructing their learning rather than passively absorbing information (Salcedo, 2010). Students will also benefit from the implementation of the frontloading strategy that includes the Frayer model with L1 supports. Frontloading has been found to help students improve word mastery, and deepen their comprehension of vocabulary (Cuba, 2020; Stowe, n.d.). Frontloading can also assist ELLs with increasing their confidence with their L2 development, as they are provided with more textual context to engage with grade-level texts, and more deeply comprehend unfamiliar vocabulary (Chang 2007; Verplaetse et al., 2012; Barton & Heidema, 2002). They are able to deepen their understanding of vocabulary words while identifying non-examples using the Frayer model and referencing their L1 translation to clarify concepts (Adams, 2003;

Paulsen, 2007; Echevarria et al., 2008). The high school drop-out rates for ELLs are quite high considering their linguistic, academic, school, and socioeconomic factors. The areas that influence ELLs' dropout rates are their levels of English proficiency, their ability to learn content, and their abilities to keep up with specialized vocabulary or complex concepts (Rodriguez et al., 2020). It can be assumed that through implementing strategies like creating language objectives, building background, and frontloading with L1 supports, ELLs can possess better educational opportunities as these strategies serve to assist ELLs with developing their language proficiency and content-area related knowledge.

Implications for Teaching

ENL, bilingual, and mainstream teachers can benefit from implementing language objectives, building background, frontloading, and/or using L1 supports into their teaching practices. Many mainstream teachers carry the beliefs that ELLs are too overwhelming to teach and are not ready to be educated in mainstream classes (Walker Dalhouse et al., 2009, Wang et al., 2008;). Additionally, mainstream teachers claim that it is someone else's responsibility to educate ELLs, and they lack the time to learn how to meet the learning needs of ELLs. In fact, in Polat & Mahalingappa's (2013) study, mainstream teachers responded on a questionnaire that they believed it was the ESL teacher's responsibility to educate ELLs. Their negative perceptions towards teaching ELLs stem from their perceived difficulty of meeting the learning needs of ELLs of varying academic and language proficiencies, and the perceived lack of resources required to teach ELLs (Gandara et al., 2005). These deficit misperceptions of ELLs and perceived time constraint barriers are recommended to be addressed through professional developments (Polat & Mahalingappa, 2013). Mainstream teachers, ENL, and/or bilingual teachers can increase their confidence in their abilities to support ELLs through integrating

various strategies. Since ENL teachers can only provide ELLs with a maximum of 360 minutes of service per week or 72 minutes a day, it would be beneficial for mainstream and bilingual teachers to be equipped with strategies to help educate ELLs and not the burden the ENL teacher with complete responsibility for ELL's academic success. Whether an ELL is being educated in a bilingual or English-only classroom, their classroom teacher spends the majority of the day with them and should be aware of instructional techniques that can foster content-learning and language development. Through learning how to create language objectives, all teachers can feel more confident in their abilities to set focused language goals for students to expand their language skills and identify ways to differentiate their assessments to measure students' language progress (Carrier, 2005). Teachers will also enhance their teaching practices through creating language objectives to ensure improved student performance. In Echevarria et al.'s (2006) study, it was recognized students within teachers' classrooms who implemented language objectives into their lessons performed significantly better on expository writing tasks, compared to students in classes that did not include language objectives. Teachers will be able to better reach students from planning language objectives in comparison to not preparing language objectives. For example, a mainstream teacher from Coady, Harper, and de Jong's (2016) study, failed to engage one of her ELL students or encourage his participation due to her lack of preplanning language goals and supports. Teachers can also enhance their instruction by adopting culturally relevant practices. The benefits of integrating culturally relevant teaching practices like building background and frontloading with L1 supports include increasing student achievement and fostering inclusive environments that value students' cultures (Byrd, 2016). Building upon students' background knowledge will aid teachers in developing a more productive and effective mindset when working with ELLs, in comparison to the deficit perspectives, as they leverage the

existing knowledge their ELLs already possess to aid their L2 learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2018; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016a). Building upon students' background knowledge will also help all teachers feel successful in reaching the ultimate goal of preparing students to navigate a global community with positive ethnic-racial identities (Byrd, 2016). Since academic language is prevalent in content-area classes and activities related to content areas, it is helpful that all teachers are prepared with strategies to aid ELLs' academic vocabulary learning (Gee, 2005; National Research Council [NRC], 2012; Schleppegrell, 2004). Frontloading will help all teachers reach various struggling students, including ELLs, through explicitly teaching students vocabulary with which they struggle to make direct connections (Verplaetse et al., 2012). Bilingual, ENL or mainstream teachers can also aid ELLs' learning of new vocabulary or concepts by clarifying these concepts in their L1, which can be done through translations or collaboration with peers or their teachers (Echevarría et al., 2000). Overall, through learning strategies to teach ELLs, all teachers can develop more confidence in their abilities to educate ELLs as well as positive beliefs and feelings of preparation, which can positively influence ELLs' learning (Villegas et al., 2018; Feiman-Nemser, 2018).

Recommendations for Future Research

In the future, it would be helpful to access more studies that show more data of student and teacher growth related to the implementation of language objectives, building background, frontloading, and using L1 supports. Through investigating language objective research, the findings indicated teachers and students enhanced their performance due to the implementation of language objectives. For example, students scored higher on expository writing tasks within classes of teachers who incorporated language objectives into their instruction compared to teachers who did not integrate language objectives (Echevarria et al., 2006). There was not a

clear formula, however, as to how the teachers formulated the language objectives. In Jung and Brown 's (2016) study, preservice teachers demonstrated successful ability to create measurable language objectives due to using the ALPO model. There is limited research that studies teachers' success with writing language objectives using the ALPO model, and more research would make this argument more credible. There must be more clarity and consistency following how the language objectives were formulated, and various sources of data that demonstrate how language objectives affected ELLs' academic performance and/or teachers' perceptions of their instructional practices. There was limited research to showcase the effectiveness of the Frayer model as a frontloading technique for ELLs. From my research, I was able to find how the Frayer model is used with the vocabulary word, its definition, examples, and non-examples, however I would like to see more clear statistics on how this model has helped ELLs access or retain new learning (Adams 2003; Paulsen 2007). As for frontloading, it had been suggested that ELLs improve their word mastery, comprehension, and morphology due to frontloading, however this data is limited since it does not demonstrate what frontloading strategies were utilized. This is important to consider since frontloading can occur through computer-based programs, or after teachers scan an article and pre-select vocabulary words to explicitly teach based upon what they perceive to be difficult to understand solely through context (Lesaux et al., 2010) It would be helpful to know which frontloading strategies are most successful and ideally how many words teachers should pre-select, while ensuring these recommendations are backed up by research-based evidence. It had also been recommended that utilizing students' L1s can help clarify concepts in their L2, however little research was provided to describe whether translation websites or peer translations are more effective (Echevarria et al., 2008). Research that demonstrates students' prior knowledge on a concept prior to translating, and then their

comprehension and retention of the words after using L1 translations could help provide valuable evidence for the effectiveness of using L1 translations.

Final Thoughts

It is evident that ELLs are not afforded equitable educational opportunities considering their high drop-out rates. To help ELLs reach their maximum academic potential, mainstream teachers must acknowledge their role in ELLs' education through shifting their negative perceptions of ELLs and taking responsibility for their educational role in teaching ELLs. They can bridge ELLs' educational equity gaps through first transforming their views of ELLs as deficient to a view that sees the resourcefulness of ELLs' accumulated linguistic and cultural knowledge and experience. ELLs are capable of meeting high academic expectations but need support in meeting their language proficiency and content-area learning goals. ELLs are in need of teachers who prepare for misconceptions and preplan supports to help them access academic language and content-area knowledge. Furthermore, they require opportunities to build upon their rich linguistic and cultural funds of knowledge to create new learning and make learning more relevant and meaningful. Mainstream teachers can help ELLs achieve academic excellence through incorporating culturally relevant teaching practices like creating language objectives, building background, frontloading, and using L1 supports that aim to leverage ELLs' unique linguistic and cultural resources.

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Appendix A:

Language Objectives PowerPoint

<https://brockport.voicethread.com/share/18006127/>

Slide 1



Slide 2

REFLECTION
HOW PREPARED AND EDUCATED DO YOU FEEL TO MEET THE CONTENT-LEARNING AND LANGUAGE NEEDS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELLs)?

1- I strongly believe that I am unprepared to help ELLs meet both language and content goals and need a lot of training or assistance.

2- I am unsure of whether I have enough preparation or skill to help ELLs meet language or content goals.

3- I feel somewhat confident in my abilities to help ELLs meet language or content goals.

4- I feel decently confident in my abilities to help ELLs meet language and content goals.

5- I feel confident in my abilities to educate ELLs and help them meet language and content goals.

Slide 3

TURN AND TALK



1. Have you had a lot of English language learners in your classroom throughout the years?



2. What is one word to describe your experience with teaching ELLs?



3. What were some positive factors and challenges you experienced from working with ELLs?

Slide 4

AGENDA



1. **Problem-** Mainstream teachers feeling unprepared to educate ELLs to meet content and language learning goals



2. **Solutions-** Language objectives can help guide mainstream teacher's instruction of ELLs for language and content learning development



3. **Justification for the tools-** What does research say about these tools?



4. **Tools-** Academic Language Planning Organizer, and language objective formula



5. **Wrap-up**

Slide 5

PROBLEM - LACK OF PREPARATION FOR MAINSTREAM TEACHERS TO TEACH ELLS

- Even though ELLs spend most of the day with their mainstream teachers, many mainstream teachers have not received proper training on how to educate ELLs (Reeves, 2006).
- The overwhelm to meet ELLs' language and content-learning needs has led mainstream teachers to shift the role of educating ELLs solely to the ENL teacher (Walker Dalhouse et al., 2009, Wang et al., 2008).
- Mainstream teachers fail to preplan their lessons, modify their instruction, or create appropriate language objectives to ensure that content learning is accessible for ELLs, and ELLs' language development suffers as a result (Coady et al., 2016).
- Mainstream teachers have admitted to not modifying or adapting the curriculum to provide scaffolds for ELLs due to pressures of being in alignment with the pacing of the district's calendar (Bauler & Kang, 2020).
- Proficiency acquisition and core content acquisition are two important factors that can influence dropout rates amongst ELLs if not given the proper attention (Rodriguez, 2020).

Slide 6

SOLUTION - HOW CAN LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES HELP MAINSTREAM TEACHERS EDUCATE ELLs?

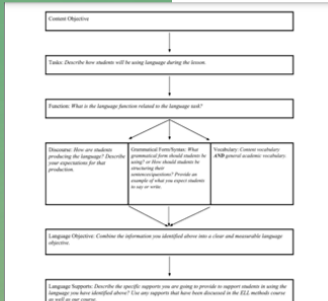


Figure 1: (Jung & Brown, 2016)

A "formula" for writing language objectives

I can use _____ to _____

I can use [language skills, functions, vocabulary, language structures] = **THE HOW** STUDENTS WILL USE LANGUAGE to active verb phrase. = **THE WHAT** CONTENT STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO KNOW OR DO




Figure 2: (Van Borssum, 2021)

- If mainstream teachers learn how to create language objectives to guide their lessons, then they can better recognize the linguistic and content demands needed to aid ELLs' participation and can create alternative assessments to measure ELLs' content learning in a manner that complements their needs (Alvarez et al., 2014).
- Academic language is highly prevalent in content-area classes like science and is needed for ELLs to participate fully and authentically engage with content-related activities (Gee, 2005; National Research Council [NRC], 2012). Academic language refers to the specialized language and knowledge that students engage with to read, write, and speak about content in their classrooms (Schleppegrell, 2004)
- By learning how to create language objectives, mainstream teachers can identify language goals, related to the academic vocabulary, for the students that promote ELLs' participation and allow flexible means to assess students' content learning that are more appropriate for their unique needs (Alvarez et al., 2014)
- In the study of Echevarria et al. (2006), it was found that students at middle school science teachers who included language objectives into their instruction performed significantly better on an expository writing task compared to students whose teachers did not implement language objectives and other components of the SIOP model.

Slide 7

TOOLS- ACADEMIC LANGUAGE PLANNING ORGANIZER

What is ALPO?

- The Academic Language Planning Organizer (ALPO) is a tool used in Jung and Brown's (2016) study that was developed to aid preservice mainstream teachers in creating language objectives.
- This tool is used to aid mainstream teachers in identifying academic language features, objectives and supports, and ways to translate the supports to the planned activities (Jung & Brown, 2016).

How is the ALPO tool used?

- The ALPO model requires mainstream teachers to identify the content objective, and then determine the tasks in which language will be used in the lesson. From identifying the task in which language will be used, teachers can get then get clearer on the function of the language, as well as the discourse, syntax and vocabulary, which they will input into the graphic organizer. Then, students will synthesize their language objectives through combining the function, discourse, syntax, and vocabulary information to make measurable objectives. Last, they will determine what planned supports can help students in meeting these language objectives and language structures (Jung & Brown, 2016).

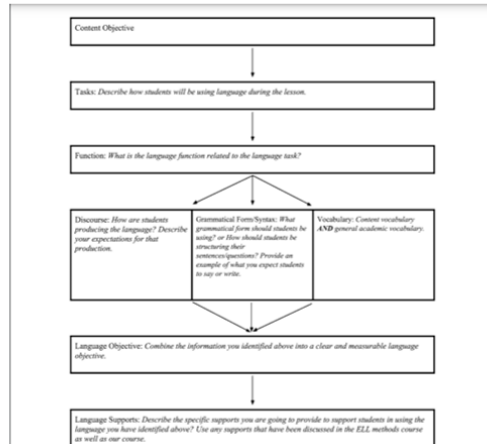


Figure 1: (Jung & Brown, 2016)

Slide 8

TOOLS- LANGUAGE OBJECTIVE FORMULA

- Teachers can also formulate language objectives following the “I can use ___1___ to ___2___” model” In the first blank, they will write how the students will use the language (language skills, functions, vocabulary, language structures), and in the second blank they will write in the active verb describing what content the students will know or be able to do (Van Borssum, 2021).

A “formula” for writing language objectives

I can use _____ to _____.

I can use language skills, functions, vocabulary, language structures = **THE HOW** STUDENTS WILL USE LANGUAGE

to active verb phrase = **THE WHAT** CONTENT STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO KNOW OR DO



Write a language objective...

using *cause and effect* as the language function you want to focus on.

Students can use _____ (**how** they will use language) to _____ (**what** content students will know).



Figure 1 and 2: (Van Borssum, 2021).

Slide 9

JUSTIFICATION OF THE TOOLS

Why should mainstream teachers consider using the ALPO tool?

- Preservice teachers who have used the ALPO tool in Jung and Brown's (2016) study could identify clear language functions, objectives and supports, and were able to translate their supports into their activities to support their ELLs.

Why should mainstream teachers consider ALPO or the language objective formula?

How can these formats be beneficial?

- Creating language objectives and narrowing down language goals and supports is necessary since the second language acquisition process requires ELLs to be exposed to language, practice the language, and then have their language skills assessed. Language objectives can help students be successful when they know the language functions and skills, they need in order to participate in the lesson and meet grade-level standards (Echevarria, Short, & Vogt, 2008).
- These tools will help teachers recognize that they must recognize the linguistic demands related to the content, language structures the students will need to participate with the content-learning, and what literacy skills students will develop (reading, writing, listening, or speaking).
- Mainstream teachers may select literacy objectives that relate to the vocabulary acquisition but may fail to identify what language structures need to be used with the vocabulary (Carrier, 2005).

Slide 10

LANGUAGE OBJECTIVE SAMPLES

- Which language objective is “better”? Why?

Choice A- Students will be able to define immigration.

Choice B- Students will be able to orally explain why a particular group immigrated to America using the sentence frame: _____ immigrated to America because _____.

Slide 11

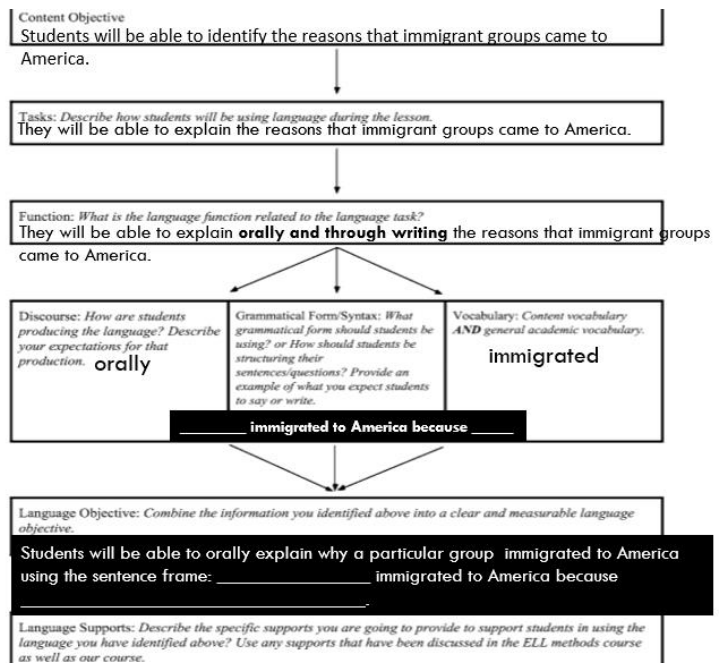
LANGUAGE OBJECTIVE SAMPLES

- Which language objective is “better”? Why?

Choice B- Students will be able to orally explain why a particular group immigrated to America using the sentence frame: _____ immigrated to America because _____.

This language objective is better because it represents how students will use language, and what content they will be addressing.

Slide 12



I will provide students with the sentence frame of: _____ immigrated to America because _____ . I will also provide them with visuals of the immigrant groups, and a list of reasons to aid emerging ELLs.

Figure 1: (Juna & Brown, 2016)

Slide 13

STANDARD:

- Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1.A](#)
Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons.

Content objective: Students will be able to write an opinion sentence about the best season.

Slide 14

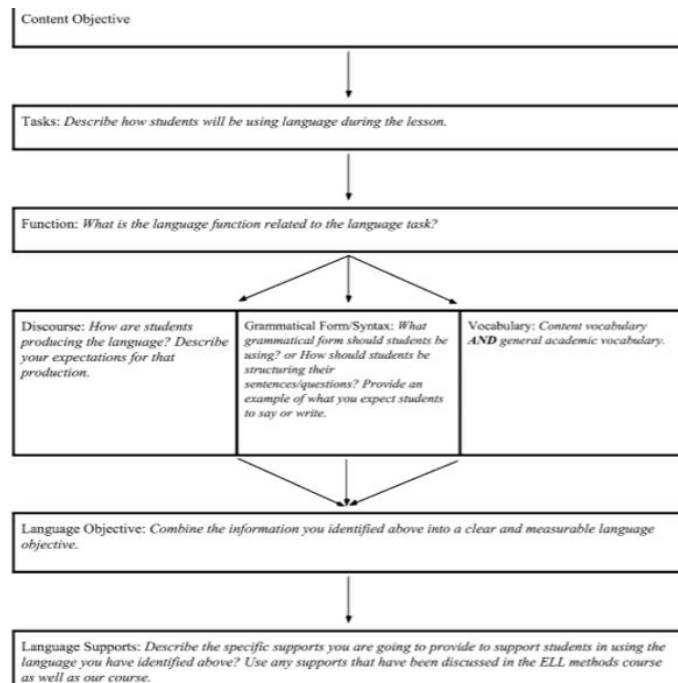
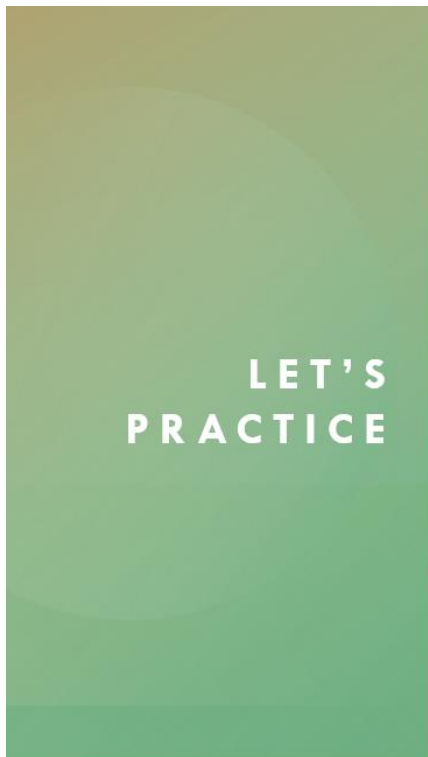


Figure 1: (Jung & Brown, 2016)

Slide 15

LANGUAGE OBJECTIVE FORMULA

- Students can use _____ to _____.

A "formula" for writing language objectives

I can use _____ to _____.

I can use (language skills, functions, vocabulary, language structures) = **THE HOW** STUDENTS WILL USE LANGUAGE to active verb phrase = **THE WHAT** CONTENT STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO KNOW OR DO

Write a language objective...

using *cause and effect* as the language function you want to focus on.

Students can use _____ (how they will use language) to _____ (what content students will know).

Figure 1 and 2: (Van Borssum, 2021).

Slide 16

SAMPLE ANSWERS- OPINION WRITING LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES

Content Objective
Students will be able to write an opinion sentence about the best season.

↓

Tasks: Describe how students will be using language during the lesson.
Students will be able to describe their opinion about the best season through writing.

↓

Function: What is the language function related to the language task?
Students will be able to describe their opinion about the best season.

<p>Discourse: How are students producing the language? Describe your expectations for that</p> <p>On the exit ticket, students will be able to complete the sentence pertaining to their opinion about the best season through writing.</p>	<p>Grammatical Form/Syntax: What grammatical form should students be using? or How should students be structuring their sentences/questions? Provide an example of what you expect students to say</p> <p style="text-align: center; background-color: black; color: white; padding: 5px;">In my opinion, _____ is the best season.</p>	<p>Vocabulary: Content vocabulary AND general academic vocabulary.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">opinion</p>
--	---	--

Language Objective: Combine the information you identified above into a clear and measurable language objective
Students will be able to use the sentence starter of: "In my opinion, _____ is the best season" to describe their opinion about the best season.

↓

Language Supports: Describe the specific supports you are going to provide to support students in using the language you have identified above? Use any supports that have been discussed in the ELL methods course as well as our course.

I will give students the sentence frame: In my opinion, _____ is the best season.
I will also provide labeled visual aids of fall, winter, spring, and summer.

Figure 1: (Jung & Brown, 2016)

Slide 17

LANGUAGE OBJECTIVE FORMULA

- Students can use the sentence starter of: “In my opinion, _____ is the best season” to describe their opinion about the best season.

A “formula” for writing language objectives

I can use _____ to _____.

I can use (language skills, functions, vocabulary, language structures) = **THE HOW** STUDENTS WILL USE LANGUAGE

to active verb phrase. = **THE WHAT** CONTENT STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO KNOW OR DO



Write a language objective..

using *cause and effect* as the language function you want to focus on.

Students can use _____ (how they will use language to _____ (what content students will know).



Figure 1 and 2: (Van Borssum, 2021).

Slide 18

TURN AND TALK

WHAT IS ONE THING THAT YOU TOOK AWAY FROM THIS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAT YOU CAN IMPLEMENT INTO YOUR OWN TEACHING?

Slide 19

REFLECTION PART 2
HOW PREPARED AND EDUCATED DO YOU FEEL TO MEET THE CONTENT-LEARNING AND LANGUAGE NEEDS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELLs)?

1- I strongly believe that I am unprepared to help ELLs meet both language and content goals and need a lot of training or assistance.

2- I am unsure of whether I have enough preparation or skill to help ELLs meet language or content goals.

3- I feel somewhat confident in my abilities to help ELLs meet language or content goals.

4- I feel decently confident in my abilities to help ELLs meet language and content goals.

5- I feel confident in my abilities to educate ELLs and help them meet language and content goals.

Slide 20

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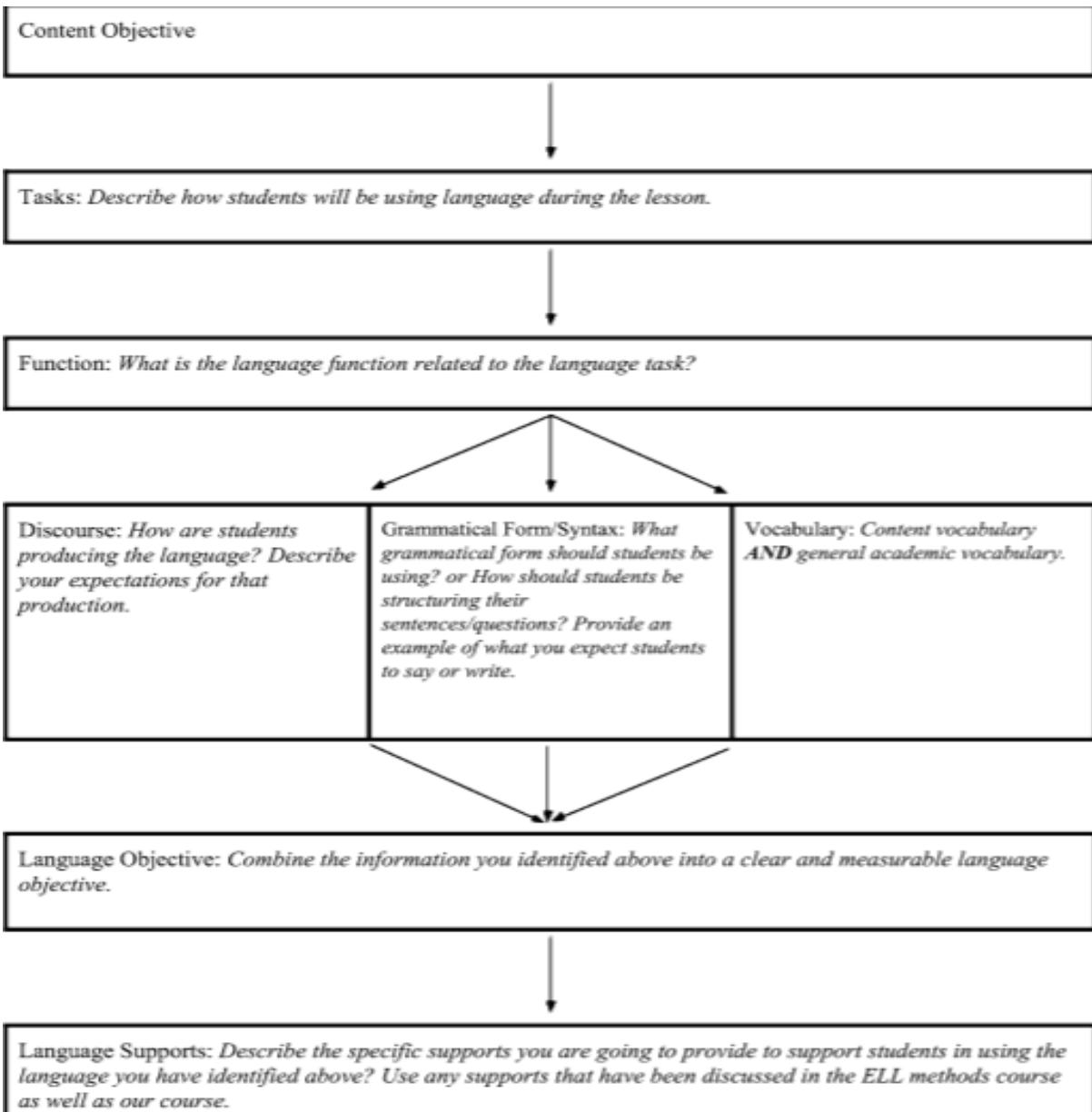
Slide 21

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Appendix B:

Academic Language Planning Organizer Template



(Jung & Brown, 2016)

Appendix C:

Language Objective Formula Hand-Out

**LANGUAGE
OBJECTIVE
FORMULA**

- Students can use the sentence starter of: “In my opinion, _____ is the best season” to describe their opinion about the best season.

A “formula” for writing language objectives

I can use _____ to _____.

I can use (language skills, functions, vocabulary, language structures) = **THE HOW** STUDENTS WILL USE LANGUAGE

to active verb phrase. = **THE WHAT** CONTENT STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO KNOW OR DO



Write a language objective...

using *cause and effect* as the language function you want to focus on.

Students can use _____ (how they will use language to _____ (what content students will know).



Figure 1 and 2: (Van Borssum, 2021).

Appendix D:

Culturally Responsive Teaching PowerPoint

<https://brockport.voicethread.com/share/18006135/>

Slide 1



Slide 2



-  1. Identification of the problem
-  2. Solutions
-  3. Tools
-  4. Justification of the Tools
-  5. Wrap-up

Slide 3

Problem- Lack of Preparation to Teach English Language Learners (ELLs) and misperceptions of ELLs

- Mainstream teachers, who possess negative perceptions of ELLs and perceive them through a deficit view, believe it is someone else's responsibility to teach the ELLs (Feiman-Nemser, 2018). Throughout classrooms in the country, phrases like "He has no language" and "She needs help" are frequently expressed (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016a). These distinctions do not recognize students' rich linguistic resources and their wide linguistic repertoires, or their language learning potentials considering they are bilinguals or multilingual learners (García & Kleifgen, 2010).
- The deficit perception fails to acknowledge that it takes ELLs 1-3 years to acquire basic interpersonal communication skills to showcase conversational fluency, and 5-7 years to develop their cognitive academic language proficiency to comprehend and express ideas concepts linked to school (Cummins, 1979).
- Some ELLs may possess strong L1 language skills and knowledge due to formal schooling, which can be leveraged to access English learning, in comparison to ELLs who lack formal schooling or a native written language (Souto-Manning, 2016).
- Mainstream teachers have also admitted to not modifying or adapting the curriculum to provide scaffolds for ELLs due to pressures of being in alignment with the pacing of the district's calendar (Bauler & Kang, 2020).
- Although mainstream teachers feel afraid to modify the curriculum due to time constraints, they can leverage students' linguistic and cultural funds of knowledge to aid their English learning through viewing their unique capitals as resources (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016).

Why is this a problem?

- Mainstream teachers must recognize that all students bring funds of knowledge based on their unique cultural and linguistic experiences, in and out of school, to the classroom that teachers can leverage to ensure ELLs' academic success (Gonzalez et al., 2005; de Oliveira et al., 2021).

Slide 4

Solution

- Mainstream teachers can help ELLs' access content learning and language development through building upon students' existing knowledge and prior experiences (Gonzalez et al., 2005; de Oliveira et al., 2021).
- Building Background:
 - Building background is a strategy that consists of linking students' cultural and personal experiences to the content to aid students' content learning. Additionally, the building background strategy helps teachers develop awareness about students' second language knowledge and language gaps that may exist and must be bridged (Salcedo, 2010).
 - Teachers can successfully link content to students' backgrounds by incorporating factors like students' age, preferences, lifestyle, and religious inclination, and/or real-life concerns faced by students into instruction to make teaching more effective (Calderón Pachón & Jiménez Vargas, 2009).
- Frontloading:
 - Frontloading is a strategy that refers to pre-teaching vocabulary, which prepares students for the textual content and making it relevant to students' lived abilities through explicitly teaching the academic vocabulary. Frontloading is a necessary strategy for students like ELLs who may struggle to find direct connections between their background knowledge and academic texts. Frontloading allows students to prepare their background knowledge, vocabulary, visuals, and related questions to the topic prior to engaging with the content (Verplaetse et al., 2012).
- Native/first language support (L1):
 - Clarifying concepts in students' L1s allows students to grasp a truer understanding of the content while learning English (Echevarría et al., 2000). Overall, when students can comprehend the terms within a text, then they can better comprehend the information they read or hear that is related to the topic (Marzano & Pickering, 2005).

Slide 5

Tools- Building Background

- Building background refers to linking the content to students' personal experiences (Salcedo, 2010). Teachers should make frequent opportunities for students to make personal connections to the curriculum. They can research more about students' cultures to identify questions or ways to help students bridge their existing knowledge to the content knowledge. Or, teachers can build upon universal knowledge that all students possess like students' age, preferences, lifestyle, and religious inclination, and/or real-life concerns (Calderón Pachón & Jiménez Vargas, 2009).
- In this unit on immigration, I invites students to turn and talk about their arrival to America as well as good things as challenges they faced considering all the students were immigrants. In this lesson, we were learning about why different groups immigrated to America. Therefore, asking students why they and their family members came to America connects directly to the content concept of immigration to America and students' personal lives.
- How can you connect the content to students' personal lives? What universal or cultural factors can you leverage to build upon students' existing knowledge and experience?

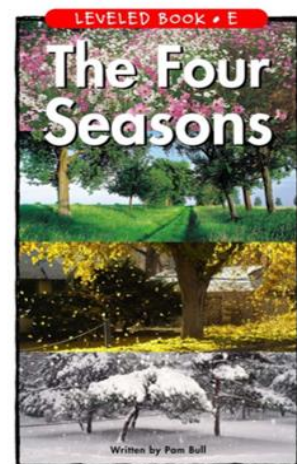
This lesson will draw upon/connect to students' prior knowledge and relevant experiences as they engage in turn and talks and make personal or cultural connections to the following questions seen throughout the lesson.

1. How was life for you and your family once you arrived in America?
2. Were there any good things or challenges you remember?
3. Have you experienced people not treating you fairly since you came from another country?

Slide 6

Let's Practice- Building Background


- Scenario:
- Imagine teaching a first-grade class, including some ELLs, about the four seasons. Consider that the words "seasons", "fall", "winter", "spring", and "summer", may be abstract to children.
- How can you help them connect their personal experiences to these vocabulary words? Turn and talks? YouTube videos?



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(Readinga-z.com, 2016)

Slide 7



Sample answers Building Background

- You can help students prepare to read “The Four Seasons” by asking questions that may link to the content and their personal experiences like:
- Have you ever played in the leaves? (Links to fall)
- Do you like snow? Have you made a snowman? (Links to winter)
- What is your favorite flower? (Links to spring)
- Have you ever been to the beach? What do you do when it is hot outside? (Links to summer)

Slide 8

Tools- Frontloading with L1 support

- Frontloading is a strategy that refers to pre-teaching vocabulary, which prepares students for the textual content and making it relevant to students’ lived abilities through explicitly teaching the academic vocabulary. Frontloading is a necessary strategy for students like ELLs who may struggle to find direct connections between their background knowledge and academic texts (Verplaetse et al., 2012).
- The Frayer model, is an instructional strategy that utilizes a graphic organizer to teach vocabulary. The Frayer model template can be modified, but usually allows students to visualize the vocabulary word synonyms, antonyms, illustrations, and sentence creation (Dazzeo & Rao, 2020). The Frayer model aids teachers in explicitly teaching new vocabulary while ensuring students are active participants in constructing their understanding. Furthermore, students deepen a fuller understanding of the vocabulary word through identifying non-examples. In my modified version of the Frayer model, the students will identify the definition, example, non-example, and L1 translation of the vocabulary word.
- Best practices suggest that ELLs benefit academically when they can clarify concepts in their L1s with peers, teachers, or even tools like bilingual dictionaries or translators. Clarifying concepts in students’ L1s allows students to grasp a truer understanding of the content while learning English (Echevarría et al., 2000).

Definition	L1 Translation
Example	Non-example

Vocabulary word


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Tools- Frontloading with L1 support

<p style="text-align: center;">Definition</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Foods that you put on top of other foods</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">L1 Translation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ingredientes</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Example</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pizza is my favorite topping on pizza.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Non-example</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This pizza is plain.</p>

Vocabulary word

Toppings



A man hands out flatbreads in this painting from ancient Rome.

A History of Pizza

People around the world have made flatbreads with toppings for a long time.

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(Readinga-z.com, 2016)


Slide 10

Let's Practice!

Directions: Consider what vocabulary word you would explicitly teach, and how you would guide your students in completing the Frayer model.

<p style="text-align: center;">Definition</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">L1 Translation</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Example</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Non-example</p>

Vocabulary word



Pig and Poodle had another nice dinner. This time, Poodle used good table manners. "Look, I'm eating like a pig!" Poodle said.

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(Readinga-z.com, 2016)

Slide 11

Let's Practice!

Directions: Consider what vocabulary word you would explicitly teach, and how you would guide your students in completing the Frayer model.

<p>Definition Correct behavior</p>	<p>L1 Translation Modales</p>
<div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 150px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <p><u>Vocabulary word</u> Manners</p> </div>	
<p>Example I show my manners by waiting for my whole family to sit at the table before eating.</p>	<p>Non-example Eating my dinner with my hands instead of a fork</p>



Pig and Poodle had another nice dinner. This time, Poodle used good table manners. "Look, I'm eating like a pig!" Poodle said.

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(Readinga-z.com, 2016)

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Justification of Tools

- Building background will help resolve teacher's lack of preparation to educate ELLs and also help them develop a more productive mindset regarding working with ELLs since they tend to view ELLs through a deficit perspective (Feiman-Nemser, 2018). If teachers can identify what knowledge and experience students already possess, then they can leverage their background knowledge to aid their L2 learning (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016a).
- ❖ When a mainstream teacher was able to connect a student's experience in their home country to the content, the ELL's participation increased (de Oliveira et al., 2021)
- When vocabulary words are frontloaded, students are prepared with more textual context to participate with grade-level texts, their L2 confidence increases significantly, and they can more deeply comprehend the meaning of originally abstract vocabulary words (Chang 2007; Verplaetse et al., 2012; Barton and Heidema, 2002). Frontloading vocabulary has been showed through research-based evidence to improve ELLs' word mastery, morphology, word meaning, and overall comprehension (Cuba, 2020; Stowe, n.d.).
- ❖ The Frayer model helps students understand more abstract vocabulary and comprehend it more deeply as students are explicitly taught the vocabulary word, its meaning, and examples (Barton & Heidema, 2002)
- ❖ Meta-analyses have shown that education programs that integrate students' L1s result in academic success with ELLS 'performances with literacy and content-area learning (Genesee & Lindholm-Leary, 2012). Best practices suggest that ELLs benefit academically when they can clarify concepts in their L1s with peers, teachers, or even tools like bilingual dictionaries or translators. Furthermore, . Clarifying concepts in students' L1s allows students to grasp a truer understanding of the content while learning English (Echevarría et al., 2000).

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Appendix E:
Modified Frayer Model Hand-Out

