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Beginning Teacher Self-Efficacy Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners Within the Mainstream Elementary Setting

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BEGINNING TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY MEETING THE NEEDS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS WITHIN THE MAINSTREAM ELEMENTARY SETTING

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Abstract

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The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of beginning teacher self-efficacy when working with English language learners (ELLs) in mainstream elementary classrooms. Elementary teachers provide instruction for their students during the majority of the instructional day, and supporting students learning a new language while simultaneously learning academic concepts can be challenging. The study sought to identify in-service professional development or training beginning teachers deemed beneficial to their perceived ability to work with ELLs as well as the training or professional development they would like to receive going forward. This mixed methods study was carried out using a survey and focus group interviews. The survey contained the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale and three open-ended questions. Participants were elementary teachers with less than 4 full years of teaching experience who were currently working with students identified as ELLs. The data from the survey were analyzed to determine the mean, mode, and outliers. The data from the open-ended questions and focus group interviews were coded for themes. Findings from the study showed beginning teachers need additional training to effectively work with ELLs. The teachers would benefit from training on Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocols and culturally responsive teaching practices. The teachers could also benefit from observing peers who effectively work with ELLs as well as having someone model effective ELL strategies in their classrooms. The findings from this study can be used to help building

administrators and school districts design professional development to support beginning teachers when working with ELLs.

Keywords: English language learners, beginning teacher self-efficacy, Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

English language learners (ELLs) are the fastest-growing population of students in the United States (Echevarría et al., 2017; Flynt 2018; Morales, 2021; National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2018; Scott & Mohr, 2019; Wilson, 2017). According to NCES (2018), the number of ELLs nationwide has increased from 3.8 million since the fall of 2000, to over 5 million in the fall of 2017. The percentage of non-native English speakers in the U.S. in 2014-2015 was approximately 9% of the total student population (Bondie & Zusho, 2018). The data support that 40% of the K-12 student population will be made up of ELLs by 2030 (Shevchuk, 2018). The growth in the number of ELLs has risen by approximately 60% over the last 10 years compared to a mere 2% increase in the total student population growth (Carballo, 2018). The number of ELLs has also increased in rural areas where students speaking a language other than English have traditionally been less concentrated (Mathema, 2018). These patterns in growth increase the likelihood in-service teachers will serve ELLs in their general education classrooms (Hiatt & Fairbairn, 2018; Siwatu, 2007).

As the number of ELLs in public schools across the country continues to grow, so does the gap in achievement between ELLs and their non-ELL peers (Hiatt & Fairbairn, 2018). The percentage of ELLs graduating from high school from 2010 to 2017 has increased from 57% in 2010-2011 to 68% in 2017-2018. Even with an increase in the graduation rate, there is still a significant gap that exists between students identified as ELLs who are graduating high school versus the graduation percentage for all students. According to the Office of English Language Acquisition (2017), at the end of the 2017-

2018 school year, 68% of students identified as ELLs graduated from high school compared to the 85% graduation rate for all students. The achievement gap between ELLs and non-ELLs persists at all levels of education.

The disparity in achievement is evident in more than one subject area. A 25-point deficit exists between ELLs and non-ELLs in fourth-grade math proficiency. The gap widens to a 38-point difference between ELLs and their non-ELL peers in math by eighth grade (Hiatt & Fairbairn, 2018; NCES, 2017b). There are similar deficits in reading as well. Non-ELLs scored 37 points higher than ELLs in fourth-grade reading and 45 points higher on the eighth-grade reading assessment (Hiatt & Fairbairn, 2018; NCES, 2017c).

As the number of ELLs in schools increases, so does the challenge for regular education teachers to meet their academic needs (Echevarría et al., 2017; Wilson, 2017). Echevarría et al. (2017) noted effective academic programs that support ELLs are limited and resources are not readily available to help teachers of ELLs who often lack training on how to meet the diverse needs of second language learners. Elementary educators typically serve their students in all subject areas. Research shows without adequate training, teachers feel ill-equipped to meet the needs of ELLs they will have within their classrooms. Many schools with large populations of ELLs have traditionally served ELLs through a pull-out framework, where students were removed from the general education classroom to receive language instruction from a teacher who specialized in English as a second language (ESL; Shevchuk, 2018). Efforts have been made to shift away from the previous pull-out model, moving toward increased amounts of inclusion for ELLs in regular education classrooms for the majority of the school day. This increase in the amount of ELL inclusion time has resulted in a raised awareness that all teachers,

including general education teachers, need more specialized training in order to adequately meet the needs of ELLs (Flynt, 2018; Wilson, 2017).

Many teachers often lack training from their college preparation programs to effectively meet the needs of diverse language learners (Wilson, 2017). Preservice teachers feel less prepared because they were not afforded opportunities to work directly with ELLs during their internship hours or student teaching experience (Wilson, 2017). Wilson (2017) reiterated that "many teachers today are missing the foundation and training for instructing culturally and linguistically diverse students" (p. 1). Without specialized training, even teachers typically considered to be very effective can struggle with meeting the needs of ELLs (Gándara & Santibañez, 2016).

Theoretical Framework

The lack of preparation can have a negative impact on the classroom teachers' personal beliefs about their ability to meet the needs of ELLs in their care. Bandura's (1994) social cognitive theory (SCT) serves as the conceptual framework for this study. One core tenet of SCT is self-efficacy. Studies conducted have directly linked teacher self-efficacy with teachers' instructional decisions, their students' levels of motivation, and levels of student achievement (Flynt, 2018).

Self-efficacy describes a person's belief in their ability to complete a task and can have an effect on aspects such as motivation and performance. Individuals with a high sense of self-efficacy have more confidence in their ability to produce positive outcomes when accomplishing a task or meeting a specific goal. Individuals with low self-efficacy often lack confidence in their ability to have positive results in a given situation (Flynt, 2018). Self-efficacy is defined by Bandura (1977) for this study as the "belief in one's

capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). SCT suggests that when teachers lack a strong sense of knowing that they can be successful with their students, their actual performance often suffers.

Bandura (1994) identified four factors that can have a strong influence on self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological states (Flynt, 2018). Bandura (1994) noted that successful past experiences can strengthen a person's self-efficacy when performing similar tasks in the future. Unfortunately, many preservice and beginning teachers lack positive learning experiences with ELLs because their internship hours did not include opportunities for them to work directly with ELLs. Also, since the percentage of ELL enrollment can vary by school or district, some beginning teachers often were not afforded an opportunity to work with ELLs during their student teaching experience as well.

Beginning teachers need to have an adequate knowledge base of how to support ELLs within their classrooms in order to increase their self-efficacy. Equipping teachers with effective, easy-to-implement strategies that yield successful experiences will further promote positive growth in self-efficacy for teachers when working with ELLs in their classrooms. The majority of the teaching workforce is made up of Caucasian females from middle-class backgrounds. Most of these teachers have had limited experience working with students and families from other cultures (Correll, 2016; Figueroa & Wood, 2020). Increasing the cultural awareness of classroom teachers serving language learners can also increase beginning teachers' self-efficacy in their classrooms. A lack of cultural understanding for their language learners can cause apprehension and increase stress. Stress can cause a physiological response in the teacher, which can result in negative

effects on self-efficacy. Learning how to view the varying backgrounds of students as an asset to the classroom can help increase teacher confidence in their ability to reach their students and meet their learning needs.

Background of the Problem

As the number of ELLs across the country has increased, the number of teachers receiving quality professional development and preservice training to work with ELLs has not (Echevarría et al., 2017; Wilson, 2017). The amount of preparation preservice teachers receive prior to receiving their certification often varies by state (Gándara & Santibañez, 2016). Of the 50 individual states, only 15 had requirements in place to ensure that all teachers were exposed to some form of ELL instruction in their teacher preparation programs (Gándara & Santibañez, 2016). Without adequate preparation, teachers may be ill-equipped to meet both the content and language needs of ELLs.

Language acquisition also takes time. Research shows that acquiring a new language takes an average of 3 to 5 years (Johnson & Wells, 2017). Unfortunately, high-stakes state testing required by legislation only allows a limited amount of time for students to learn English before taking the standard assessments required for native English speakers (Wilson, 2017). ELLs also need explicit language instruction to master academic language (Sullivan et al., 2016). There are two designated categories of language, Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills (CALPS). BICS is used to socially interact with peers and the environment. Basic or conversational language can be typically acquired in 2 to 3 years with targeted ELL instruction (Khatib & Taie, 2016). Academic language, needed to successfully navigate specific scholarly concepts, takes more time. CALPS can take up

to 7 years to demonstrate a level of proficiency even with targeted instruction.

Accountability measures from state testing place added pressure on schools and teachers. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) federal legislation was enacted in 2001. NCLB began to disaggregate data based on specific subgroups of students including those categorized as ELLs. The goal of NCLB was to have all students meet minimum grade-level proficiency. Schools that struggled with meeting the minimum grade-level proficiency could be penalized. The data collected from end-of-grade testing is disaggregated by subgroups. Adequate yearly progress (AYP) goals were established for each of the identified subgroups. If schools failed to meet their AYP goals for 2 consecutive years, students would be given a choice to move to another higher-performing school within the system (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction [NCDPI], 2015).

NCLB was replaced when the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) became law in April 2015. ESSA was also designed to promote high standards for achievement for all students. ELLs form a subgroup, and their progress is reported on the school report card (Scott & Mohr, 2019). School report card grades can therefore be negatively or positively affected by the academic progress of ELLs.

The implementation of common core standards has also raised the bar for ELL success. Common core standards were created to adequately prepare students for the 21st century workforce (Johnson & Wells, 2017). The newly adopted common core standards were more rigorous than the previous standards in place in most states. Common core standards also focused on language and literacy across grade-level content, not just in language arts (Johnson & Wells, 2017). Under common core standards, students are

expected to analyze features of complex texts. Students need to be prepared to use text evidence to support a position, effectively navigate multiple-step math word problems, and explain character interactions by citing specific situations from literature (Johnson & Wells, 2017). Standards were also added for speaking and listening. These new advanced standards have challenged all students but especially ELLs who are working outside of their native language (Johnson & Wells, 2017). ELLs are not only expected to translate the language but also to be able to effectively navigate the language well enough to make interpretations and analyses.

Mathematical word problems with multiple steps and complex language are also challenging for ELLs. No longer are students simply being asked to demonstrate proficiency with a particular math process but also to interpret, analyze, and assess data sets as well (Johnson & Wells, 2017). This places cognitive strain on ELLs who are learning both the language and content in the new language. Teachers need to know how to provide additional support to help ELLs acquire both content and language development.

Even with the added pressures from legislation, ELL performance continues to lag behind that of non-language learners (Flynt, 2018). Studies conducted by Gándara and Santibañez (2016) accentuated the gaps that exist between ELLs and their native English counterparts. Based on data from the U.S. Department of Education, the average scale score for a fourth-grade non-ELL student in reading was 223 in 2007 and 225 in 2017 (NCES, 2017a). The average scale score of fourth-grade ELLs in reading was 188 in 2007 and 189 in 2017. Over the span of 10 years, the achievement gap has proportionally remained the same. Without additional support to help teachers adequately prepare ELLs,

the achievement gap may continue to widen (Flynt, 2018; Johnson & Wells, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

The persistent achievement gaps between ELLs and their non-ELL peers suggest that teachers are not adequately prepared to help their ELLs achieve the same level of success as their non-ELL peers (Johnson & Wells, 2017). General education teachers need adequate preparation to meet the needs of ELLs in their classrooms. Preservice teachers need additional support to meet the needs of ELLs due to a lack of preservice preparation and a lack of experience working with ELLs prior to beginning teaching. Wilson (2017) emphasized that fewer than one third of teacher graduate candidates have been required to work with ELLs during their field experiences. Beginning teachers also need ongoing professional development during their first years in the classroom. Beginning teachers need professional development to acquire effective strategies to support ELLs that are easy to implement and maintain in the regular education setting. Culturally responsive training may also be necessary to help regular education teachers ensure they create a safe space within their classroom where students can learn and grow. Creating an atmosphere within the general education setting where beginning teachers achieve a sense of success will help increase teacher efficacy, leading to future success when working with ELLs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the level of self-efficacy of beginning teachers when working with ELLs in the regular education setting. The study included beginning teachers from two neighboring school districts in western North Carolina. The teachers who participated in the study had less than 4 years of experience as classroom

teachers. The teachers were also currently serving ELLs in their classrooms. The majority of educators are middle-class, Caucasian females. They may lack life experiences and teaching experiences working with students who are outside their own culture (Correll, 2016; Figueroa & Wood, 2020). They may also be bringing personal assumptions about the abilities of their students due to cultural differences and the students' lack of English language proficiency (Correll, 2016; Figueroa & Wood, 2020). The study sought to identify the type of training beginning teachers had received during their first years in a school district that supported positive attitudes and interactions with students who are culturally different from their own and how that impacted their efficacy to meet the needs of their students. The study also sought to identify specific professional development or experiences that beginning teachers perceived had been beneficial to increase their self-efficacy when working with ELLs in mainstream classrooms.

Preservice teachers may also have limited experience in utilizing effective techniques to engage ELLs in their mainstream classroom instruction. Beginning teachers may also lack the knowledge of how to support their ELLs with language acquisition for their ELLs. Beginning teachers need to have a knowledge base of research-based strategies that they can use to support the learning of their students. This knowledge also serves as a foundation on which future additional techniques can be added. Successful experiences working with ELLs should continue to increase teacher beliefs in their ability to be successful with ELLs moving forward. Beginning teachers may need additional training on how to implement research-based instructional strategies designed to support ELLs in the mainstream classroom.

Research Questions

This mixed methods case study was guided by four core research questions.

1. What are the self-perceptions of mainstream teachers concerning their readiness to effectively teach ELLs?
2. What type of professional development or preparation has been provided to teachers to effectively meet the needs of diverse learners both before and after entering the classroom?
3. What type of professional development or experiences would be perceived as beneficial to increase teacher efficacy when working with ELLs in the mainstream classroom?
4. What techniques are general education teachers putting in place within their classrooms to support language and academic learning for ELLs within the regular education setting?

Significance of the Study

The study is significant because the number of ELLs being served in schools across the nation continues to rise, and there is a need for classroom teachers to be able to effectively serve them in the regular education setting. The majority of students identified as ELLs are elementary school age, where the majority of student instruction is provided in the mainstream classroom by the regular education classroom teacher. Test data demonstrate the prior course of action has not been effective in meeting the needs of ELLs. Regular education classroom teachers need effective strategies to support increased levels of ELL engagement within their classrooms. Wilson (2017) suggested teachers need to have a better understanding of how to use specific strategies to help

make content more easily understood by their ELLs. Without the knowledge of effective strategies to teach ELLs, classroom teachers will feel less prepared and therefore less confident in their ability to effectively educate their ELLs in their classrooms (Flynt, 2018). Building this knowledge base may require additional training both in preservice coursework and after the teachers begin serving in their classrooms.

The results from this study can be used to help school districts have a better understanding of the preparation needs of their beginning teachers in regard to working with their ELLs. The results can also be used to improve teacher preparation programs at the university level to ensure beginning teachers have knowledge of classroom learning experiences and successful opportunities to implement those strategies in their field experiences in order to increase their internal beliefs about their capability for success when working with ELLs in their classrooms.

Setting of the Study

The setting of this study was elementary schools in two neighboring districts located in the rural foothills region of western North Carolina. The two districts were similar in size and overall population.

District A served approximately 10,770 students. There are 14 elementary schools within the district. District A had 4.5% of the student population identified as ELLs. The ELL student population is not equally distributed across the district between the schools. Of the students in District A, 39% were eligible to receive free or reduced lunch. District A employed approximately 711 teachers, with 59 being identified as beginning teachers.

District B currently served approximately 12,500 students. There were 14 elementary schools within this district. District B had 10.9% of students identified as

ELLs. The ELL student population was not evenly distributed across all the schools within the district. District B employed approximately 1,260 teachers. Of those total teachers, 88 were beginning teachers in Years 0 to 4.

Overview of Methodology

This mixed methods case study involved both quantitative and qualitative measures. The data collection began with the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (CRTSES). The survey was sent through an anonymous link via the building administrator to all beginning teachers who were serving ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. The CRTSES measured the beginning teacher perceptions of their readiness to meet the needs of their language learners. The CRTSES data were examined to determine the mean, mode, and statistical significance.

After completing the survey, participants received a prompt asking about their willingness to participate in a focus group interview. A separate link was provided for participants to sign-up to participate in the focus group. Beginning teachers from each district were randomly selected from those who agreed to participate in the focus group interviews. Focus group interview questions aligned with the research questions were asked in a semi-structured interview format which allowed for follow-up questions if needed for clarification. The focus interviews were conducted over Zoom, and the sessions were recorded. Confidentiality was maintained for all participants, and participation was voluntary. The focus group participants consented to be video recorded. The data collected from the focus group interviews were coded, with themes identified from the information gathered.

Role of the Researcher

My role as researcher in this study was to attempt to identify the current level of self-efficacy of beginning teachers in regard to working with ELLs within their general education classroom. I sought to gain a better understanding of the thoughts and feelings of the participants during the focus groups in order to identify their current level of self-efficacy in working with ELLs in their classrooms.

I also sought to identify which factors have increased or decreased the self-efficacy of the teachers when working with ELLs and which strategies should be implemented moving forward to help support increased self-efficacy for beginning teachers when working with ELLs in their classrooms. I also intentionally protected the safety of the participants by removing personal identifiers from the data collected.

Definition of Terms

ACCESS Test

A language test used to assess the present ability level of multilingual students in four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (WIDA, 2021).

AYP

Refers to the amount of academic growth required for a student to demonstrate proficiency within a school year (Scott & Mohr, 2019).

Academic Growth

Refers to the amount of progress a student makes during a course or a grade level (NCDPI, 2015).

Academic Proficiency

Refers to whether a student meets specific academic standards based on their

individual grade-level expectations (NCDPI, 2015).

BICS

Refers to the language that is used in daily social interactions to express feelings, wants, and needs (Cummins, 2008).

CALPS

Refers to a person's ability to be able to understand language on a level to digest and interpret academic language (Cummins, 2008).

ELL

Refers to a student learning the English language (ESSA, 2015).

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Refers to students who have not yet demonstrated an adequate ability to utilize the English language (NCDPI, 2015).

Self-Efficacy

Defined as a person's belief in their ability to do something (Bandura, 1994).

Summary

Beginning teachers often lack formal preparation to feel like they can be successful in teaching ELLs within their general education classrooms. This study sought to determine the self-efficacy of preservice regular education teachers when working with ELLs and how to increase their efficacy when working with ELLs in mainstream classrooms. The study sought to identify the self-efficacy of beginning teachers when working with their ELLs. Beginning teachers have received preparation to teach in their preservice coursework. This study endeavored to clarify if beginning teachers received training specifically targeted to supporting language learners in their preservice

coursework and since beginning in the classroom. The study also sought to identify specific experiences perceived as beneficial to the self-efficacy of beginning teachers in regard to their ability to adequately provide quality instruction for ELLs in the regular education classroom. The study also sought to identify specific instructional strategies classroom teachers were currently implementing in their classroom practices to support academic success for ELLs.

Additional chapters follow, including a thorough literature review to help the reader understand the background of the legal history of English language education in the U.S., how self-efficacy affects teacher performance, current instructional practices that support ELLs in the regular classroom setting, and the cultural awareness needs for teachers to connect to ELLs in their classrooms.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Overview

Educational policies and views toward ELL education have changed over time (Figueroa & Wood, 2020). A review of the current literature was conducted. Research was collected regarding multi-lingual instruction in the U.S. to provide historical context for ELL education. In the following sections, the history of English language education is discussed in terms of legal precedents that have impacted teaching and learning for ELLs.

The History of ESL Instruction

Immigrants have been a part of United States history since its foundation. In the 17th and 18th centuries, schools were created and maintained by local governments. The influx of immigrants to the U.S. meant many languages and cultures were represented: English, Irish, Scottish, French, German, Swedish, Dutch, and Russian (Blanton, 2007; Cavanaugh, 1996; De Jong, 2011). Towns with a large percentage of immigrant residents had the option for their students to receive instruction in their native language (Cavanaugh, 1996; Correll, 2016). Teachers were often hired from local occupants and would be culturally and linguistically similar to the students they were instructing (Blanton, 2007). Teaching students in their native language made educating students who had a first language other than English easier. This method did not increase the English language acquisition for the students. The immigrants were also often living in small enclaves, which meant they were slower to assimilate into the established American culture. Many of these immigrants were served in parochial schools, which again, made the possibility of easy assimilation into the common culture more difficult (Blanton, 2007; Cavanaugh, 1996; Correll, 2016; Sugarman & Widess, 1974).

Over time, many of these small schools that taught students in their native language were absorbed into the larger districts that were instructing students in English only. Benjamin Franklin proposed the education system as a way to Americanize citizens. Franklin hoped that schools would help standardize language and solidify allegiance to the newly formed country (Cavanaugh, 1996).

The Ordinance of 1787 was one of the first pieces of legislation to attempt to create common schools. The ordinance established requirements for the Northwest Territories, which at the time, were newly established (Cavanaugh, 1996). The ordinance is significant because it required mandatory attendance in schools and also required that instruction be provided only in English.

The 1800s in the U.S. saw a massive amount of immigration. Over 32,000,000 immigrants are documented entering the United States between 1820 and 1914. German immigrants were one of the largest ethnic groups in Chicago during that time period. Political strife resulted in a shift in educational language policies in the Chicago school district in 1865. The German families lobbied the local school board to include instruction in their native language, German. The school system did acquiesce to the political pressure, and for a period of time, instruction was provided in both English and German. As the German political power decreased, the amount of instruction provided in German also decreased (Cavanaugh, 1996). Questions began to arise during this time about the best way to provide instruction to newcomers learning the English language. One train of thought was to provide instruction only in English, while another school of thought proposed that newcomers be taught in their native languages (Blanton, 2007).

Americanization Period

The Compulsory Education Law was enacted in 1889. The Compulsory Education Law was similar to the Ordinance of 1787 for the Northwest Territories by requiring all children to attend school and also requiring the language of instruction to be English only (Cavanaugh, 2016; Lleras-Muney & Shertzer, 2012). Between 1910 and 1930, many laws were passed at the state level prohibiting classroom instruction in any language other than English. This was largely due to the influx of immigrants from eastern and southern Europe who were linguistically, religiously, politically, and culturally different from earlier immigrants (Lleras-Muney & Shertzer, 2012). The established people felt threatened by these newcomers and wanted to ensure their assimilation into the existing American culture (Cavanaugh, 2016; Lleras-Muney & Shertzer, 2012).

The English immersion framework became the most popular way of teaching public school students when English was not their native language (Correll, 2016). In an immersion setting, all students are required to speak English. Few supports are given to students who are learning the language under the premise that ELLs will learn English simply by being immersed in the language (Correll, 2016). English immersion programs have been criticized for showing little value in the native language or culture by asking the ELL to completely assimilate into the English culture and language (Correll, 2016; Lleras-Muney & Shertzer, 2012).

The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s brought about civil rights legislation to help address concerns about disparities in the U.S. social structure. Public education was also affected (Correll, 2016; Morales, 2021; Sinclair, 2018). The Civil Rights Act was

enacted in 1964. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act banned discrimination from any federally funded program or activity based on the person's race, birthplace, or skin color (Congressional Research Service Report, 2019).

Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Signed into action by President Lyndon B. Johnson, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, 1965) was originally established in 1965 as a form of aid in the education and advancement of minority children (ESEA, 1965; Sinclair, 2018). ESEA brought a billion dollars in funding from the federal government for programs designed to promote those deemed to be at a disadvantage culturally or educationally (Sinclair, 2018). The establishment of ESEA was the first time the federal government established accountability for educational programming. ESEA required program progress to be monitored through the use of formal annual program assessments. These assessments also helped to identify specific student populations deemed to be a deficit that would need focused remediation (ESEA, 1965; Sinclair, 2018). ESEA was reauthorized several different times, and adjustments were made to specific parts at different times.

The Bilingual Education Act of 1968

The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 was created as Title VI when ESEA was reauthorized in 1968 (Sinclair, 2018). The Bilingual Education Act is significant to the history of ELL education because it was the first time the federal government officially recognized the needs of students learning English as their second language in the United States (Sinclair, 2018; Sung, 2017). The social activism of the 1960s sparked the movement toward equality for all, and the focus also included bilingual education. A

large portion of Latino families were living well below the national poverty line. Many Latino families were struggling to find employment. They were also struggling to find success in school. Policymakers connected the high poverty rate to a lack of education (Bilingual Education Hearings, 1967; Sung, 2017). The response from the government was bilingual education legislation which was designed to provide equitable access to education for all students (Sung, 2017; Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: Bilingual Education Act, 1968). Policymakers also hoped to help assimilate Latino students into the culture. The Bilingual Education Act established $15 million in funding, which could be used to implement programs to support bilingual education. Each district utilizing the funds was required to submit annual reports of how the funds were utilized. Because the legislation utilized federal funds, annual program evaluations needed to be conducted so program results could be measured and compared (ESEA, 1965; Sinclair, 2018). Debate quickly arose around how to adequately measure the effect of the educational programs on ELLs. Opponents argued standardized tests were typically normed with middle-class, Caucasian students who were native English speakers (Sinclair, 2018). The idea of annual evaluations gradually evolved into the end-of-grade and end-of-course tests that students currently take annually to monitor ELL academic progress (ESEA, 1965).

Lau v. Nichols

The Supreme Court Case of *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) had a strong influence on ESL education in the U.S. In *Lau v. Nichols,* 1,800 Chinese American immigrants sued the San Francisco school system for not providing an adequate education (Morales, 2021). The Chinese students only understood their native language, Chinese, and all the

instruction they were being provided in the school was in English. The students' classes were being taught using the English-only model. The instruction was only provided in English, and the teachers only spoke and understood English.

The San Francisco school system was charged with violating the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by not providing adequate education to the students based on their race (Lau v. Nichols, 1974; Morales, 2021). The case was complex. The San Francisco school system argued that California state standards required students to demonstrate proficiency in English in order to obtain a diploma. State standards also stated that the language of instruction was English (Correll, 2016). The immigrant students countered they were unable to understand the instruction in English and should be taught English or instructed in their native language until they have time to learn English on their own (Correll, 2016). The case was heard by the Supreme Court. The court found that the San Francisco school system had violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by refusing to provide English language instruction to 1,800 Chinese immigrant students.

The court recognized that the lack of fluency in English was keeping the immigrants impoverished and limiting opportunities that were supposed to be given to all citizens. Many of the immigrant groups were living in ethnic enclaves so the only available source of learning the English language was at school (Blanton, 2007; Sugarman & Widess, 1974). The court ruled the San Francisco school system had not made an adequate effort to support the English instruction needs of the Chinese immigrant students. School systems were required by the precedent set with *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) to put supports in place to meet the language and academic needs of ELLs. The court however provided no clear direction on the best plan for meeting the

needs of the students. Ultimately, it was left to the local districts to figure out the most effective strategy.

NCLB

A large influx of Latino immigrants into the U.S. in the 21st century has re-sparked the debate on the best way to instruct students. The NCLB legislation of 2002 changed the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 and created high-stakes accountability for schools to show students demonstrating proficiency in English based on standardized tests (Bush 2001; Correll, 2016). This legislation placed pressure on schools not meeting AYP goals for students in specific subgroups. NCLB stipulated that school districts that did not meet AYP for 2 consecutive years receive additional support in the form of required professional development on research-based practices that would best support the needs of their ELLs (Bush, 2001; Scott & Mohr, 2019).

ESSA

In 2015, NCLB was updated and renamed into the current education law, ESSA (2015). ESSA transferred a large amount of power back to the states that had been previously shifted to the federal government in prior revisions of ESEA (Sharp, 2016). ESSA continued annual accountability measures in third through eighth grade, taking into account both proficiency percentages and growth measures for students and subgroups. Schools deemed low performing also receive additional support to increase student achievement levels and/or graduation rates (ESSA, 2015). Title III of ESSA requires general education teachers to meet specific requirements for licensure or certification in their grade level and subject area (ESSA, 2015, Scott & Mohr, 2019). The certifications designate teachers as highly qualified in their specific area and mean they have specific

training to work with the students they serve. This certification however does not require regular education teachers to have any additional training to work with ELLs (ESSA, 2015).

Some states are beginning to require new teachers to have an English language endorsement prior to graduating from their preservice program (Schneider, 2019). At this time, only Alabama, New Jersey, New York, and Washington currently require regular education teachers to have ELL preservice coursework (Fu & Wang, 2021). North Carolina does not require regular education teachers to be certified to work with ELLs in their general education classes. North Carolina began the implementation of revised standards for ELLs beginning in the 2022-2023 school year. All elementary education teachers in North Carolina are expected to successfully implement the standards with their students (WIDA, 2021).

SCT

Bandura (1977) studied the connections between human behavior, thought processes, and the physical environment. Bandura (1977) termed the concept of learning through social observations as social learning theory. Social learning theory would later be renamed SCT by Bandura in 1986. Through his work, Bandura suggested that behavior can be learned through direct experiences that happen to us, but human behavior is also heavily molded by observing the behavior experiences of others (Bandura, 1994). This process of learning expected behaviors by observing the behavior of others is known as observational learning. Observational learning is a core component of social learning theory.

Observational Learning

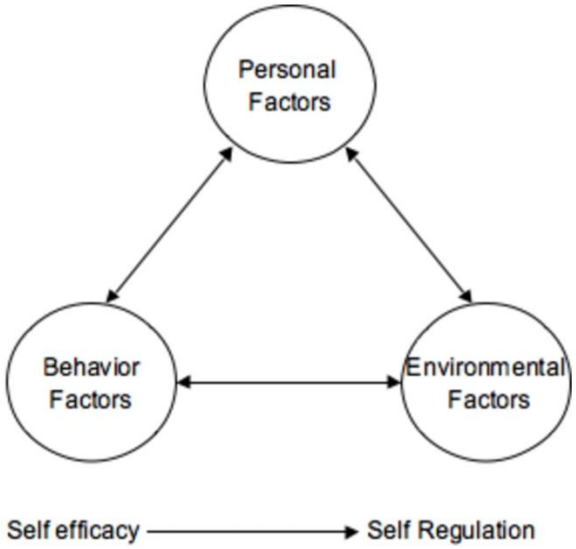
The concept of observational learning described by Bandura (1994) is influenced by four core processes. First, the person observing, known as the observer, must be paying close attention to the person exhibiting the behavior, also known as the model. The primary function of the model is to transmit information about behavior to the observer. Next, the observer must be able to hold onto the information they are observing. This process is known as retention of the information. Next, reproduction must be possible. The observer must be able to replicate the steps or the process presented by the model. Finally, Bandura (1994) included reinforcement and motivation as influencers of observational learning.

Triadic Reciprocal Determinism

One core tenet of SCT is triadic reciprocal determinism also known as triadic reciprocal causation. The figure shows the reciprocal flow of influence between the three components of the triangle.

Figure

Bandura's Triadic Reciprocal Determinism Model



Triadic reciprocal determinism refers to the way behavior, personal factors, and the environment interact to influence the individual. Personal factors include internal competencies like emotional, cognitive, and physical states. Behavior factors include decisions to act and inaction. Environmental factors include external spaces, laws, and objects. Each factor of the triadic reciprocal model can influence each of the other factors in the model (Bandura, 1986).

Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy

One personal factor in the triadic reciprocal determinism model is the concept of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to a person's belief in their ability to accomplish something (Bandura, 1986, 1994). Self-efficacy is at the core of whether or not a person feels like they can be successful with a specific task. Self-efficacy affects how we perceive things, our motivation to attempt new things, and our motivation to persevere in the face of adversity (Bandura, 1994). A strong sense of efficacy does not ensure that the

person will master every obstacle; however, it can impact the way they perceive successes and failures. A person with high efficacy would most likely place the blame for poor results on a lack of planning or the need for additional practice and support. A person with a low sense of efficacy would more likely place the blame on personal deficits within themselves (Bandura, 1994). Self-efficacy affects four major areas of an individual's life: cognitive processes, motivation, affective processes, and selection processes (Bandura, 1994).

A person's perceived efficacy can have a strong impact on how they function cognitively. Most actions are first generated by a person's thoughts. People often visualize the predicted result from their actions before deciding whether or not to begin an activity. Self-defeating thoughts and images increase the difficulty of tasks. Individuals who have a higher perceived self-efficacy are more likely to think they can be successful, therefore also more likely to take on challenges for themselves. Coping mechanisms like being able to control negative, destructive thought patterns can be impacted by self-efficacy as well. People with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to be able to turn off distracting thoughts when it becomes a hindrance to accomplishing a necessary task (Bandura, 1994). Those with lower self-efficacy can be consumed with stress and depression because they feel like they lack the ability to control the negative, destructive thought patterns, which can lead to higher levels of stress and depression.

Self-efficacy can have a positive or negative impact on motivation. A person with a high sense of self-efficacy holds a strong belief in their ability to perform well on given tasks; therefore, they are more likely to set challenging goals for themselves and persist

with the task even after it becomes difficult (Bandura, 1994). Bandura (1977, 1997) identified four factors that influence self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological state.

Teacher Self-Efficacy

Teacher self-efficacy is context- and subject-based. In the classroom environment, the teacher may feel a greater sense of self-efficacy when working with specific subjects, grade levels, or groups of students (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Teacher efficacy can be influenced by mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological states. Research has shown mastery experiences to have the greatest impact on teacher efficacy, but beginning teachers may not have many opportunities initially to gain mastery experiences prior to their actual time in the profession. In those situations, teachers often rely more on other factors like social persuasion and vicarious experience to form their initial perceptions of their capability to be successful with specific tasks. Teacher self-efficacy beliefs are often solidified after mastery experiences have taken place. Once a teacher has established their self-efficacy, a major change would have to take place in order for a reassessment of their efficacy to occur. An example of a major change could be a grade-level change, school change, or drastic demographic shift in the student population (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Teachers make judgments when they approach a task. First, they think about what needs to be done and whether or not they have the capacity necessary to meet the demands of the task (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Beliefs about self-efficacy are strongly influenced by the context of the situation (Bandura, 1997). The environment of the school, school culture, colleagues, and expectations from the school

administration can influence teacher self-efficacy.

Mastery Experiences

Based on Bandura's (1994) research, mastery experiences have the greatest impact on perceived self-efficacy. Much of the perception of our ability to perform a task successfully is formed from our perception of success with similar tasks in the past (Bandura, 1997). Mastery experiences are the most successful way to build efficacy beliefs because they demonstrate to the person that they have the capabilities necessary to perform a task successfully (Bandura, 1994).

When a person is successful in a task that requires sustained effort, they are increasing their own perceptions of their ability to be successful with a similar task in the future. Perceptions of previous failures in personal attempts to achieve a goal can also adversely affect self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994; Wilson et al., 2020). A person who perceives a prior experience as unsuccessful may be less confident in their ability with a similar task in the future. They may be hesitant to attempt a challenging task for fear of failure.

Mastery Experiences in the Field

Mastery experiences in the field of education for preservice teachers can come from positive experiences working with students during their internship or student teaching experience. Mastery experiences in the classroom lead to an increased expectation of future successful experiences in the classroom (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Wilson et al. (2020) conducted a study on the impact of mastery experiences on the perceived self-efficacy of teachers when working with intellectually disabled

students. The study collected data from 148 elementary general education teachers with an average of 12 years of teaching experience. The study found that mastery experiences were significant predictors of self-efficacy in different areas of teaching (Wilson et al., 2020). One specific area that showed a significant correlation was the instructional strategies used by teachers. Instructional strategies in the study were defined as the teacher's abilities to design and implement lessons and activities for students. Wilson et al. found that if teachers believed the strategies they used in the past were effective, then they felt capable of meeting the needs of their students in the future by utilizing the previous methods. Teachers who had previous experiences they considered successful demonstrated higher levels of confidence in their abilities. The previous perceived success fosters increased self-efficacy (Wilson et al., 2020). Preservice teachers need opportunities to have mastery experiences with diverse learners prior to serving in their own classrooms.

Research studies show teachers were more open to working with diverse populations when they were given those opportunities in the preservice preparation programs (Capella-Santana, 2003; Duarte & Reed, 2004). Duarte and Reed (2004) studied the attitudes and perceptions of preservice teachers in relation to working with minority students. The teachers were surveyed prior to their field experience placements. Participants exhibited deficit mindsets about minority students prior to the field experience. The study divided 20 White preservice female teachers into two groups. One group was provided additional professional development in working with diverse learners and assigned to complete field experiences in high-minority school settings. The other group served as the control group. No professional development was provided, and they

were assigned to schools with very few minority students. All the participants were surveyed to assess their attitudes and perceptions toward minority students before being assigned to a group. The results from the study showed that the preservice teachers who received the professional development and were placed in a school with higher minority populations were much more likely than the control group to pursue opportunities to work in schools that served a higher population of diversity. The results affirmed the need for preservice teacher professional development and exposure to linguistically and culturally diverse students prior to entering their own classrooms (Duarte & Reed, 2004).

The recent study by Castaneda (2020) affirmed the need to strategically plan field placements so preservice teachers can gain opportunities to work with diverse student populations prior to serving ELLs in their own classrooms. In the study, Castaneda conducted focused interviews with 13 K-6 teachers with varying years of service in public education. The teachers also represented a variety of ethnic groups: Asian, Caucasian, and Latino. Few participants from the study had experience working with diverse populations of students during their field experiences. The participants reported having some training on serving diverse learners in the preparation programs but lacked any opportunity to try the strategies in their field experience. The lack of hands-on opportunities prior to entering the classroom caused frustration for the participants. The teachers expressed feeling inadequate in their skills as a teacher to meet the needs of their ELLs when they began in their own classrooms. The participants also stated frustration about a lack of opportunity to observe the instruction of others working with ELLs during their preservice experience. The teachers felt that being able to observe a colleague working with ELLs in their field experience would have been a productive experience

and could have had a positive impact on their perceived ability to meet the needs of their ELLs.

Vicarious Experiences

Vicarious experiences, which refer to learning from watching the sustained efforts of a peer, can also have an impact on their self-efficacy. The level of impact on the observer can be influenced by whether or not the model receives positive reinforcement or negative consequences from the exhibited behavior (Bandura, 1994). If the person receives praise for their behavior, the behavior is more likely to be reinforced. If the behavior elicits negative consequences, the behavior is less likely to be replicated by the observer.

There is an increased chance of learning from the model's behavior if the observer can identify in some way with the person who is modeling the behavior. The more closely the person identifies with the observed model, the greater the influence will be on the observer's self-efficacy in similar situations. If the observer does not closely identify with the model, the influence on the observer's behavior will be less impacted (Bandura, 1994). An example of the necessary connection between the model and the observer is exhibited in the Bobo Doll experiment.

Bobo Doll Experiment

One of Bandura's well-known social learning experiments, the Bobo doll experiment, relates to the impact of vicarious experiences (Bandura et al., 1961). In the first Bobo doll experiment, 36 boys and 36 girls between 3 to 6 years of age were placed in a room with a large toy called a Bobo doll and an adult model. There were two independent variables in the experiment. In one study, the model used aggressive words

and behaviors when interacting with the Bobo doll. In the other study, the model used kind words and gentle gestures toward the doll. One group of children had a female model, while the other group had a male behavior model. After modeling specific behaviors, the adult was removed from the room. The behavior of the children in the room was observed. The children who observed the aggressive behavior began to imitate the behaviors through their words and actions. The children who observed kind words and gentle behaviors towards the doll also mimicked those behaviors exhibiting docile, soothing words and actions.

The Bobo doll study demonstrated the connection between the behavior exhibited by the model being imitated in the behavior of the observer. The study also found that behavior was reproduced more often when the observer had a connection with the model. In the Bobo doll study, female child observers viewing the behavior of a female adult model were more likely to reproduce both aggressive and nonaggressive behaviors. The young male observers connected more closely with the adult male model and were more likely to imitate his behaviors.

In the Bobo doll study, Bandura identified a greater impact on the self-efficacy of the observer when they closely identified with the model (Bandura et al., 1961). This is important to note because teacher self-efficacy is more heavily impacted through vicarious experiences if the teacher can strongly identify with the person modeling the behavior.

Vicarious Experiences in the Field

Vicarious experiences can also help support increased teacher self-efficacy, but the level of influence is strongly determined by how much the viewer identifies with the

model. Variations between the model and the viewer in the years of experience, level of training, gender, or ethnicity can make a difference in the amount of influence from model to observer (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Teachers learn from watching and observing other teachers like them. In the Castaneda (2020) study, participants cited that one of the ways they as teachers learned how to support their ELLs in their classrooms was by working closely with other teachers of ELLs. Teachers could have vicarious experiences in the field through peer modeling, instructional coach modeling, and viewing their cooperating teacher during their internship experience.

A research study conducted by Zúñiga (2019) tested the effectiveness of using former ELL teachers as instructional coaches for mainstream teachers serving ELLs in the mainstream classroom. In part of the study, the instructional coach took over the role of the teacher in the classroom modeling specific instructional practices that support ELLs. The classroom teacher observed the interactions between the coach and students, increasing the classroom teacher's efficacy to be able to replicate the actions within the class afterward. Odell and Ruvalcaba (2019) examined the benefits of using instructional coaches to support teachers who served ELLs in mainstream classrooms. The study revealed an increase in the level of academic achievement for students served by the teachers who received coaching.

Odell and Ruvalcaba (2019) also included peer modeling by the instructional coach inside the regular education classroom and found that mainstream teachers observing someone considered a peer modeling instruction in their classroom with their students increased their self-efficacy to be able to meet their students' needs.

Social Persuasion

Social persuasion can also have an impact, both positive and negative, on the self-efficacy of others. Social persuasion, sometimes termed verbal persuasion, refers to the verbal influencing of another person about their perceived ability or inability to successfully attempt a challenge (Bandura, 1994). The effectiveness of social persuasion on perceived efficacy depends greatly on the relationship between the person coaching and the person being influenced. The person being coached needs to value the opinion of the influencer. Verbal persuasion can also have a negative impact on perceived self-efficacy. When individuals have been persuaded that they have deficits in their capacity to accomplish something, they tend to shy away from attempting those tasks or persisting long in the task when it becomes challenging (Bandura, 1994). Coaching can be an example of social persuasion. Verbal persuasion in the teaching capacity refers to coaching and feedback, both written and verbal, the teacher receives from instructional coaches, peer mentors, and administrators. The more the teacher connects with the staff member, the more influence their feedback will have (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Physiological State

A person's physiological state can also influence their beliefs in their own efficacy in specific situations. Physical sensations and emotional reactions associated with a specific event or situation can also influence a person's self-efficacy. Increased stress can lead to a heightened sense of arousal (Bandura, 1977). The more stress or anxiety a person feels physically at the thought of a specific action, the less capable they feel of controlling it.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007) described physiological responses teachers

experience and their effects on arousal. Teachers receive a physical response from specific aspects of teaching. Seeing their students succeed can give teachers pleasure. The physiological sensation of pleasure is perceived as positive and therefore reinforces the teacher's sense of self-efficacy. Teachers can also experience internal sensations of feeling like situations are out of control, stress, and anxiety when faced with challenging situations in the classroom. Those physical responses are perceived as negative and can negatively impact self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Teacher Readiness

Beginning teachers often lack the preparation needed to feel confident in their ability to meet the diverse needs of ELLs in their classrooms. Previous studies have shown when classroom teachers are less prepared to teach ELLs, they have a lower self-efficacy regarding providing ELL instruction (Correll, 2016; Odell & Ruvalcaba, 2019). Teachers who lack self-efficacy in educating ELLs demonstrate lower levels of academic success with language learners (Durgunoglu & Hughes, 2010). Supporting beginning teachers in acquiring the knowledge they need to support ELLs in their classroom begins with pedagogical knowledge of how to effectively deliver content instruction (Fu & Wang, 2021). Research conducted by Tran (2015) studied the efficacy of teachers with less than 5 years of experience in Texas. The study showed that teachers who had completed coursework toward obtaining their ESL licensure had a higher efficacy when working with ELLs in their classrooms (Tran, 2015).

Pedagogical Practices That Support ELLs

Mainstream teachers must be equipped with effective strategies to teach academic content while simultaneously building language skills for ELLs. Previous studies have

shown when classroom teachers are less prepared to teach ELLs, they have lower self-efficacy regarding their instruction being sufficient to meet the needs of their students (Correll, 2016; Odell & Ruvalcaba, 2019). Teachers who lack self-efficacy in educating ELLs demonstrate lower levels of academic success with ELLs in their care (Byrd, 2016; Durgunoglu & Hughes, 2010). Irby et al. (2018) stated, "English language learners (ELLS) benefit when their teachers utilize a wide range of ESL instructional strategies" (p. 1).

Many teachers are not adequately prepared to teach ELLs in their mainstream classrooms (Odell & Ruvalcaba, 2019; Schneider, 2019). A study by Schneider (2019) showed teachers working with ELLs are not always equipped to support ELLs, even if the teacher has been shown to be effective at delivering content to non-ELLs. One challenge is being able to teach the content while also tackling the challenge of students not having a strong grasp of the English language. Schneider interviewed teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators about their perceptions of their ability to meet the needs of ELLs within their school environment. ELLs are learning academic content in a language they have not yet mastered, which increases the challenge for teachers and students (Schneider, 2019). The study found that teachers often group all ELLs together, even though they may have differences in their home language and cultures. Schneider's study also reinforced the challenges educators feel in meeting the diverse needs of ELLs who are coming with different levels of exposure to English and huge discrepancies in their skills and background information. Teachers may resent having ELLs in their classrooms because of the additional time and support they require during instruction in their classrooms (Walker et al., 2004).

The majority of the participants in Schneider's (2019) study admitted to feeling ill-equipped to meet the instructional needs of their ELLs. Many of the teachers who participated in Schneider's study were unable to describe any instructional practices that could be used to support ELLs in mainstream classrooms. Many participants cited receiving inadequate preservice training and limited in-service training as well to specifically address the needs of ELLs. The professional development they had received was delivered in stand-alone sessions and was not sustained over time to provide opportunities to try what they were learning hands-on in their classrooms. Participants who had previously received training on the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model, however, were able to identify established learning targets integrating wait time, visuals, graphic organizers, sentence stems, and incorporating student dialogue as research-based supports for ELLs (Schneider, 2019).

The participants who lacked knowledge of effective ELL strategies often lowered their expectations for learning with their ELLs, which unintentionally also lowered their expectations for success. Schneider's (2019) study reinforced the need for professional development to help teachers understand how new language acquisition takes place and how to increase teacher knowledge of effective strategies to use in supporting high levels of academic achievement for ELLs (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018).

Professional development is needed to support skill acquisition for mainstream teachers of ELLs. Ramos-Velita (2018) studied the experiences of 12 middle school teachers with ELLs they were serving in their mainstream classrooms. The teachers in the study had a minimum of 4 years of teaching experience. Participants were asked to describe their feelings about their ELLs and their ability to serve their ELLs, many of

whom were new to the English language. The majority of the participants in the study shared feelings of isolation, anger, frustration, and guilt when describing their feelings about their ability to serve their ELLs. The participants described high levels of fear and insecurity in their ability to meet the instructional needs of their ELLs. The teachers stated that they felt ill-prepared because they had not received formal training in their preservice programs to support both the language and content needs of their ELLs. The teachers cited a lack of training in specific strategies to address language learners (Ramos-Velita, 2018).

The teachers in the study also expressed frustration with their inability to help learners with specific academic content without the ability to fully communicate with students. The students had limited use of the English language, and the classroom teachers in the study did not speak the home language of the student, which increased the challenge for teachers to accurately impart abstract concepts to students, like absolute value in math.

The majority of the participants expressed feelings of guilt about their lack of knowledge of how to support their ELLs. Participants voiced concerns over the lack of engaged learning for their ELLs due to the teacher's lack of knowledge in how to effectively engage the student in the activity. Teachers struggled to create lessons that were truly accessible to ELLs, which resulted in guilt over the amount of time and attention the teacher was able to provide individually supporting the student. When teachers slowed down the pacing of the lessons to compensate for the needs of their ELLs, they worried that they would not be able to finish the curriculum for the non-ELLs in the class. Participants also cited frustration over the discrepancy between the current

level of knowledge exhibited by the students and the level of content knowledge all students were expected to show by the end of the course. The teachers expressed guilt that the student would be moving forward without having all the skills necessary to create a foundation for future learning.

The teachers from the study cited a need for targeted professional development to help them master instructional strategies they could use to support their ELLs within their classrooms daily. Participants in the study stated that some limited professional development was previously provided; however, it was a stand-alone training that lasted only a few hours with no additional follow-up sessions provided to ensure ongoing support (Ramos-Velita, 2018).

A study conducted by Coady et al. (2016) found teachers had an increased sense of self-efficacy when working with ELLs after they received strategic professional development on how to meet the academic needs of their ELLs. Teachers who received training on how to build language and content for ELLs have higher levels of student achievement than those without specialized training (Irby et al., 2018; Odell & Ruvalcaba, 2019; Scott & Mohr, 2019). Researchers also found that teachers who were provided professional development prior to entering their mainstream classrooms were better prepared for meeting the educational needs of their language learners (Byrd, 2016; Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018).

Morales (2021) also studied teacher beliefs, practices, and skills general education teachers need to effectively meet the needs of their ELLs. The study found that teachers who had received targeted professional development cited higher levels of efficacy when working with ELLs in general education classrooms. The majority of teachers who

participated in the study cited high levels of confidence in their abilities to support ELLs in their classrooms. The majority of the teachers in the study were utilizing support strategies they learned from prior training. Participants spoke of integrating specific instructional strategies that have been proven effective with ELLs: graphic organizers, word banks to scaffold academic vocabulary, collaborative learning, visual aids, and physical gestures to help students understand and retain information (Morales, 2021).

All the teachers who participated in the study were teaching in the state of Florida where all teachers are required to attend specific professional development for language learners. Teachers in Florida are required to attend 15 semester hours of training in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL; Morales, 2021). The ESOL training provided teachers with research-based strategies to implement in their classroom instruction to meet the diverse needs of their ELLs (Morales, 2021).

The prior professional development was cited by the participants as integral to their understanding of how to reach ELLs in their classrooms. Adequate preparation for teachers also translates into higher levels of academic achievement for multilingual students. Studies have shown a strong correlation between teacher effectiveness and student achievement (Scott & Mohr, 2019). Teachers need to be taught how to utilize effective strategies within their classrooms that meet the needs of ELLs.

Proven Classroom Strategies for ELLs

Research has proven there are specific strategies considered to be effective when working with ELLs in a mainstream setting. First, teachers need to help ELLs build their background or prior knowledge. Students bring a variety of lived experiences with them to the classroom (Calderon et al., 2011; Ferlazzo & Sypnieski, 2018). It is necessary for

teachers to utilize those experiences as a foundation on which to build new learning.

Activating prior knowledge allows ELLs to connect their learning to something they already know (Calderon et al., 2011; Ferlazzo & Sypnieski, 2018). Teachers need to identify gaps in student background knowledge and help fill those deficits to ensure students have a firm foundation to build new skills. Understanding what students already know about a topic provides increased access to new content. Assessing background information also allows the classroom teacher an opportunity to identify misconceptions the students might hold about a subject or idea (Fenner & Snyder, 2017).

Vocabulary Development

Jim Cummins (1979) is considered a seminal researcher on effective practices for ESL instruction. Cummins (1979) emphasized the need to explicitly support the development of CALPS so students can succeed in the school environment. Academic language is more specific and challenging compared to conversational speech. Teachers often assume that ELLs who hold verbal social interactions with other students and adults have a strong grasp of the English language. Students may demonstrate an understanding of BICS but may be extremely lacking in their ability to navigate academic content language correctly without support. ELLs need specific instruction to support their learning of academic language (Calderon et al., 2011; Cummins, 1979; Fenner & Synder, 2017).

Fenner and Snyder (2017) suggested pre-teaching key vocabulary words prior to the start of the lesson. Adding physical gestures and body movements known as total physical response can also increase the likelihood of students understanding and retaining new information (Calderon et al., 2011). Fenner and Snyder also suggested the use of

word banks and concept word walls to provide support for students while they are learning new vocabulary. Adding visual connections through picture-based vocabulary cards also helps ELLs make connections to new terminology. The study of cognates also helps support ELL success with vocabulary development. Studies have shown that Spanish-speaking ELLs benefitted from direct instruction with cognates because it helped students make connections between their home language, Spanish, and English. (Schneider, 2019).

Scaffolds

For this study, scaffolds were defined as supports that are used in the classroom to aid students in learning language, knowing how to correctly utilize the language, and having increased access to the academic content. Integrating visual aids into classroom instruction supports higher levels of learning for ELL learners (Calderon et al., 2011; Irby et al., 2018; Samuels, 2018). A study by Halwani (2017) studied the impact of using visual aids in the classroom to support reading and writing for beginning ELLs. The study involved high school students who were identified as beginning language learners. The study found that Integrating visual representations from multimedia had a positive impact on the students' ability to absorb content.

The use of visuals also had a positive impact on the students' sense of being able to fully participate in class. Halwani's (2017) results reinforced the benefit of including visuals as a way to support the increased engagement of ELLs in classroom instruction and increased academic success with new concepts.

A study by Campbell (2019) reinforced the positive impact of visuals on student academic success. Campbell's study sought to identify specific instructional practices

that were used to support academic success for ELLs. Campbell's study examined strategies that were being used by both ELL teachers and mainstream classroom teachers. Graphic organizers serve as a visual scaffold of information for ELLs. Campbell found the use of graphic organizers as one of the tools often implemented to support ELLs. The use of graphic organizers minimized the cognitive load requirements for students pairing new content knowledge with large amounts of academic vocabulary. The graphic organizers could also be utilized as a scaffold to support writing.

Campbell's (2019) research study also supports small collaborative groups as important supports for ELL student learning. The teacher participants in Campbell's study were experienced teachers. The majority of the teachers in the study stated they used small group instruction to support high levels of academic success for ELLs in their classrooms on a daily basis. The use of small groups allowed the teacher a greater opportunity to tailor the lesson to support the student within their zone of proximal development. The teacher could also more easily differentiate the level of support provided in the small group setting (Campbell, 2019). ELLs also need scaffolds to support language development. Research affirms that ELLs struggle academically in school because they are being required to learn academic content in a language they have not yet mastered. Students must be intentionally supported during their acquisition of content knowledge and simultaneously supported with language acquisition (Cummins, 1980, 1981a, 1981b). Classroom teachers can also integrate language scaffolds to support ELL language acquisition in mainstream classrooms (Fenner & Synder, 2017; Irby et al., 2018).

Collaboration Between Educators

The need for collaboration between the general education teacher and the instructional staff who support ESL instruction also emerged through the review of the literature. ESL teachers have typically received a higher level of professional development training around meeting the instructional needs of ELLs. Previous studies have demonstrated collaboration between ELL teachers and mainstream classroom teachers resulted in academic gains for students (Fenner & Snyder, 2017; Schneider, 2019). Schneider (2019) found mainstream classroom teachers who struggled to meet the instructional needs of their ELLs often lacked collaboration with the ESL specialists in their building, citing a lack of time to plan together. Increased collaboration with ESL teachers could help support mainstream teachers in acquiring skills to support ELLs in the regular education setting. Teacher participants in the Morales (2021) study cited the need for collaboration with ELL teachers as crucial to their success with ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. The collaboration was noted as even more beneficial when the classroom teacher spoke a language different from their students (Morales, 2021).

Student Collaboration

Teachers of ELLs also need to support collaboration between students during learning. A study conducted by Samuels (2018) encouraged opportunities for students to collaborate with each other during classroom lessons. Samuels emphasized the need for collaborative learning within the classroom to support high levels of student achievement. Samuels also found the students who worked together in the study gained a greater appreciation for cultural differences present within the classroom. Students also need opportunities to practice and apply the language and content they have learned.

Collaboration also includes opportunities for students to work together on games, partner reading, and sharing in discussions. Research also shows that students need opportunities to practice their newly acquired skills (Calderon et al., 2011). Strategically partnering students can provide viable opportunities for students to practice the language skills they are working on. Practice creates new pathways within the brain to support learning and retention of information.

ELLs need opportunities to practice their language skills in meaningful ways within the classroom. Students need valuable time as language learners to interact with other students and the second language by speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The study by Samuels (2018) also supported paired language approaches within the classroom like turn and talk opportunities as a successful way for ELLs to learn and practice the English language. By practicing the language, ELLs begin assimilating new vocabulary into their language inventory while reinforcing English language patterns. New words are used and practiced in an environment where the peer can support and model. The classroom teacher can also circulate and listen for misunderstandings, correcting when necessary.

Providing meaningful opportunities for ELLs to practice the new language is an important component of the language acquisition process (Calderon et al., 2011; Irby et al., 2018; Samuels, 2018). Teachers need support to design activities and routines within the classroom setting that encourage students to dialogue about their learning. Classroom positioning is an important component to support ELLs. Classroom teachers need to know how to utilize student collaboration as a tool for ELL student success.

Classroom Positioning

Classroom seating (as a type of positioning) can promote or limit ELL opportunities for engagement in the academic setting. Alzouwain (2019) conducted a study on the way students are physically positioned within the classroom and how that positioning supports or limits their ability to interact and succeed in the classroom. Alzouwain studied ELL high school studies in the southern United States. Alzouwain's study indicated the way ELLs are positioned within the classroom either encourages or limits their interaction with academic content within the classroom. In his study, Alzouwain discovered that most of the students were being grouped within the classroom based on their language proficiency, which often ended up placing students in groups by ethnicity. Students had less understanding of the academic language needed to support discussion around the academic material and therefore often reverted back to their native language for group discussion. In his study, Alzouwain posited that teachers should strategically assign partners or groups so a mix of ELLs and native speakers can support each other (Alzouwain, 2019).

Classroom positioning can also refer to the way teachers assign roles to students within the classroom learning environment that either empowers or reduces their perception of power within the classroom environment. Teachers can position students as novice learners or as experts within the classroom setting. The role a student is assigned can affect their belief in themselves to accomplish a task and also their perceived worth within the classroom environment. In the Alzouwain (2019) study, ELLs would be positioned for the role of novice within the classroom discussions. They would be absorbing information from other students who had more experience with language and

academic content. There are times when this type of positioning is necessary to support background knowledge and academic content; however, ELLs also need opportunities to be placed in a role of power within the classroom.

One collaborative option classroom teachers can use to help promote positive positioning of ELLs within the classroom is Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS). The purpose of PALS is to support learning for students who are from underrepresented populations including ELLs in the classroom setting. Students are paired with another student with a similar cultural background. The teacher provides reading texts that incorporate the students' cultural or lived experiences and their interests. Students share their interests with the teacher prior to the activity. The higher-level reader is positioned as an expert, which increases their belief in their ability to achieve success in the classroom. The lower-level reader is also more likely to participate in the reading activities because of their shared cultural background. Instead of being partnered with a student from the dominant culture, they are partnered with someone from their cultural background. Some suggested PALS that support reading are partner reading with retelling and chunking reading into smaller amounts like paragraphs and summarizing those sections (Thorius & Graff, 2017).

Promoting Cultural Identity

Another area identified through the literature review as a need for beginning teachers working with ELLs was cultural awareness. Teacher beliefs about their students have a strong influence on the level of student success (Pettit, 2011; Yoon, 2008; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). Preservice teachers often lack personal experiences with cultures other than their own. The majority of teachers demographically come from Caucasian middle-

class backgrounds (Li & Protacio, 2010). Preservice teachers lack adequate preparation to work with ELLs because they often come from backgrounds that are linguistically and culturally different from their own (Feliz, 2018; Samuels, 2018).

Because they have not had adequate experiences with students from other cultures, they may be averse to having ELLs in their classrooms. Without prior experiences or some form of professional development, educators may come into their classrooms with predetermined views about not only their ability to teach multilingual learners but also the students' ability to learn (Feliz, 2018). The teachers may experience frustration and lay blame for their difficulties on their students instead of their lack of understanding (Batt, 2008). Teachers may be culturally separated from their students. Preparation plays a large role in the way mainstream teachers view their students. A study conducted by Durgunoglu and Hughes (2010) found that teachers who felt better equipped to meet the needs of the diverse learners within their classrooms exhibited more positive attitudes toward their diverse learners as well. If they felt ill-equipped, their attitudes reflected a more negative perception of their students.

Increased cultural awareness can help preservice teachers become more comfortable and confident when working with ELLs in their classrooms and help them feel valued by integrating culturally responsive pedagogy. Ladson-Billings (2005) sparked ideas about culturally responsive pedagogy that incorporates the values and cultural experiences of students into classroom instructional practices. Considered to be the seminal researcher in culturally responsive pedagogy, Ladson-Billings encouraged teaching practices that would help to maintain the cultural identity of the student in the middle of mainstream language and culture that were different.

Culturally responsive teaching strategies help support a sense of inclusion for multilingual learners and build a greater sense of classroom community (Harrison & Lakin, 2018). Instead of teachers removing cultural differences within their classroom, the culture of ELLs is acknowledged and integrated into classroom activities and instructional practices. Increasing the amount of integration of culturally relevant material increases the amount of engagement ELLs feel within the classroom (Morales, 2021).

A study by Walker (2021) examined common perceptions of ELLs held by mainstream classroom teachers in Florida. The study included experienced in-service teachers who served ELLs in their general education classrooms. Walker's study reinforced a lack of adequate preparation for teachers in their preservice programs. Walker's study also reinforced the need for in-service professional development to foster positive attitudes toward ELLs. The majority of the participants in the study had received professional development to teach ELLs because the state requires specific training to be completed by the teachers. Participants in the study had experienced ESOL training and second language acquisition training. The teachers who had received the training were accepting of ELLs in their classrooms and had developed strategies like modified assignments, scaffolding, and extended time to support ELLs academically. The participants did cite a feeling that they were limited in the amount of time they had to work with their ELLs. This study reinforces that professional development training is necessary for teachers to build their skills and their confidence in teaching their ELLs within mainstream classrooms (Arroyo, 2018; Walker, 2021).

Cultural awareness also helps teachers see students learning the language in a

positive light. The research conducted by Samuels (2018) suggested cultural competence in teachers shows positive benefits for students. In the study, Samuels examined qualitative data collected from 200 K-12 teacher participants currently serving students in low-socioeconomic schools within a large urban setting. The teachers volunteered to participate in professional development specifically designed to support culturally responsive teaching (Samuels, 2018).

Samuels (2018) stated, "Teachers must develop a knowledge and appreciation of diverse cultures, explore how equitable and inclusive practices can be implemented in schools, and imagine strategies for challenging existing barriers" (p. 22). Teachers need to examine their own perceptions and the biases they bring into the classroom because a student's culture is part of their identity and cannot be separated. Teachers need to learn more about their students' cultures and how to integrate and celebrate different cultures in their classroom activities. "Culturally responsive pedagogy is characterized by teachers who are committed to cultural competence, establish high expectations, and position themselves as both facilitators and learners" (Samuels, 2018, p. 23).

Anthony (2017) examined the self-efficacy of first-year teachers in relation to the level of preparation they received to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students prior to beginning teaching. The study included participants who were concluding their first full year of teaching. The study found 70% of teachers felt unprepared to teach students who were linguistically and culturally different from themselves (Anthony, 2017). Many of the participants cited they had received formal foundational training on the foundations of culturally responsive teaching; however, they lacked real-world experiences in their student teaching to practice what they had learned.

Approximately 50% of the participants cited having some life experiences with students who were culturally and linguistically diverse, which fostered a positive impact on their self-efficacy when working with ELLs. Anthony found that 85% of participants cited positive experiences in their field experience as the more useful experience that aided in them feeling prepared to meet the diverse needs of ELLs. The study suggested that more time working in the field with culturally and linguistically diverse students would help increase beginning teachers' sense of preparedness to be able to meet students' needs on their own (Anthony, 2017).

Preparation plays a huge role in the way mainstream teachers view their students. Durgunoglu and Hughes (2010) found that teachers who felt prepared through preservice coursework or in-service professional development to specifically work with ELLs displayed more positive attitudes toward ELLs in their classrooms. Conversely, a lack of preparation resulted in teachers displaying more negative attitudes toward their ELLs (Castaneda, 2020).

Teachers may resent having ELLs in their classrooms because of the additional time and effort it takes to instruct them in their classrooms (Walker et al., 2004). Preservice teachers who did not receive culturally responsive training or did not see culturally responsive training modeled in their student teaching or internship experiences often fail to understand how to meet this need for their students (Anthony, 2017; Feliz, 2018). Feliz (2018) found some teachers felt comfortable integrating a few cultural events into their classroom activities, but very few were able to carry it over into their instructional practices to fidelity. The study found the teachers failed to incorporate literature that contained characters, settings, or experiences that were closely connected

to the lived experiences of their multilingual learners. Feliz's study confirmed the need for teachers to have exposure to coursework or professional development centered around culturally responsive teaching in order to be prepared to work with students from different cultures in their classrooms.

Summary

Educators have been working to identify the best way to meet the learning needs of ELLs in the United States for decades. Legislation has been established to provide equal access to curriculum and content for ELLs; however, not all teachers have been equally equipped to deliver academic instruction specifically designed for language learners. Schools are under pressure to ensure that all students show academic gains; however, teachers often feel unprepared to meet the diverse needs of their students who are culturally and linguistically different from themselves (Anthony, 2017).

Teachers need to feel confident in their ability to meet the academic and cultural needs of their students because teachers have the greatest influence on the academic success of the students they serve in their classrooms (Scott & Mohn, 2019). As the student population in the United States continues to shift, the likelihood of all teachers serving ELLs within their mainstream classroom will continue to increase (Scott & Mohr, 2019). Teachers need targeted professional development to assist them in acquiring and effectively integrating research-based classroom practices that support high levels of academic learning for language learners.

Teachers can also feel disconnected from their students because of a lack of experience with cultures other than their own (Samuels, 2018). Cultural awareness training is necessary to help educators view the language and lived experiences their

student brings into their classroom as a strength (Feliz, 2018). Without professional development, teachers can see the language difficulties of their ELLs as burdensome in the mainstream classroom and may begin to develop negative attitudes toward their ELLs (Walker et al., 2004). Teachers also need hands-on opportunities to experience success or observe successful learning with students from diverse cultural backgrounds prior to beginning in their own classrooms (Wilson et al., 2020).

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the level of self-efficacy of beginning teachers working with ELLs in general education settings. The classroom teacher is the highest predictor of student academic success (Hattie, 2011); however, many teachers feel ill-equipped to meet the needs of diverse learners in their classrooms (Gomez & Diarrassouba, 2014). Teacher efficacy has a direct correlation to student achievement. It is therefore important to understand how to foster high levels of efficacy for teachers when working with ELLs.

The study sought to determine professional development that has been provided to beginning teachers either in the preservice coursework or after employment within a district to work with students who are culturally and linguistically diverse. The literature review revealed connections between professional development and increased levels of teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs (Samuels, 2018). This study sought to identify the current level of preparedness to teach ELLs and how much professional development has been provided to adequately equip beginning teachers to meet their students' academic and cultural needs. The study also sought to identify experiences that increased beginning teacher beliefs in their ability to successfully work with their ELLs. By identifying experiences that beginning teachers found useful in supporting their ability to meet the needs of their students, universities and districts could work to replicate those experiences with future beginning teachers.

The study also sought to identify particular strategies that general education teachers were currently using to support ELLs within the regular education setting.

Preservice teachers often hold a limited knowledge bank of strategies to support students. Supporting ELLs can also bring additional challenges. Understanding what strategies beginning teachers were currently using helped to identify additional professional training needs for this group of teachers when working with ELLs.

Research Questions

This mixed methods case study was guided by four core research questions.

1. What are the self-perceptions of mainstream beginning teachers concerning their readiness to effectively teach ELLs?
2. What type of professional development or preparation has been provided to beginning teachers to effectively meet the needs of ELLs since entering the classroom?
3. What type of professional development or experiences would be perceived as beneficial to increase teacher efficacy when working with ELLs in the mainstream classroom?
4. What techniques are beginning teachers putting in place within their classrooms to support language and academic learning for ELLs within the regular education setting?

Research Setting

The research study was conducted using two separate neighboring school districts in western North Carolina. Each district represents one county. Both counties were considered rural based on their demographics. District names were given pseudonyms in order to protect the anonymity of the schools and participants. District A and District B were compared by demographics: mean gross income, population total, population

breakdown by ethnicity, the number of elementary schools, number of ESL teachers, and number of beginning teachers in Years 0-3. Each district had at least five beginning teachers currently working with ELLs. Table 1 outlines demographic data for the two districts where the studies were conducted.

Table 1

Demographic Comparison for Districts

Demographic	District A	District B
Total population	80,463	87,611
Population under 18	20%	18%
Median household income	$46,094	$43,915
Persons in poverty, percent	13%	18.4%
Population per square mile	170	173
White alone, percent	90%	85.7%
Black or African American alone, percent	5.5%	6.8%
American Indian or Alaska Native alone, percent	0.7%	1.0%
Asian alone, percent	0.8%	3.8%
Two or more races, percent	2%	1.9%
Hispanic or Latino alone, percent	6.5%	6.9%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, alone	0.1%	0.8%
Education – high school or above	81.4%	82.4%
Education – bachelor's degree or above	15.8%	16.7%
Language other than English spoken at home, % of persons age 5+	5.3%	9.9%

Participants

Participants in this study were elementary teachers currently serving ELLs in their

mainstream classrooms. These participants were selected because they have direct experience instructing ELLs and were able to describe their experiences of working with this population of students. The teachers had less than 4 years of teaching experience. Identifiable information was removed to protect the participants in the study. The participants, schools, and districts were provided pseudonyms in order to maintain anonymity.

Methodology

The descriptive nature of the case study allows participants to describe their experiences with a specific phenomenon in the context of real-life situations (Yin, 2014). This mixed methods case study focused on self-efficacy for elementary teachers in mainstream classrooms to gain a better understanding of their perceptions of their preparedness to work with ELLs. A mixed methods research design was used on "the assumption that the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods, in combination provides a better understanding of the research problem and question than either method by itself" (Creswell, 2014, p. 537). The quantitative portion of the case study sought to quantify teacher perceptions of their self-efficacy when working with students who are linguistically and culturally different from themselves. The qualitative portion of the case study was used to help me capture the unique perceptions and experiences of the participants.

Data Collection

This mixed methods case study utilized data from multiple sources. First, a survey was utilized to collect self-efficacy ratings of beginning teachers across two districts of the study. The survey chosen for the study was the CRTSES (Siwatu, 2007). Other

teacher efficacy instruments were available; however, the CRTSES was specifically selected because the focus of this survey involved teacher self-efficacy when instructing students who may be culturally and linguistically different from the teacher. The CRTSES was created by Siwatu (2007) using Bandura's early self-efficacy work and the recent work from scholars focused on the education of culturally and linguistically diverse students. The CRTSES had been used in previously published surveys and the reliability and validity of the survey were previously established by the creator of the survey (Siwatu, 2007). The CRTSES was used as the instrument to collect beginning teacher perceptions of their preparedness to effectively educate ELLs in their classrooms (Siwatu, 2007). The CRTSES utilized a Likert scale with 11 numerical choices on a scale from 0, which represented no confidence at all, to 100, which represented completely confident.

The survey also contained demographic information. The survey allowed participants to verify that they were currently serving ELLs in their classroom and had less than 4 years of teaching experience. The survey prompted them to opt out if they did not meet these study requirements.

The survey was administered through Qualtrics. All beginning teachers serving ELLs in both districts studied received a digital link to the survey via their school building administrator. The link was generic and not correlated to any participant. To protect the anonymity of the participants, no identifiable information was collected. The survey included the CRTSES questions using a Likert scale along with a separate section for the following three open-ended questions:

1. Describe your readiness or comfort level to effectively teach English language

learners (ELL) in your classroom. Why do you feel ready or why do you feel not ready to teach ELLs?

2. Describe training or professional development you have received specifically designed to help you support English language learners in your classroom.
3. Describe experiences or training you have found most beneficial to you with supporting success with English language learners in your classroom.

Table 2 shows the CRTSES components.

Table 2

CRTSES Components

Individual elements of the CRTSES
1. adapt instruction to meet the needs of my students
2. obtain information about my students' academic strengths
3. determine whether my students like to work alone or in a group
4. determine whether my students feel comfortable competing with other students
5. identify ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) is different from my students' home culture
6. implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture
7. assess student learning using various types of assessments
8. obtain information about my students' home life
9. build a sense of trust in my students
10. establish positive home-school relations
11. use a variety of teaching methods
12. develop a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse backgrounds
13. use my students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful
14. use my students' prior knowledge to help them make sense of new information
15. identify ways how students communicate at home may differ from the school norms
16. obtain information about my students' cultural background
17. teach students about their cultures' contributions to science
18. greet English Language Learners with a phrase in their native language
19. design a classroom environment using displays that reflect a variety of cultures
20. develop a personal relationship with my students
21. obtain information about my students' academic weaknesses
22. praise English Language Learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language
23. identify ways that standardized tests may be biased toward linguistically diverse students

(continued)

Individual elements of the CRTSES
24. communicate with parents regarding their child's educational progress
25. structure parent-teacher conferences so that the meeting is not intimidating for parents
26. help students to develop positive relationships with their classmates
27. revise instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups
28. critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes
29. design a lesson that shows how other cultural groups have made use of mathematics
30. model classroom tasks to enhance English Language Learner's understanding
31. communicate with the parents of English Language Learners regarding their child's achievement
32. help students feel like important members of the classroom
33. identify ways that standardized tests may be biased toward culturally diverse students
34. use a learning preference inventory to gather data about how my students like to learn
35. use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds
36. explain new concepts using examples that are taken from my students' everyday lives
37. obtain information regarding my students' academic interests
38. use the interests of my students to make learning meaningful for them
39. implement cooperative learning activities for those students who like to work in groups
40. design instruction that matches my students' developmental needs
41. teach students about their cultures' contributions to society

Prior to their use in the study, the three open-ended questions were reviewed and edited by three people considered experts in their field due to their supervisory work with beginning teachers. The surveys were anonymous. Measures to ensure anonymity included a nonidentifiable link distributed through the school administrators and no personal information was requested or collected. At the end of the survey, participants were asked if they were willing to participate in a focus group interview to allow for additional discussion about the experiences of beginning teachers when working with

ELLs in mainstream classrooms. Table 3 shows how the study components aligned with the research questions.

Table 3

Research Alignment Table

Research question	Sources of data	Presentation of data
1. What are the self-perceptions of mainstream beginning teachers concerning their readiness to effectively teach ELLs?	CRTSES	Table of results
	Open-Ended Survey Question 1: Describe your readiness or comfort level to effectively teach English language learners (ELL) in your classroom. Why do you feel ready or why do you feel not ready to teach ELLs?	Transcribed notes
	Focus Group Questions Describe how prepared you feel to teach students in your classroom that are culturally and linguistically different from you.	
	How much do you know about the cultural background of your English language learners? (Examples: language spoken at home, cultural background).	
2. What type of professional development or preparation has been provided to beginning teachers to effectively meet the needs of diverse learners both before and after entering the classroom?	Open-Ended Survey Question 2: Describe training or professional development you have received specifically designed to help you support English language learners in your classroom.	Transcribed notes
	Focus Group Questions What experiences or training has impacted your perceptions of your ability to meet the cultural needs of your students?	
	Describe the training or preparation you received since you entered your position as a classroom teacher to meet the needs of English language learners.	
	Describe training or experiences that you have found beneficial to you as a teacher when working with English language learners.	
3. What professional development or experiences would be perceived as beneficial to increase teacher efficacy when working with ELLs in the mainstream classroom?	What experiences or training have had a positive impact on your perceptions of your ability to meet the academic needs of your ELLs? How has that impacted your perception of your ability to meet their academic needs?	Transcribed notes
	What experiences or training have had a negative impact on your perceptions of your ability to meet the academic needs of your ELLs? How has that impacted your perception of your ability to meet their academic needs?	
	Follow-up Question -You shared what trainings you had, what type of follow-up did you receive? Over what time period did that occur?	

(continued)

Research question	Sources of data	Presentation of data
	Follow-up Question -Did that amount of training time feel adequate? Would you have liked something different -more or less? Follow-up Question -How did the ELL training you receive compare to other trainings you received?	
4. What techniques are beginning teachers putting in place within their classrooms to support language and academic learning for ELLs within the regular education setting?	Focus Group Question Describe specific instructional strategies you utilize in your classroom instruction to meet the academic needs of your students.	Transcribed notes

Data Collection and Analysis

The data from the CRTSES were collected using Qualtrics. Responses to the CRTSES were analyzed to determine the mean, mode, and outlier responses. Qualitative responses to the open-ended questions and the focus group questions were coded by hand to look for themes. Codes were created based on the frequency of word use/response. A codebook was utilized to examine each response (Creswell, 2014). Themes were connected to each research question (Creswell, 2014).

Self-Efficacy Scale

The self-efficacy data from the two districts were analyzed. The information from the focus group interviews was also coded and themes were identified. I analyzed the findings from the Likert scale CRTSES and compared the level of efficacy expressed by participants.

Focus Group

Focus groups served as a viable opportunity to gather multiple perspectives on the same phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). Teachers who were willing to participate in the focus groups were provided a separate link so their survey data were not identifiable.

Participants from each district were randomly selected from the list of teachers willing to participate in the focus groups.

For the purpose of this study, a random selection of survey respondents from each district was selected. Focus groups consisted of no more than six participants in each group. Randomization of sampling was selected because I am not knowledgeable of the participants from one of the two districts being studied. Randomization also helps to remove any researcher bias from the selection process. The selected participants were invited to participate in the focus group which was conducted via Zoom. Focus groups were created with a limited number of participants held in an environment to support open dialogue. Focus group size can vary; however, for the purpose of this study, the focus group size was kept to a smaller number in order to ensure that all participants had an opportunity to share their thoughts and remain engaged in the discussion.

I clearly informed the participants that their participation in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. I ensured teachers had access to the needed technology to access Zoom. If there was a need, I collaborated with the school building administrator to ensure equal access for all participants. The interview questions were structured to allow for adding follow-up questions as needed for clarification of information if necessary. Table 4 displays the focus group interview questions and shows the alignment with the research questions that governed this study.

Table 4

Focus Group Questions Aligned With Research Questions

Research question	Focus group question
1. What are the self-perceptions of mainstream beginning teachers concerning their readiness to effectively teach ELLs?	Describe how prepared you feel to teach students in your classroom that are culturally and linguistically different from you. How much do you know about the cultural background of your English language learners? (Examples: language spoken at home, cultural background).
2. The type of professional development or preparation has been provided to beginning teachers to effectively meet the needs of diverse learners both before and after entering the classroom?	What experiences or training has impacted your perceptions of your ability to meet the cultural needs of your students? Describe the training or preparation you received since you entered your position as a classroom teacher to meet the needs of English language learners. Describe training or experiences that you have found beneficial to you as a teacher when working with English language learners.
3. What professional development or experiences would be perceived as beneficial to increase teacher efficacy when working with ELLs in the mainstream classroom?	What experiences or training have had a positive impact on your perceptions of your ability to meet the academic needs of your ELLs? How has that impacted your perception of your ability to meet their academic needs? What experiences or training have had a negative impact on your perceptions of your ability to meet the academic needs of your ELLs? How has that impacted your perception of your ability to meet their academic needs? Follow-up Question -You shared what trainings you had, what type of follow-up did you receive? Over what time period did that occur? Follow-up Question -Did that amount of training time feel adequate? Would you have liked something different -more or less? Follow-up Question -How did the ELL training you receive compare to other trainings you received?
4. What techniques are beginning teachers putting in place within their classrooms to support language and academic learning for ELLs within the regular education setting?	Describe specific instructional strategies you utilize in your classroom instruction to meet the academic needs of your students.

The focus groups were recorded so the conversations could be transcribed.

Participants were given an informed consent via email to agree to participate in the focus

group and to be video recorded. Videos were not published and were made available only to me. Video transcription was reviewed for themes and included as part of the qualitative analysis.

Role of the Researcher

I served as a data collector in this study (Creswell, 2014). I sought to capture participant perceptions of their preparedness to work with ELLs in their mainstream classrooms, what training they had received to prepare them, and what experiences had positively or negatively impacted their thoughts and perceptions toward ELLs in their classroom. I helped participants clearly articulate their thoughts during the focus group interviews by asking questions and collecting their responses. I was also responsible for ensuring that data collected both in the responses and the personal information of the participants were safeguarded to ensure privacy.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the level of self-efficacy of beginning teachers when working with ELLs in the regular education setting. The study included beginning teachers from two neighboring school districts in western North Carolina. The teachers participating in the study had less than 4 years of experience as a classroom teacher and were currently serving ELLs in their classrooms. As the number of ELLs being served in public education continues to rise, so does the demand for teachers to feel adequately prepared to meet their needs. Teachers may lack life and teaching experiences of working with students who are culturally and linguistically diverse. The study sought to identify what professional development or training beginning teachers have received during their first years in a school district that support positive attitudes and interactions with students who are culturally different from their own and how that impacts their efficacy to meet the needs of their students. The study also sought to identify specific professional development or experiences that beginning teachers perceive would be beneficial to increase their self-efficacy when working with ELLs in mainstream classrooms.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following four research questions:

1. What are the self-perceptions of mainstream beginning teachers concerning their readiness to effectively teach ELLs?
2. What type of professional development or preparation has been provided to beginning teachers to effectively meet the needs of ELLs since entering the

classroom?

3. What type of professional development or experiences would be perceived as beneficial to increase teacher efficacy when working with ELLs in the mainstream classroom?
4. What techniques are beginning teachers putting in place within their classrooms to support language and academic learning for ELLs within the regular education setting?

Participants

Participants for the study were selected in a way to maximize participant confidentiality. An informational email was provided to the district administration with an attached form letter for principals to send out to their beginning teachers who were currently serving ELLs in their mainstream elementary classrooms. A copy of the district approval and support letter was also attached to the email so both administrators and teachers would know that district approval had been granted. Participants in the study were provided the survey link by their school administrator. The participants for this study were public elementary school teachers with less than 4 full years of teaching experience. Teachers who participated in the survey remained anonymous since the survey did not require individual identifiers such as name or email address. The survey was administered through Qualtrics. Demographic data were collected from the participants regarding their district and their number of years teaching. The initial intent was to study three neighboring districts; however, one district was removed from the study. The survey asked the participants whether or not they were currently working with ELLs. Those teachers not working with ELLs were eliminated from participation.

Participants who selected more than 4 years of teaching experience were also automatically exited from the survey. Table 5 shows the number of survey participants based on their years of teaching experience.

Table 5

Survey Participants by Teaching Experience

Teaching experience	Number of survey participants
Less than 1 full year of teaching	5
1-2 years	5
2-3 years	6
3-4 years	2
Total	18

The participants were distributed across the number of years of teaching experience. Five participants had been teaching for less than 1 full year. Five participants had 1 to 2 full years of teaching experience. Six study participants had 2 to 3 years of experience, and two participants had 3 to 4 years of teaching experience. Eighteen teachers participated in the CRTSES.

Methodology/Survey

The mixed methods study collected data from participants in three ways. First, teachers rated their perceived ability on individual components of the CRTSES. The CRTSES asked participants to rate themselves on an 11-point Likert scale of 0-100 where 0 represents not confident at all, 50 represents moderately confident, and 100 represents completely confident. A chi-square goodness of fit test was performed on the CRTSES data collected to determine the validity of results. The mean and mode were also calculated for each component. Data were calculated for the entire group and then also broken down by participant teaching experience.

Three open-ended questions were also included at the conclusion of the survey:

1. Describe your readiness or comfort level to effectively teach English language learners (ELL) in your classroom. Why do you feel ready or why do you feel not ready to teach ELLs?
2. Describe training or professional development you have received specifically designed to help you support English language learners in your classroom.
3. Describe experiences or training you have found most beneficial to you with supporting success with English language learners in your classroom.

The responses collected from the open-ended questions were coded for themes. Finally, focus groups were conducted for participants who consented to participate. Focus group responses were likewise coded for themes. The data were aligned to answer the four research questions.

Research Question 1: What Are the Self-Perceptions of Mainstream Beginning Teachers Concerning Their Readiness to Effectively Teach ELLs?

Research Question 1 was addressed from data collected through the CRTSES, Open-Ended Question 1, and Focus Group Questions 1 and 2. The first question from the CRTSES asked participants to rate their perception of their ability to adapt their instruction based on the needs of their students. Table 6 shows the statistical results for all participants for Question 5 of the CRTSES.

Table 6

Statistical Results for Survey Question 5 (I am able to adapt instruction to meet the needs of my students.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [18/11=1.636]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.636	0
2	10	0%	1.636	0
3	20	0%	1.636	0
4	30	0%	1.636	0
5	40	5.56%	1.636	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	16.67%	1.636	3
7	60	11.11%	1.636	2
8	70	16.67%	1.636	3
9	80	33.33%	1.636	6
10	90	11.11%	1.636	2
11	Completely Confident 100	5.56%	1.636	1
	Total	100%	18	18

$p = 0.02$

The beginning teachers were given a scale of 0-100, with 0 being not confident at all and 100 being completely confident. The first question on the survey asked participants to rate their confidence in their ability to adapt their instruction: $p = 0.02$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean response from the group for being able to adapt their instruction for ELLs was 71.1. The mode was 80 for this question, which represents that overall, the beginning teachers perceived themselves as more than moderately confident in their ability to adapt instruction to meet ELL student needs. Three teachers scored themselves at 50, which represents a moderate level of confidence. One person self-rated at 40, which signifies a less-than-moderate level of confidence. The majority of the beginning teachers rated themselves between moderately confident and completely confident. One participant rated themselves as completely confident in their

ability to adapt their instruction to meet the needs of their ELLs.

Table 7 shows the results for Survey Question 6.

Table 7

Statistical Results for Survey Question 6 (I am able to obtain information about my students' academic strengths.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [18/11=1.636]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.636	0
2	10	0%	1.636	0
3	20	0%	1.636	0
4	30	0%	1.636	0
5	40	0%	1.636	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	11.11%	1.636	2
7	60	5.56%	1.636	1
8	70	27.78%	1.636	5
9	80	16.67%	1.636	3
10	90	27.78%	1.636	5
11	Completely Confident 100	11.11%	1.636	2
	Total	100%	18	18

$p = 0.00$

The beginning teachers scored themselves moderately confident or above on their perceived ability to obtain information about their students' academic strengths, Question 2 on the CRTSES: $p = 0.00$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean score was 77.8, which represents more than moderately confident on the self-efficacy scale. The modes were 70 and 90. All respondents scored themselves at or above the moderately confident level on their perceived ability to obtain information about the academic strengths of their students.

Table 8 shows the results for Survey Question 7 from the CRTSES regarding whether students prefer to work alone or in a group.

Table 8

Statistical Results for Survey Question 7 (I am able to determine whether my students like to work alone or in a group.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [18/11=1.636]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.636	0
2	10	0%	1.636	0
3	20	0%	1.636	0
4	30	0%	1.636	0
5	40	0%	1.636	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.56%	1.636	1
7	60	5.56%	1.636	1
8	70	11.11%	1.636	2
9	80	11.11%	1.636	2
10	90	22.22%	1.636	4
11	Completely Confident 100	44.44%	1.636	8
	Total	100%	18	18

$p = 0.00$

Beginning teachers as a group also rated themselves moderately confident or above on their perception of their ability to determine which setting their students prefer to work in, whether alone or with group members: $p = 0.00$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean response was 87.3. The mode response for this question was 100, which represents complete confidence. Eight of the 18 participants selected completely confident on this indicator. Four participants selected 90, meaning 66% of the respondents were almost or completely confident in their perceived ability to determine if students felt comfortable working in a group. Study participants also rated their confidence high in knowing whether or not their students felt comfortable competing with other students. Seven of the 18 participants selected completely confident in their ability to know whether their students felt comfortable competing.

Table 9 shows the results for Survey Question 8.

Table 9

Statistical Results for Survey Question 8 (I am able to determine whether my students feel comfortable competing with other students.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [18/11=1.636]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.636	0
2	10	0%	1.636	0
3	20	0%	1.636	0
4	30	0%	1.636	0
5	40	0%	1.636	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.56%	1.636	1
7	60	5.56%	1.636	1
8	70	11.11%	1.636	2
9	80	27.78%	1.636	5
10	90	11.11%	1.636	2
11	Completely Confident 100	38.89%	1.636	7
	Total	100%	18	18

$p = 0.00$

Participants were asked to rate their efficacy on their ability to determine if their students feel comfortable competing with others: $p = 0.00$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. All the beginning teachers surveyed rated their confidence at or above moderately confident. The mean for this indicator was 85. The mode for this question was 100, which represents complete confidence in their ability. Fourteen of 18 participants scored themselves at 80 or higher.

Table 10 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 9.

Table 10

Statistical Results for Survey Question 9 (I am able to identify ways that the school culture [e.g., values, norms, and practices] is different from my students' home culture.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [18/11=1.636]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.636	0
2	10	0%	1.636	0
3	20	0%	1.636	0
4	30	11.11%	1.636	2
5	40	5.56%	1.636	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.56%	1.636	1
7	60	11.11%	1.636	2
8	70	11.11%	1.636	2
9	80	11.11%	1.636	2
10	90	22.22%	1.636	4
11	Completely Confident 100	22.22%	1.636	4
	Total	100%	18	18

$p = 0.24$

The study participants rated themselves lower overall in their perceived ability to identify ways that school culture is different from the students' home culture: $p = 0.24$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean score for this indicator was 73.9, and responses were widely distributed from 30, which is less confident to 100, which represents completely confident. The modes were 90 and 100.

Table 11 shows the statistical data from the responses to Survey Question 10.

Table 11

Statistical Results for Survey Question 10 (I am able to implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [18/11=1.636]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.636	0
2	10	0%	1.636	0
3	20	0%	1.636	0
4	30	11.11%	1.636	2
5	40	5.56%	1.636	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	11.11%	1.636	2
7	60	22.22%	1.636	4
8	70	11.11%	1.636	2
9	80	16.67%	1.636	3
10	90	16.67%	1.636	3
11	Completely Confident 100	5.56%	1.636	1
	Total	100%	18	18

$p = 0.33$

Question 10 asked participants to rate their confidence in their ability to implement instructional strategies to minimize the effects of differences between the culture of students and the culture of the school: $p = 0.33$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. A wide range of responses were collected. The mean for this indicator was 66.1, indicating a lower sense of efficacy overall of the participants. The mode for this question was 60. Two of the beginning teachers rated themselves 30 on the 100-point scale, indicating a low sense of efficacy. Seven responses were mid-level confidence with one participant rating themselves at 40, two participants rating themselves at 50, and four teachers rating themselves at 60.

Table 12 shows the statistical data for Survey Question 11.

Table 12

Statistical Results for Survey Question 11 (I am able to assess student learning using various types of assessments.

#	Answer	%	Expected value [18/11=1.636]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.636	0
2	10	0%	1.636	0
3	20	0%	1.636	0
4	30	0%	1.636	0
5	40	0%	1.636	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.56%	1.636	1
7	60	5.56%	1.636	1
8	70	33.33%	1.636	6
9	80	16.67%	1.636	3
10	90	22.22%	1.636	4
11	Completely Confident 100	16.67%	1.636	3
	Total	100%	18	18

$p = 0.00$

Question 11 asked beginning teachers to rate their confidence in their ability to assess student learning using different assessments: $p = 0.00$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. Participants overall rated themselves higher on this indicator. The mean for the group was 79.4. The mode for this indicator was 70, with six participants selecting 70 as their rating. All participants rated themselves moderately confident or above. Three participants selected 80, and four participants selected 90, which both indicate high levels of confidence. Three participants selected 100, which represents complete confidence in their ability to assess student learning.

Table 13 displays the results for Survey Question 12.

Table 13

Statistical Results for Survey Question 12 (I am able to obtain information about my students' home life.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [18/11=1.636]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.636	0
2	10	0%	1.636	0
3	20	0%	1.636	0
4	30	0%	1.636	0
5	40	5.56%	1.636	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	16.67%	1.636	3
7	60	5.56%	1.636	1
8	70	22.22%	1.636	4
9	80	16.67%	1.636	3
10	90	16.67%	1.636	3
11	Completely Confident 100	16.67%	1.636	3
	Total	100%	18	18

$p = 0.13$

Survey Question 12 asked participants to rate their confidence in their ability to obtain information about their students' home lives: $p = 0.13$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The majority of responses for this indicator were at or above a moderately confident score of 50. One participant scored themselves at 40 on the 100-point scale, which represents less than moderately confident. Three teachers scored themselves at 50, moderately confident. One respondent rated themselves at 60. The mode for this indicator was 70, with four responses. The mean was 74.4. The remaining nine beginning teachers scored themselves at 80 or above, indicating a higher level of confidence in their ability to access information about their students' home lives.

Table 14 shows the statistical data for Survey Question 13.

Table 14

Statistical Results for Survey Question 13 (I am able to build a sense of trust in my students.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [18/11=1.636]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.636	0
2	10	0%	1.636	0
3	20	0%	1.636	0
4	30	0%	1.636	0
5	40	0%	1.636	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.56%	1.636	1
7	60	5.56%	1.636	1
8	70	5.56%	1.636	1
9	80	22.22%	1.636	4
10	90	16.67%	1.636	3
11	Completely Confident 100	44.44%	1.636	8
	Total	100%	18	18

$p = 0.00$

Survey Question 13 shows teacher responses for their confidence in their ability to build a sense of trust in their students: $p = 0.00$ which, is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The teachers overall rated their efficacy high for this indicator. The mean was 87.2. The mode for this indicator was 100, which represents completely confident. All participants rated themselves at 50, which represents moderately confident or higher.

Table 15 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 14.

Table 15

Statistical Results for Survey Question 14 (I am able to establish positive home-school relations.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [18/11=1.636]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.636	0
2	10	0%	1.636	0
3	20	0%	1.636	0
4	30	5.56%	1.636	1
5	40	0%	1.636	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.56%	1.636	1
7	60	11.11%	1.636	2
8	70	11.11%	1.636	2
9	80	16.67%	1.636	3
10	90	22.22%	1.636	4
11	Completely Confident 100	27.78%	1.636	5
	Total	100%	18	18

$p = 0.04$

Survey Question 14 asked participants to rate their efficacy in their ability to establish positive connections between home and school: $p = 0.04$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. Participants overall felt more confident on this element. The mean for this indicator was 80. The mode was 100, which represents completely confident. All participants except one rated themselves at or above moderately confident. Fourteen of 18 teachers scored themselves at 70 or above.

Table 16 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 15.

Table 16

Statistical Results for Survey Question 15 (I am able to use a variety of teaching methods.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [18/11=1.636]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.636	0
2	10	0%	1.636	0
3	20	0%	1.636	0
4	30	0%	1.636	0
5	40	0%	1.636	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.56%	1.636	1
7	60	5.56%	1.636	1
8	70	16.67%	1.636	3
9	80	27.78%	1.636	5
10	90	27.78%	1.636	5
11	Completely Confident 100	16.67%	1.636	3
	Total	100%	18	18

$p = 0.00$

Survey Question 15 asked beginning teachers to rate their level of confidence in their ability to use a variety of teaching methods: $p = 0.00$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. Participants overall felt confident in their ability to vary their teaching methods. The mean for this indicator was 81.7. The modes for this indicator were 80 and 90. All participants rated themselves at 50 or above on this element.

Table 17 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 16.

Table 17

Statistical Results for Survey Question 16 (I am able to develop a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse backgrounds.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	11.76%	1.545	2
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.88%	1.545	1
7	60	5.88%	1.545	1
8	70	5.88%	1.545	1
9	80	23.53%	1.545	4
10	90	23.53%	1.545	4
11	Completely Confident 100	23.53%	1.545	4
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.04$

Survey Question 16 asked participants to rate themselves on their ability to develop a community of learners when the class consists of students from diverse backgrounds: $p = 0.04$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The number of participants dropped at this point in the survey from 18 to 17. The mean for this indicator was 78.8. The modes were 80, 90, and 100, with four participants scoring each of these levels.

Table 18 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 17.

Table 18

Statistical Results for Survey Question 17 (I am able to use my students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	5.88%	1.545	1
5	40	5.88%	1.545	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.88%	1.545	1
7	60	17.65%	1.545	3
8	70	11.76%	1.545	2
9	80	23.53%	1.545	4
10	90	17.65%	1.545	3
11	Completely Confident 100	11.76%	1.545	2
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.27$

This indicator asked beginning teachers to rate their efficacy with their ability to use the students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful: $p = 0.27$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The teachers rated this area lower than previous indicators overall. The mean for this indicator was 66.5. The mode was 80 for this indicator, but there was a large spread of values for this question. Responses for this indicator ranged from 30 to 100. Two teachers selected less than moderately confident, one teacher selected moderately confident, and three teachers selected 60, which represents more than moderately confident. Two teachers selected 70, four teachers selected 80, and three teachers selected 90, which all represent high levels of confidence. Two teachers selected 100, which represents completely confident.

Table 19 displays the results for Survey Question 18.

Table 19

Statistical Results for Survey Question 18 (I am able to use my students' prior knowledge to help them make sense of new information.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	0%	1.545	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	11.76%	1.545	2
7	60	11.76%	1.545	2
8	70	11.76%	1.545	2
9	80	41.18%	1.545	7
10	90	5.88%	1.545	1
11	Completely Confident 100	17.65%	1.545	3
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.00$

The CRTSES indicator asks participants to rate their efficacy in being able to use the students' prior knowledge to make sense of new information: $p = 0.00$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. All survey participants cited a moderate or higher level of confidence in their ability to help students make sense of new information by utilizing their prior knowledge. The mean for this indicator was 77. The mode was 80 of 100. Seven of the 17 participants rated themselves as 80 of 100 on the scale for their efficacy in utilizing background knowledge.

Table 20 displays the statistical results for Survey Question 19.

Table 20

Statistical Results for Survey Question 19 (I am able to identify ways how students communicate at home may differ from the school norms.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	5.88%	1.545	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.88%	1.545	1
7	60	11.76%	1.545	2
8	70	23.53%	1.545	4
9	80	35.29%	1.545	6
10	90	5.88%	1.545	1
11	Completely Confident 100	11.76%	1.545	2
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.00$

Survey Question 19 asked participants to rate their confidence level in their ability to identify ways how students communicate at home may be different from the norms at school: $p = 0.00$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean for this indicator was 74.1. The mode was 80 of 100 with six teachers scoring themselves at 80 on this element. The lowest score for this indicator was 40, which represents below moderately confident; the highest score was 100, representing completely confident.

Table 21 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 20.

Table 21

Statistical Results for Survey Question 20 (I am able to obtain information about my students' cultural background.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	11.76%	1.545	2
5	40	0%	1.545	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	23.53%	1.545	4
7	60	5.88%	1.545	1
8	70	11.76%	1.545	2
9	80	17.65%	1.545	3
10	90	5.88%	1.545	1
11	Completely Confident 100	23.53%	1.545	4
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.09$

Beginning teachers rated their efficacy on their ability to obtain information about their students' cultural background: $p = 0.09$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. Acquiring information would be necessary to aid teachers in gaining a better understanding of how the students' culture differs from the majority culture represented in the classroom. There was a wide spread of responses for this indicator. Two participants selected 30, which represents a low level of confidence. The mean was 70. The modes were 50 and 100. Four participants selected 50, moderately confident, and four participants selected 100, completely confident, with the other participants falling between moderately confident and completely confident.

Table 22 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 21.

Table 22

Statistical Results for Survey Question 21 (I am able to teach students about their cultures' contributions to science.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	5.88%	1.545	1
4	30	11.76%	1.545	2
5	40	11.76%	1.545	2
6	Moderately Confident 50	23.53%	1.545	4
7	60	11.76%	1.545	2
8	70	23.53%	1.545	4
9	80	5.88%	1.545	1
10	90	5.88%	1.545	1
11	Completely Confident 100	0%	1.545	0
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.20$

For Survey Question 21, beginning teachers rated their efficacy in their ability to teach students about their cultures' contributions to science: $p = 0.20$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean score was much lower for this indicator than previous indicators at 54.7. The modes were 50 and 70. There was a wide span of answers to this question. Nine people scored 50, moderately confident, or below. Eight respondents scored themselves at 60, above moderately confident, but less than 100, completely confident. No respondents scored themselves as completely confident on this indicator.

Table 23 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 22.

Table 23

Statistical Results for Survey Question 22 (I am able to greet English Language Learners with a phrase in their native language.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	11.76%	1.545	2
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	5.88%	1.545	1
4	30	5.88%	1.545	1
5	40	0%	1.545	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	29.41%	1.545	5
7	60	0%	1.545	0
8	70	5.88%	1.545	1
9	80	11.76%	1.545	2
10	90	5.88%	1.545	1
11	Completely Confident 100	23.53%	1.545	4
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.06$

This indicator shows the efficacy of beginning teachers in their ability to greet their ELLs with a phrase in their native language: $p = 0.06$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean for this question is 60. The mode was 50. The was a wide variety of responses to this question. Two participants responded they were not at all confident, 0, in their ability to greet ELLs with a phrase in their native language. Five participants were moderately confident, 50, in their ability to greet their ELLs with a phrase in their native language, and four participants were completely confident, 100.

Table 24 displays the statistical results for Survey Question 23.

Table 24

Statistical Results for Survey Question 23 (I am able to design a classroom environment using displays that reflect a variety of cultures.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	5.88%	1.545	1
4	30	11.76%	1.545	2
5	40	5.88%	1.545	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	11.76%	1.545	2
7	60	11.76%	1.545	2
8	70	23.53%	1.545	4
9	80	5.88%	1.545	1
10	90	5.88%	1.545	1
11	Completely Confident 100	17.65%	1.545	3
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.48$

This question asked teachers to gauge their efficacy in their ability to design a classroom environment using displays that reflect a variety of cultures: $p = 0.48$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. There was a wide spread of results for this indicator. The mode for this indicator was 70. The mean was 64.1, which reflects greater than moderately confident overall; however, four respondents rated themselves at 40 or below. Three teachers rated themselves as 100, which represents completely confident. Table 25 shows the results for Survey Question 24.

Table 25

Statistical Results for Survey Question 24 (I am able to develop a personal relationship with my students.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	0%	1.545	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	0%	1.545	0
7	60	5.88%	1.545	1
8	70	5.88%	1.545	1
9	80	17.65%	1.545	3
10	90	23.53%	1.545	4
11	Completely Confident 100	47.06%	1.545	8
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.00$

This question asks beginning teachers to rate their efficacy in their ability to develop personal relationships with their students: $p = 0.00$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. This question asks teachers to rate their efficacy in their ability to develop personal relationships with their students. The mean score for this indicator was 90. The mode response was 100, completely confident. Eight of the 17 participants selected completely confident on this indicator. Fifteen of the 17 participants selected 80 or above. All respondents rated themselves at 60 or above for their efficacy in developing personal relationships.

Table 26 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 25.

Table 26

Statistical Results for Survey Question 25 (I am able to obtain information about my students' academic weaknesses.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	5.88%	1.545	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	0%	1.545	0
7	60	11.76%	1.545	2
8	70	11.76%	1.545	2
9	80	5.88%	1.545	1
10	90	35.29%	1.545	6
11	Completely Confident 100	29.41%	1.545	5
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.00$

The majority of the teacher participants rated high levels of efficacy in their ability to obtain information about their students' academic weaknesses: $p = 0.00$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. All the respondents except one rated themselves above moderately confident on this indicator. Eleven of the participants rated themselves at 90 or above on the confidence scale for their ability to obtain information about their students' academic weaknesses. The mean for this element was 83.5. The mode was 90.

Table 27 shows the results for Survey Question 26.

Table 27

Statistical Results for Survey Question 26 (I am able to praise English Language Learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	11.76%	1.545	2
2	10	5.88%	1.545	1
3	20	5.88%	1.545	1
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	5.88%	1.545	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	23.53%	1.545	4
7	60	0%	1.545	0
8	70	5.88%	1.545	1
9	80	11.76%	1.545	2
10	90	0%	1.545	0
11	Completely Confident 100	29.41%	1.545	5
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.06$

For Survey Question 26, the beginning teachers rated their efficacy on their ability to praise their ELLs in their native language: $p = 0.06$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The overall ratings for this indicator were widely distributed. The mean for this question was 58.8. The mode for this element was 100. Five respondents rated themselves as 100, completely confident. Two teachers rated themselves as not confident at all. Five respondents rated themselves as less than moderately confident. Four respondents rated themselves as moderately confident. One respondent rated themselves at 70, and two respondents rated themselves at 80, which are between the moderately confident and completely confident ranges.

Table 28 shows the responses for the beginning teachers on Survey Question 27.

Table 28

Statistical Results for Survey Question 27 (I am able to identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards linguistically diverse students.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	5.88%	1.545	1
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	17.65%	1.545	3
5	40	5.88%	1.545	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	0%	1.545	0
7	60	5.88%	1.545	1
8	70	17.65%	1.545	3
9	80	5.88%	1.545	1
10	90	5.88%	1.545	1
11	Completely Confident 100	35.29%	1.545	6
	Total	100%	17	17

p = 0.01

Survey Question 27 asked teachers to rate their efficacy on their ability to identify ways that standardized tests may be biased toward linguistically diverse students: p = 0.01, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean for this question was 69.4. The mode was 100, completely confident. The majority of respondents rated themselves moderately confident on this indicator; however, five teachers rated themselves less than moderately confident. One respondent rated themselves 10 of 100, designating little confidence in their ability to identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards ELLs. Five respondents rated themselves as less than moderately confident.

Table 29 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 28.

Table 29

Statistical Results for Survey Question 28 (I am able to communicate with parents regarding their child's educational progress.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	5.88%	1.545	1
5	40	11.76%	1.545	2
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.88%	1.545	1
7	60	11.76%	1.545	2
8	70	5.88%	1.545	1
9	80	23.53%	1.545	4
10	90	11.76%	1.545	2
11	Completely Confident 100	23.53%	1.545	4
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.20$

Participants were asked to rate themselves on their ability to communicate with parents regarding their child's educational progress: $p = 0.20$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. There was a wide range of ratings on this indicator. All respondents scored themselves at 30 or above, with 10 of 17 participants scoring themselves at 80 or higher. Four participants scored themselves as completely confident in their ability to communicate with parents regarding their child's educational progress.

Table 30 displays the statistical results for Survey Question 29.

Table 30

Statistical Results for Survey Question 29 (I am able to structure parent-teacher conferences so that the meeting is not intimidating for parents.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	11.76%	1.545	2
5	40	11.76%	1.545	2
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.88%	1.545	1
7	60	0%	1.545	0
8	70	17.65%	1.545	3
9	80	11.76%	1.545	2
10	90	11.76%	1.545	2
11	Completely Confident 100	29.41%	1.545	5
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.09$

Teachers rated their efficacy in being able to structure parent-teacher conferences so the meetings were not intimidating for parents: $p = 0.09$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. Five participants rated themselves in the 30-50 range, showing a lower level of confidence in being able to structure parent conferences for parents who did not speak the same language. The other 12 participants scored themselves at 70 or above on the scale, demonstrating a higher level of confidence, with the mode score being 100 on the scale, completely confident. The mean for this element was 72.9 and the mode was 100.

Table 31 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 30.

Table 31

Statistical Results for Survey Question 30 (I am able to help students to develop positive relationships with their classmates.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	0%	1.545	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	6.25%	1.545	2
7	60	0%	1.545	0
8	70	12.50%	1.545	2
9	80	25%	1.545	4
10	90	18.75%	1.545	3
11	Completely Confident 100	37.50%	1.545	6
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.00$

The majority of the beginning teachers felt a moderately high level of confidence in their ability to help students develop positive relationships with their students: $p = 0.00$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. Thirteen beginning teachers rated themselves at a score of 80 or higher on the scale, with six of 17 participants rating themselves as completely confident. The mean for this question was 84.1. The mode was 100.

Table 32 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 31.

Table 32

Statistical Results for Survey Question 31 (I am able to revise instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	5.88%	1.545	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	23.53%	1.545	4
7	60	11.76%	1.545	2
8	70	23.53%	1.545	4
9	80	11.76%	1.545	2
10	90	0%	1.545	0
11	Completely Confident 100	23.53%	1.545	4
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.03$

Beginning teachers rated their efficacy with being able to revise instructional materials to include a better representation of cultural groups: $p = 0.03$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean for this question was 70.6. The modes are 50, 70, and 100. The distribution of scores on this question was interesting. Four teachers rated themselves at 50, which represents moderately confident; four teachers rated themselves at 70, which represents a higher level of confidence; and four teachers rated themselves as 100, which represents complete confidence in their ability to revise materials to better represent the cultures represented in their classroom.

Table 33 shows the statistical data for Survey Question 32.

Table 33

Statistical Results for Survey Question 32 (I am able to critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	5.88%	1.545	1
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	11.76%	1.545	2
6	Moderately Confident 50	11.76%	1.545	2
7	60	17.65%	1.545	3
8	70	5.88%	1.545	1
9	80	35.29%	1.545	6
10	90	0%	1.545	0
11	Completely Confident 100	11.76%	1.545	2
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.01$

Beginning teachers rated their efficacy on being able to look critically at the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes: $p = 0.01$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. There was a wide range in the responses for this indicator. One teacher scored themselves at 20, which demonstrates a low level of confidence in their ability to recognize curriculum elements that reinforce cultural stereotypes. Two respondents rated themselves at 40, and two rated themselves at 50, moderate and slightly below confidence in their ability. Three participants scored themselves at 60, and one scored themselves at 70, which represents more than moderately confident in their ability. Six participants scored themselves at the mode response of 80, while two participants scored themselves at 100, completely confident. The mean for this question was 66.5. The mode was 80.

Table 34 displays the statistical results for Survey Question 33.

Table 34

Statistical Results for Survey Question 33 (I am able to design a lesson that shows how other cultural groups have made use of mathematics.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	17.65%	1.545	3
2	10	11.76%	1.545	2
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	5.88%	1.545	1
5	40	5.88%	1.545	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	11.76%	1.545	2
7	60	0%	1.545	0
8	70	23.53%	1.545	4
9	80	11.76%	1.545	2
10	90	11.76%	1.545	2
11	Completely Confident 100	0%	1.545	0
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.37$

In this question, beginning teachers rated their efficacy in their ability to design a lesson that shows how other cultural groups have made use of mathematics: $p = 0.37$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. This indicator had some of the lowest responses on the survey overall. The mode for this indicator was 70, but the mean was 47.6. Three teachers scored themselves at 0, which represents they are not at all confident in their efficacy to complete this task. Two participants rated themselves at 10, which continues to show a very low rating of confidence in their efficacy for this indicator. Seven of the 10 total respondents scored themselves below 50, which is considered moderately confident. Two participants scored themselves as moderately confident, and eight participants scored themselves between 70 and 90, representing a higher level of

confidence. There were no responses for completely confident on this indicator.

Table 35 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 34.

Table 35

Statistical Results for Survey Question 34 (I am able to model classroom tasks to enhance ELL's understanding.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	5.88%	1.545	1
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	0%	1.545	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	17.65%	1.545	3
7	60	5.88%	1.545	1
8	70	17.65%	1.545	3
9	80	35.29%	1.545	6
10	90	5.88%	1.545	1
11	Completely Confident 100	11.76%	1.545	2
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.01$

Survey Question 34 asked teachers to rate their efficacy to be able to model tasks in the classroom that would enhance ELL understanding: $p = 0.01$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean score for this indicator was 70.6, which demonstrates the group as a whole was more than moderately confident in their ability to model tasks for ELLs in order to increase their understanding. The mode for this question was 80, which represents a strong level of confidence. One participant selected 10 on this scale, which represents a very low level of confidence. The rest of the participants selected a rating that fell in the moderately confident to completely confident range.

Table 36 displays the statistical results for Survey Question 35.

Table 36

Statistical Results for Survey Question 35 (I am able to communicate with the parents of English Language Learners regarding their child's achievement.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	5.88%	1.545	1
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	5.88%	1.545	1
5	40	0%	1.545	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	29.41%	1.545	5
7	60	0%	1.545	0
8	70	23.53%	1.545	4
9	80	11.76%	1.545	2
10	90	17.65%	1.545	3
11	Completely Confident 100	5.88%	1.545	1
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.03$

Survey Question 35 asked beginning teachers to rate their efficacy with their ability to communicate with the parents of their ELLs about their academic progress: $p = 0.03$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. Responses to this question were lower for the group overall. The mean for this question was 55.9. The mode for this indicator was 50, moderately confident. One participant scored themselves at 10, and another respondent scored themselves at 30, which both represent a low level of confidence. The majority of respondents scored themselves from 70 to 90, which represents a high level of confidence. One teacher rated themselves as completely confident.

Table 37 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 36.

Table 37

Statistical Results for Survey Question 36 (I am able to help students feel like important members of the classroom.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	0%	1.545	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	0%	1.545	0
7	60	5.88%	1.545	1
8	70	5.88%	1.545	1
9	80	5.88%	1.545	1
10	90	23.53%	1.545	4
11	Completely Confident 100	58.82%	1.545	10
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 3.59$

This indicator received some of the highest ratings on the survey: $p = 3.59$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. Beginning teachers overall felt very confident in their ability to help their students feel like important members of the classroom. All respondents scored themselves at 60 or above on the scale, representing above moderately confident. The majority of participants, 10 of 17, rated themselves as completely confident. The mean for this indicator was 92.4, and the mode was 100.

Table 38 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 37.

Table 38

Statistical Results for Survey Question 37 **(**I am able to identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards culturally diverse students.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	5.88%	1.545	1
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	5.88%	1.545	1
5	40	5.88%	1.545	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.88%	1.545	1
7	60	11.76%	1.545	2
8	70	0%	1.545	0
9	80	23.53%	1.545	4
10	90	23.53%	1.545	4
11	Completely Confident 100	17.65%	1.545	3
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.14$

Survey Question 37 asked beginning teachers to rate their efficacy on their ability to identify ways standardized tests might be biased toward culturally diverse students: $p = 0.14$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean for this question was 72.4. The modes for this indicator are 80 and 90. One participant rated themselves at 10, which indicates an extremely low level of confidence. One participant rated themselves at 30, which also represents a lower level of confidence in their ability to identify testing bias. Several participants rated themselves in the mid-range for confidence, with one participant rating themselves at 40, one at 50, and one at 60. Eleven of 17 teachers rated themselves at a high level of confidence in their ability to identify bias in standardized testing.

Table 39 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 38.

Table 39

Statistical Results for Survey Question 38 (I am able to use a learning preference inventory to gather data about how my students like to learn.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	5.88%	1.545	1
3	20	5.88%	1.545	1
4	30	11.76%	1.545	2
5	40	11.76%	1.545	2
6	Moderately Confident 50	17.65%	1.545	3
7	60	11.76%	1.545	2
8	70	11.76%	1.545	2
9	80	5.88%	1.545	1
10	90	11.76%	1.545	2
11	Completely Confident 100	5.88%	1.545	1
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.92$

Beginning teachers were asked to rate the efficacy of their ability to use a learning preference inventory to gather data about how their students like to learn: $p = 0.92$, which is not significant at the 0.05(5%) level. The mean for this indicator was 55.3, and responses were widely spread across the scale. The mode for this indicator was 50. The majority of the ratings for this indicator fell in the middle range of the scale, from 40 to 80. One teacher rated themselves as 10, which represents a low level of confidence. One participant rated themselves at 20, which also represents a low level of confidence. Two participants rated themselves at 30 on the scale, which is also in the lower level of confidence range. Two participants rated themselves at 40, which is below moderately confident. Three teachers rated themselves at 50, or moderately confident. Moderately confident was also the mode for this question. Two people selected 60 as their response.

Two people rated themselves at 70, and one person rated themselves at 80, which represents an increased level of confidence. Two participants rated themselves at 90, and one person selected completely confident as their rating for their ability to use a learning preference inventory to better understand how their students like to learn.

Table 40 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 39.

Table 40

Statistical Results for Survey Question 39 (I am able to use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	5.88%	1.545	1
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	17.65%	1.545	3
6	Moderately Confident 50	11.76%	1.545	2
7	60	5.88%	1.545	1
8	70	17.65%	1.545	3
9	80	23.53%	1.545	4
10	90	11.76%	1.545	2
11	Completely Confident 100	5.88%	1.545	1
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.27$

The teachers were asked to rate their efficacy to be able to use examples from diverse cultural backgrounds that are familiar to their students: $p = 0.27$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. Based on the range of ratings, this was an area where the beginning teacher group overall felt less confident. The mean for this indicator was 65.3. The mode for this element was 80. One participant scored themselves at 20, which demonstrates a low level of confidence. Three respondents selected 40, which represents

a level below moderately confident. Two teachers rated themselves at 50, which is moderately confident. Three respondents rated themselves at 70. Four teachers rated themselves at 80, and two rated themselves at 90, which shows a higher level of confidence in their efficacy with this task. One teacher rated themselves as completely confident.

Table 41 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 40.

Table 41

Statistical Results for Survey Question 40 (I am able to explain new concepts using examples that are taken from my students' everyday lives.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	5.88%	1.545	1
5	40	5.88%	1.545	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	17.65%	1.545	3
7	60	5.88%	1.545	1
8	70	17.65%	1.545	3
9	80	17.65%	1.545	3
10	90	11.76%	1.545	2
11	Completely Confident 100	17.65%	1.545	3
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.37$

Question 40 asked participants to rate their efficacy in their ability to explain new concepts using examples that would be familiar to students because they are taken from their daily life experiences: $p = 0.37$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean for this question was 71.2. The modes for the indicator were 50, 70, 80, and 100. There was a wide range of responses to this question. One teacher rated themselves at 30,

which represents a lower level of confidence. One teacher rated themselves at 40, which also demonstrated a lower level of confidence. Three teachers rated themselves as moderately confident. One teacher rated themselves at 60 on the scale. Three respondents rated themselves at 70, three rated themselves at 80, and two rated themselves at 90, which represented a higher level of confidence. Three teachers rated themselves as completely confident in their ability to use relevant examples to help explain new concepts to students.

Table 42 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 41.

Table 42

Statistical Results for Survey Question 41 (I am able to obtain information regarding my students' academic interests.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	11.76%	1.545	2
5	40	0%	1.545	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	11.76%	1.545	2
7	60	0%	1.545	0
8	70	11.76%	1.545	2
9	80	23.53%	1.545	4
10	90	23.53%	1.545	4
11	Completely Confident 100	17.65%	1.545	3
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.06$

Question 41 asked beginning teachers to rate their efficacy on their ability to obtain information regarding the academic interests of their students: $p = 0.06$, which is not significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. This indicator was rated at a higher level of

confidence for the group of beginning teachers overall. The mean for this question was 75.3. The modes for this question were 80 and 90. Two teachers rated themselves at 30, which represents a lower level of confidence in their abilities. Two teachers rated themselves at 50, or moderately confident in their ability. The remaining 13 respondents rated themselves at 70 or higher, demonstrating a higher level of confidence.

Table 43 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 42.

Table 43

Statistical Results for Survey Question 42 (I am able to use the interests of my students to make learning meaningful for them.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	5.88%	1.545	1
6	Moderately Confident 50	0%	1.545	0
7	60	5.88%	1.545	1
8	70	17.65%	1.545	3
9	80	11.76%	1.545	2
10	90	41.18%	1.545	7
11	Completely Confident 100	17.65%	1.545	3
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.00$

Survey Question 42 asked participants to rate their efficacy in their ability to use students' interests to make learning meaningful: $p = 0.00$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. Overall, the beginning teachers rated this as an area of increased confidence. The mean was 82.4. The mode for this indicator was 90 of 100, which represents a high level of confidence. All participants except one scored themselves above moderately

confident. One participant scored themselves at 40, which is below moderately confident. The chi-square goodness of fit test validated the results from this question.

Table 44 displays the statistical results for Survey Question 43.

Table 44

Statistical Results for Survey Question 43 (I am able to implement cooperative learning activities for those students who like to work in groups.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	0%	1.545	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	11.76%	1.545	2
7	60	5.88%	1.545	1
8	70	17.65%	1.545	3
9	80	5.88%	1.545	1
10	90	29.41%	1.545	5
11	Completely Confident 100	29.41%	1.545	5
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.00$

Survey Question 43 asks teachers to rate their efficacy on their ability to implement cooperative learning activities for students who like to work in groups: $p = 0.00$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The teachers who participated in the survey overall felt confident about their ability to implement cooperative activities. The mean for this indicator was 82.4. The mode was 100. All participants selected moderately confident or above. Ten of 17 participants selected 90 or 100, demonstrating a high level of confidence.

Table 45 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 44.

Table 45

Statistical Results for Survey Question 44 (I am able to design instruction that matches my students' developmental needs.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	5.88%	1.545	1
4	30	0%	1.545	0
5	40	0%	1.545	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	5.88%	1.545	1
7	60	5.88%	1.545	1
8	70	17.65%	1.545	3
9	80	17.65%	1.545	3
10	90	17.65%	1.545	3
11	Completely Confident 100	29.41%	1.545	5
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.04$

Survey Question 44 asked teachers to rate their efficacy with their ability to design instruction that matches their students' developmental needs: $p = 0.04$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. The mean for this indicator was 79.4. The mode for this indicator was 100. Teachers overall rated themselves more confident with their ability to match their instruction to the developmental needs of their students. All the teachers except one rated themselves as above moderately confident on this indicator, with 14 of 17 participants rating themselves at 70 or above.

Table 46 shows the statistical results for Survey Question 45.

Table 46

Statistical Results for Survey Question 45 (I am able to teach students about their cultures' contributions to society.)

#	Answer	%	Expected value [17/11=1.545]	Mode [observed value]
1	Not At All 0	0%	1.545	0
2	10	0%	1.545	0
3	20	0%	1.545	0
4	30	23.53%	1.545	4
5	40	0%	1.545	0
6	Moderately Confident 50	11.76%	1.545	2
7	60	23.53%	1.545	4
8	70	5.88%	1.545	1
9	80	17.65%	1.545	3
10	90	17.65%	1.545	3
11	Completely Confident 100	0%	1.545	0
	Total	100%	17	17

$p = 0.04$

Survey Question 45 asked teachers to rate their efficacy in their ability to teach students about their cultures' contributions to society: $p = 0.04$, which is significant at the 0.05 (5%) level. Teacher efficacy overall was lower on this indicator. The mean for the indicator was 61.2. The modes were 30 and 60. Four participants rated themselves at 30 of 100, which represents a low level of confidence. Four participants rated themselves at 60 on the 100-point scale, which demonstrates more than moderately confident.

A chi-square goodness of fit test was performed on each question for the CRTSES to test validity. The p was calculated to determine the probability of reliability of answers. The results from 18 of 40 indicators were not deemed significant. The chi-square goodness of fit test can be impacted by a large range of choices and a small number of participants. The CRTSES has 40 indicators and an 11-point Likert scale to

measure responses. There were only 18 participants in the survey. With the large range of answers, the significance was affected.

Open-Ended Question 1

The first open-ended question from the anonymous survey also provided insight into beginning teachers' efficacy when working with ELLs in their classroom. Open-Ended Question 1 from the anonymous survey asked participants to, "Describe your readiness or comfort level to effectively teach English Language Learners (ELLs) in your classroom. Why do you feel ready or why do you feel not ready to teach ELLs?" Responses to this question were analyzed and common themes emerged: communication barriers, instructional support strategies, and making connections.

Communication Barriers. A large number of responses from beginning teachers revolved around language differences as a barrier to their confidence in their ability to work with ELLs and families. One participant stated, "I am not comfortable because I am not fluent in Spanish." Another teacher responded, "I can make my students feel comfortable, but I am not prepared to talk with families who do not speak English." Another teacher responded, "I feel kind of ready to teach ELLs. I know of some strategies, but I cannot speak another language and sometimes it's hard to connect learning to students." Another teacher stated, "I would like to learn how to better communicate in their native language."

One teacher indicated a higher level of confidence, citing her ability to speak Spanish and prior experience with different cultures as an influential factor in their readiness to teach ELLs. The teacher wrote, "Growing up I got involved in different cultures and took courses to help me understand others better. My boyfriend is Hispanic,

and my best friend is Hmong. They have both taught me a lot about their culture and language."

Instructional Support Strategies. Some teachers cited familiarity with specific instructional strategies for ELLs as a positive influence over their perception of their ability to successfully work with ELLs in their classrooms. One teacher wrote, "My college courses prepared me for different strategies to help ELLs within the classroom." Another participant shared,

> The main stumbling block we run into is vocabulary and ensuring they understand what the terms are we are using. In second grade it is common to be explaining the terms to the whole group. It is also useful to show them pictures and make connections.

Another participant shared, "I feel kind of ready to teach ELLs. I have been given my students' modifications and accommodations." Another shared, "I feel ready to teach and connect with ELLs in my classroom. My college courses prepared me for different strategies to help ELLs within the classroom." Another teacher responded,

> I feel more than prepared to teach ELLs. I've been through a teaching program, I'm excited to teach, I'm passionate to reach every student's needs, I've also studied the language most ELs in my class speak at a college level.

Teachers also cited specific instructional struggles they faced within the classroom with their ELLs. One teacher said,

> The readiness varies from day to day. The part that makes me feel unprepared to teach my ELLs is based on the time frame given to teach the curriculum versus how fast or slow my ELLs grasp the concepts.

Making Connections. The teachers also cited their ability to help build positive relationships and create a positive classroom experience for their students when determining their readiness to work with their ELLs. One teacher responded, “I feel ready just because I feel that I make them feel a part of the classroom community no matter what cultural background they have.” One teacher stated, “I feel I can motivate and bond with my students in order to get them to learn instead of feel frustrated in class.” Another teacher wrote,

> I feel particularly ready this year because I have one ELL who is a hard worker and is on grade level; one of the brightest kids in my class. I feel ready to teach and connect with ELLs in my classroom.

Focus Group Question 1: Describe How Prepared You Feel to Teach Students in Your Classroom Who Are Culturally and Linguistically Different From You.

For the first focus group question, participants shared a variety of responses regarding their preparedness to work with ELLs in their classrooms. The following themes emerged: college training, Spanish only, and success feeds success.

College Training. P1 shared,

> I feel pretty prepared, even though you know I [haven’t]been teaching that long. I know that in our district that there’s a large Hispanic population. There’s other populations too like Hmong students and some Arab students in younger grades, but for the most part, it’s Hispanic. When I was in college, I had a class about integrating. It was kind of like equitable grading and stuff like that. So I had a class that was kind of focused on teaching ELLs, and I actually really like Spanish

> and I took Spanish in college so I didn't feel intimidated to teach students I may have.

P7 shared, "I was prepared more through college than I was as far as becoming a beginning teacher. There's not a whole lot out there to help you help them."

Spanish Only. Many of the teachers responded that they felt more prepared to work with ELLs who spoke Spanish because the majority of their training had been focused on how to support Spanish-speaking ELLs. One brand new teacher (P6) shared,

> I just graduated in December and I feel like they well prepared us for some of the more common languages and cultures, you would see. But I have a little boy from South Africa, and it's a whole other world. It's very, very different than what they engrained in our heads for the past 4 years so I would say, like on that basis some of your more common, like Hispanic and stuff like that. I would feel more comfortable with (those students) versus what I'm with right now.

Another teacher (P3) said, "They do prepare you for mostly Spanish speaking. I had a student come in last year from Cambodia and it was hard. He could speak English, but it wasn't a lot. That was different and challenging for sure." P4 shared,

> We get a lot of children that speak Marshallese, and there's only one interpreter in the state. You can't Google translate it. You can't do anything. It could be a real struggle communicating with their parents and communicating with them and making sure that they really understand because they have like their body language is telling you yeah, I got this. And then when you see an actual product, you're like, oh, maybe not. So, I can agree with that. I think that there's a lot of emphasis on primarily Spanish-speaking ELLs or a multilingual student. It would

> probably behoove everybody to have some strategies in their pocket for every language.

Another teacher (P5) stated,

> I agree, most of my students are Hispanic. So it is geared towards Spanish, but there are some students in our school that are not there. We have one that's Marshallese and I know when he first came. My co-worker had a really hard time, just because she can't do a lot with them. When you don't have as many resources like even in our HMH [Houghton Mifflin Harcourt] manuals, it tells us all kinds of things we can do. However, it's all geared towards Spanish learners.

Success Feeds Success. All the focus group participants in one district use Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) as their core reading program. Several teachers stated the support provided through the designated supports embedded into their core program helped them feel more confident in meeting the needs of their learners. One teacher (P7) stated,

> I have started to do the HMH mini ELL lessons through HMH: and at first that was really challenging for me to get [be]ause they're very short. At first it was hard for them to just understand what I was trying to teach them with the lesson, but today it went a lot better. So I'm wondering if over time it just gets easier if they're starting to make that connection. I don't know today's when I finally started to see improvement that was encouraging.

Another teacher (P3) shared that HMH paired with prior experience with WIDA testing helped support a sense of preparedness. P3 stated,

> That's something that I struggled with last year because I had a student that just moved from the Philippines, and she spoke beautifully. She read beautifully, but you could tell that there was a little mix-up until you got her reading comprehension back. I had WIDA testing one time, so I had to go through training so I understood that I needed to focus on the speaking and listening. And then, when you had those conversations like HMH tells you to do, you pick up on the little things they do, and because you can correct small things in those conversations, they know to apply it when they use it in strategies or in a test. And so I think that what you're doing is really practical and really good. I've seen that work.

Focus Group Question 2: How Much Do You Know About the Cultural Background of Your ELLs? (Examples: language spoken at home, cultural background).

In trying to understand how prepared teachers feel to work with students who are linguistically and culturally different, it was important to ascertain how much participants know about their students' cultural backgrounds. The second focus group question asked teachers to share their knowledge of their students' backgrounds. The following themes emerged: celebrations, making connections, curriculum connections, and frustrations**.**

Celebrations. Teachers spoke of learning about culture through listening to students share information. P4 stated,

> I know a lot about their holidays and stuff like that. They'll share things like that with us, so we'll know about that, and how they celebrate and do things, and then we know what language their parents and siblings speak.

Another teacher (P1) shared the importance of learning the specific country of heritage for their students as a way to connect culturally, stating,

> Well, I teach older students, and they're frequently the translators of the parents, but also I eat lunch with my students, so I know, like who their families are. Like what countries of origin their families are from; how the kids from Mexico are very proud to be Mexican, but the kids from Honduras are very proud of it. They won't say they're like Latino, for example, that they are or aren't Latino and stuff like that. So they're really proud of their backgrounds.

One teacher (P4) shared her practice of allowing students to share their culture through fairytales and folktales. P4 said,

> Last year, at the end of the year we were going through folk tales. I had students that were from different cultures so I gave them extra credit if they brought in a cultural fairy tale when we went over fairy tales and folklore, and they could share their own folktales, and the parents really had a good time with it, especially because I had 3 families that were from the Philippines, and they sent in food for everybody to try, and they really, really got into it, and (the kids) were excited that the moms were excited about it too. Making those connections really did help.

Making Connections. Teachers also shared that they were better able to know and support the cultural backgrounds of their students by connecting with their students. P3 said,

> With my students, there's a lot of dialect and they come from mostly Guatemala so I am able to kind of connect that to their culture, especially when I'm teaching

> words like vocabulary words. But I didn't know that at first it took time and speaking even with our parent educator. She really helped us kind of know how to help our students.

P7 said,

> I have an ELL student who is very bright and she speaks pretty good English. She has also helped me this year with words that are in Spanish, or any type of traditions, or anything that we've talked about. She's helped bring in her culture in my classroom just by listening to what she says. She has helped my kids get excited to hear from her talk about it, and things like that.

P5 shared the importance of listening as students shared their culture.

> I think just talking to your students if you can communicate. My kids love telling me about, Oh, Guatemala this, Guatemala that. Most of them speak English now, but even the ones that speak broken English are able to tell me parts of their culture, and just talking to them at lunch or whenever, recess. They love to tell me about what they do.

Curriculum Connections. Several teachers shared how the curriculum resources, like their HMH core reading program and Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling Training (LETRS), have helped them gain a better understanding of cultural backgrounds and how to help support their students. One teacher (P7) shared, "I think honestly, HMH helps a lot with bringing in different cultural ideas and perspectives because they have a lot of literature available, and they have us teach it about different perspectives around the world." Another participant (P4) shared strategies learned

through LETRS training as beneficial to helping her better understand her students' backgrounds and making connections:

> LETRS also recommended 60-second conversations or something. And I did apply those with my student this year, and that really was beneficial just talking with them on the playground. That was beneficial, because I learned about his favorites and the things that interest him, and when I ask questions to make sure he's engaged in class. I reference [things]. He loves McDonald's and I'm like, okay in math. Okay, we've got one happy deal. It's got 4 pieces of nuggets. What happens when we add this too? He'll laugh at me, but I mean I understand that he's engaged, and he's getting it, and you're Bringing it as common interest. But I wouldn't have been able to do that without those like 60-second conversations or I just call in my desk while I'm working on something else and talk to him. What will you do this weekend? What are you excited about? Oh, was that your favorite place? Stuff like that, and it also lets me listen to him to see, like things that I might need to work on or maybe just like, correct it in the conversation that we can come back to that later. And I know when I ask you questions, I can incorporate the same thing to see if he's applying it. It's just little things like that can be really quick, and it's not even anything that's written down. But you know that you can apply it again, and it doesn't really take a lot out of your day.

Frustrations. Other teachers shared frustrations. P6 shared,

> I would say it's something I'm struggling with because it's hard to even talk to him. Some things are linked in English, but I know that's not what they're speaking at home. Parents won't connect to Dojo parents. [The student] came in

> right after Christmas break. So, it has been a very big transition period and it's been a transition period for the other kids in the class, because it doesn't even sound like that different of a language. The other kids will tell him (to) use English and I'm like he has a different language. That is okay. So, it's been an adjustment to adjust the whole class to as well as trying to meet his needs.

P7 shared,

> I struggle with this a lot. I struggle just with fitting everything into the schedule that I already need to teach all of the kids. And then, plus I'm trying to but I just fall short in this figuring out how to bring culture and different things into the classroom. I feel like I have been taught it in college, but in terms of just applying it in real life is hard for me. I am grateful for the HMH because they do bring them into different stories. So that does help. But that's like all I really have, and I would like to do more. I know I have books and stuff I could. I struggle with the time like finding the time to do all of it.

Research Question 2: What Type of Professional Development or Preparation Has Been Provided to Beginning Teachers to Effectively Meet the Needs of Diverse Learners Both Before and After Entering the Classroom?

Data from Open-Ended Survey Question 2 and Focus Group Questions 4, 5, and 12 were collected to address the second research question concerning what type of professional development had been provided to beginning teachers to effectively meet the needs of their ELLs.

Open-Ended Survey Question 2

Open-Ended Survey Question 2 from the anonymous survey asked participants to

"Describe training or professional development you have received specifically designed to help you support English language learners in your classroom." Responses to this question were analyzed, and common themes emerged: college preparation, in-service training, and ELL teacher support.

College Preparation. Some of the beginning teachers cited their preservice programs as useful to their preparation to work with ELLs. One teacher responded, "My college courses included a course on how to support ELLs within the classroom." Another teacher said they took "one college class during [their] teacher program on equitable grading and WIDA standards." One teacher stated, "I have had two classes learning about emergent bilinguals and how their cultures are different, but I struggled to get specific examples." Another wrote, "I took one class in college about working with ELLs and I barely remember anything."

In-Service Training. Other teachers answered that they had received training to work with ELLs since entering the classroom. One participant stated, "I have received several PD trainings on how I can better my instruction in all content areas for ELLs." Another participant added, "I attended an ELL session at one of the Beginning Teacher conferences." One teacher cited the LETRS training, which is required by all elementary teachers in North Carolina, as helpful in professional development that could be applied to teaching ELLs. The teacher wrote, "LETRS is a professional development program that is intended to help me develop skills I need to become more knowledgeable in providing reading instruction [i.e., phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and language] or my students."

Other participants responded that they had received limited training on working

with ELLs since they began teaching. One participant responded, “I have not had any specific professional development related to [teaching ELLs].” Another stated, “Other than the training at the beginning of the year, I have received no specific professional development on how to support ELLs in my classroom.”

Some teachers cited receiving both training in college and in-service training since entering the classroom. One teacher said, “I have taken courses in college as well as a professional development that helped me recognize strategies that help EL learners.” Another stated, “I received training through my degree and the numerous internships on teaching and places I have taught since college.” Another added, “I have had WIDA training in college and they give us training each year at school.”

ELL Teacher Support. Beginning teachers also shared that the professional support provided by the ELL teacher had helped them meet the needs of their ELLs. One teacher wrote, “I also have help if needed from the ELL teacher at school when I have questions.” Another shared, “The ELL teacher is also good about working with my students on things I talk with them about.” One participant said, “I have met with our ELL teacher regarding different teaching strategies that would be useful in the classroom based on my students’ language abilities.” Another stated, “Our ESL teacher is always willing to offer advice.”

Focus Group Question 4

Focus Group Question 4 asked teachers to “Describe the training or preparation you received since you entered your position as a classroom teacher to meet the needs of English language learners.” Themes were identified: lack of training and SIOP.

Lack of Training. The majority of responses from teachers centered around a

lack of training or professional development since entering the classroom. One participant (P2) shared, “I haven’t had anything here for beginner teachers [regarding ELLs].” Another teacher in her first year shared that she had received no training to work with ELLs since starting in the classroom. P5 said, “I haven’t received any other kind of training [except from college].” P6 concurred that she had not had any training since college:

> Same here. And I know, like coming in mid-year it’s been a whole other hectic thing. But I don’t even know the name of my EL person. I know her face and I’ve seen her in passing, but I’ve never like had a conversation.

SIOP. One teacher (P3) stated that she had received some SIOP training, which is specially designed to support students learning language on Saturdays during her first year. She shared,

> There was a training through the district that we did from the ELL department just for strategies to help them. My school is very heavy into PD when it comes to English language learners, because we have so many. It was two days. I remember that it was two Saturdays that I went. I haven’t received any official training except for when I was a teaching assistant.

P3 later shared that the 2-day training was not sufficient to meet her needs as a classroom teacher. When asked what would have been more beneficial, she responded, “I think not necessarily a bunch of Saturdays but more spaced out, because everything did feel kind of rushed. I would have benefitted more from a slower pace.”

Focus Group Question 5

Focus Group Question 5 asked participants to “Describe training or experiences

that you have found beneficial to you as a teacher when working with English language learners." Themes were identified from the teacher responses: LETRS, benefits of modeling, and lack of training.

LETRS. The majority of the teachers in the focus group cited receiving very little training to work with ELLs. All of the first-year teaching participants reiterated no training had been provided specific to ELL instruction. P4 mentioned LETRS training as the primary source of training to work with ELLs by saying, "I've had LETRS training but that's really all." The teachers found the LETRS training beneficial because it helped them better understand how to teach reading to students. They said that gaining a better understanding of the early skills that are necessary to teach reading was useful in their work with their ELLs as well.

Benefits of Modeling. Several teachers also shared the benefits of someone more experienced modeling instruction with ELLs. P3 shared,

> I think, having the ELL teachers push into my classroom has been very beneficial because they're able to give me better strategies and build on what I'm already doing to help the students get to where they need to be. I think honestly, that's better than any training that I could get just to see it in action the way it's supposed to be done. She comes in, and she will work with them on things, and I mean I plan it. But I see the way she implements it and there's times where I'm reading a story, and she has more knowledge about the culture and the background, and how to apply what I know like what we're reading to their culture, and it just kind of helps me as a teacher see how to make those connections.

P5 agreed: “We’re just like our students. We need modeling.” P5 also shared,

> I think just experience has been the most beneficial to me at this point in learning how to teach them. All of this experience I’m getting and from what I do when I ask other teachers and stuff their advice, that’s been the most helpful so far for me with teaching them.

Focus Group Question 12

Focus Group Question 12 asked participants, “What experiences or training has impacted your perceptions of your ability to meet the cultural needs of your students?” Responses were analyzed, and themes were identified: lack of training and lack of emphasis.

Lack of Training. The majority of teachers in the focus group shared that they had not received any training in regard to supporting the cultural needs of students. One teacher, P2, was a first-year teacher. The second, P7, had less than 2 years of experience.

Lack of Emphasis. One participant, P3, shared a lack of intentional focus on the cultural needs of the students. P3 stated, “I don’t know that we’re really trying to meet the cultural needs. I think that’s something that just kind of comes with time.” P7 shared her perceptions by saying, “I think that comes with building relationships and learning your students’ culture and their family.” Another teacher, P4, said that the core reading program, HMH, helped to support cultural needs within her classroom. P4 continued, “We’re prompted with HMH for a lot of [cultural] discussions and opportunities because of the literature that we provide in teacher-directed reading.”

Research Question 3: What Professional Development or Experiences Would Be Perceived as Beneficial to Increase Teacher Efficacy When Working With ELLs in the Mainstream Classroom?

Open-Ended Question 3

Open-Ended Question 3 aligned with Research Question 3 by providing insight into specific professional development or experiences the teachers thought would increase teacher efficacy when working with their ELLs. Open-Ended Question 3 asked participants to "Describe experiences or training you have found most beneficial to you with supporting success with English language learners in your classroom." Responses to this question were analyzed, and common themes emerged: preservice preparation programs, experiences working with ELLs, colleagues and mentor support, and successful classroom strategies.

Preservice Preparation Programs. The beginning teachers shared that they received training during their preservice programs that helped them feel more comfortable working with their ELLs. One teacher stated, "Equitable grading made the biggest impact on my understanding of ELLs in my classroom." Another teacher said that their preparation program was beneficial to them being able to support their ELLs both instructionally and culturally:

> College is what prepared me for this, no professional training. I know what to consider when I grade, I know that students have different ability levels in speaking, listening, hearing, and writing, as well as I know how to incorporate visual cues and other aids to supplement my instruction. Learning that all

> differences should be highlighted in a positive way to help the class as a whole to learn and grow together.

Experiences Working With ELLs. Several teachers cited their on-the-job experience working with ELLs as a beneficial experience supporting their future success with ELLs in their classrooms. One teacher shared, “I think that the most beneficial thing is just experience and working with ELLs and their families.”

Colleagues and Mentor Support. Teachers also cited that having a colleague, mentor, or trained person like an ELL teacher to help them support learning for their students was beneficial. One teacher shared, “I think the most helpful thing is having an ESL teacher on campus who is willing to help or give resources that she has.” Another teacher shared, “I learn from others, so my coworkers and mentor have played a crucial part in my success and adapting their needs in my classroom.”

Successful Classroom Strategies. Many teachers listed specific strategies that they were using in the classroom with their ELLs as beneficial. Two teachers mentioned the benefit of focusing on specific reading strategies like vocabulary as beneficial to the success of their ELLs. One teacher said being “focused on vocabulary and comprehension” helped them feel successful with their students. Another participant said,

> I think the things that have been most beneficial is making sure I focus on understanding and being responsive to their receptiveness to the vocabulary we are covering. In small groups, I will often cover move vocabulary and ask more comprehension questions to make sure they understand.

One participant cited LETRS training as beneficial in supporting their ELLs:

> LETRS helped me to understand how English and non-English-speaking

children's brain processes the learning content I am teaching them. This allows me to retrieve a different perspective on how to teach my students so that they can become better readers.

Several teachers shared specific instructional strategies they found successful in supporting their students were using hands-on activities and materials and integrating picture supports. Two respondents specifically mentioned hands-on learning in their responses: the first one saying, "I think hands-on learning has been the most beneficial"; and the second participant saying, "Hands-on learning is beneficial for ELLs, as it enables them to engage more directly with the material." Another teacher shared that "using models and pictures" had been beneficial.

Focus Group Question 6

Focus Group Question 6 asked participants, "What experiences or training have had a positive impact on your perceptions of your ability to meet the academic needs of your ELLs? How has that impacted your perception of your ability to meet their academic needs?" Responses were coded, and themes were identified: LETRS and support through the core reading program.

LETRS. Participants identified LETRS training as a training that had a positive impact on their perception of their ability to support their ELLs academically. P4 shared, "I think the letters training we've received this year. The section where it talked about like how to interpret certain spelling issues, and from a different dialect and stuff. I feel like that was really helpful." P3 cited specific activities in LETRS training where teachers were asked to participate in a simulation of what it would be like to be in a classroom where students did not understand the language. P3 cited the experience's

positive impact on her by saying,

> LETRS training got us into (what it is like for) our students who do have English as a second language. I think that really helped us get into where they're coming from, because we know what it's like trying to figure out how to read in different languages.

Support Through the Core Reading Program. Many of the teachers who participated in the survey use the same core reading program produced by HMH. In the focus group discussions, the teachers spoke of support resources that are embedded in the program as a beneficial support for them to help address the academic needs of their students. P4 said, "What HMH offers is also really helpful. And I think, as you implement it with what tools that you have, you kind of learn more and more yourself too." P7 agreed by saying, "I think LETRS and HMH has helped me the most."

Focus Group Question 7

Focus Group Question 7 asked participants to identify "What experiences or training have had a negative impact on your perceptions of your ability to meet the academic needs of your ELLs? How has that impacted your perception of your ability to meet their academic needs?" Responses were analyzed, and themes were coded: feelings of inadequacy and difficulty with participation and grading.

Feelings of Inadequacy. Teachers shared feelings of frustration and inadequacy when trying to make an impact on their students. P4 said,

> I think, as reflective practitioners. You learn from every experience but that doesn't stop you from kind of beating yourself up when you're like. Oh, I wish I could get this. I wish I could do this, or you get something back that you really

> thought they understood it, and then they didn't and I think that it's hard not to be hard on yourself and how to figure out where to go from there.

P7 shared frustration,

> I think that it does make it harder to build those relationships with them, and also even despite, all the efforts it is sometimes hard to meet their needs in the classroom that they have as the just, the classroom teacher that only teaches English.

P6 concurred by saying,

> Yeah, we are ourselves biggest critics and it's really hard to like not beat yourself up. You want to get to that point and to I feel like I'm trying everything I know, and it's not working. That does cause frustration on our end, and it's hard to say, Okay, I know I'm frustrated, but what else can I do? What's the next step?

Difficulty With Participation and Grading. P1 shared that grouping or partnering students with someone who shares their language has been necessary to communicate but has also been problematic when students get off task easily.

> It makes it harder to teach when my students who are ESL are also the ones harassing each other. It's tough to separate them. So they can collaborate, for example, learning English, so we can translate what he needs to help me out, but when they're harassing each other they have to separate them. It doesn't work anywhere.

P5 cited a sense of frustration in accurately representing what students know when grading. The teacher shared,

> When I'm grading, it's hard to find a way that feels fair for students. They are

> reading compared to the students who are just learning English. It's really hard to grade in fifth grade. I feel like if I grade everyone the same, it's not going to work. So I would like them more specific way, maybe through what is it or with these specific standards as opposed to everyone, needs to write 5 sentences, and that needs to have capitalization.

Suggestions to Build Efficacy

Because many of the participants shared that they had received no formal training since college to work with ELLs, I asked them what they would like to see that would benefit them to feel more prepared. The responses were analyzed, and themes were identified: ongoing professional development, modeling instruction, and peer observation.

Ongoing Professional Development. Teachers shared a desire to receive ongoing training and communication to help them support their students. P6 shared that she would benefit from

> professional development through like resources in newsletters, whether it be like, you know, just monthly some tools that could help you, ways to reach out just like closing the communication. That way giving you a constant resource and providing like PD on it even like every quarter. Or you know personally like I wouldn't mind staying an hour after school just to if that means that I can better meet the needs of my students.

Modeling Instruction. Teachers also shared a desire to observe effective ELL instruction in action. One teacher suggested modeling from the ELL teacher as a way to increase her awareness of how to help support her students in her classroom. P7 shared,

> I think it would be neat, and maybe other schools do this. I know that we have ELL kids that are pulled for like a small group. It would be really cool if they could do it like EC where they have a small group resource time, and then inclusion in the classroom, so that we can see how those ELL teachers interact with our kids. Because I'm going to be honest. I don't know what my ELL teacher does with my student. Yeah, I really don't.
>
> EC teachers have like tools, and they have more training they've taken I assume and I'm sure ELL teachers are the same way They've just had more. I mean that's what they work with all the time versus a classroom full of all different types of children. They work with ELL specifically so I feel like, either from experience or training, whatever they may have had I feel like is more extensive than just me as a classroom teacher.

Peer Observation. Several teachers shared the perceived benefits of them observing other teachers in the building working with ELLs. P4 shared,

> Well, that would be something even like when we do [learning] walks. Observe other areas. Maybe, that's something that administration could look into, maybe observing, or like having some sort of a situation where we can watch what they do so that we would gain some understanding and be able to model that ourselves. I think that's a great idea.

P6 added,

> I think it's a visual tool for us as teachers to be able to see it in practice. I learned that way, I am a do as I see type of person and to be able to take those tools and to see what works with that individual child. So just to see how all that goes into

play and what works with our individual students in the classroom, I think, would be beneficial.

Research Question 4: What Techniques Are Beginning Teachers Putting in Place Within Their Classrooms to Support Language and Academic Learning for ELLs Within the Regular Education Setting?

Focus Group Question 11

Focus Group Question 11 was aligned to support Research Question 4. Focus group participants were asked to "Describe specific instructional strategies you utilize in your classroom instruction to meet the academic needs of your students. Data were analyzed, and themes were identified: use of visuals, making connections, sentence supports, and peer exchange.

Use of Visuals. Several of the beginning teachers shared their use of visual aids as a way they provided instructional support to their students learning language. P2 shared, "With kindergarten, we're pretty picture oriented with the work that we do. So we have a lot of pictures to help them." P7 responded, "I have a smart TV, and I always have pictures pulled up of the things I really want to focus on." P3 stated that she used, "visuals specifically. Visuals like vocabulary showing something. I keep eight [picture vocabulary] slides every week for [core reading] and then I also have the vocabulary cards set up in my classroom." P7 added to the benefit of using picture supports by saying,

> This summer I taught summer school and my partner that was with me had an ELL that doesn't know much English at all, and so [by using] visuals he was able to point and tell. By having a picture versus just seeing a word. Visuals are great

in that.

P6 shared that she integrates visual aids to help support classroom instructional routines. P6 said,

> Especially in the younger grades I have visuals for everything we do. I have visuals like when they come in the morning. There (are) visuals on the board of taking out (their) bookbag. You should be at your desk, and you should have your computer on it, or there's a picture of them eating their breakfast. There's a picture of the restroom. (Everything is) in sequential order. Because, if I say, do this first. They may not understand. They may. That's where that comprehension falls in. I saw a lot of things falling through the gaps (but) providing visuals has really provided a big closure in that (in my) classroom.

Making Connections. One of the beginning teachers in the focus group shared the importance of helping students make connections from their personal experiences to the curriculum material that is being covered. P3 said,

> If I can relate it back to their culture, like we just read Soccer Shoot Out, that was the best thing for my students ever because they just connected with it, and they were really into it. I think that's the best they've done on anything this whole year. We were able to teach them something that they connected (so well) with.

Sentence Supports. The teachers shared strategies they are using to support ELLs with writing. P6 shared the use of sentence frames to encourage writing with her ELLs. She stated, "I have sentence frames and guided notes." She also spoke about the benefit of grouping students in a way that they could support each other: "That's what I use and obviously sitting students beside each other who can help like explain something they

need to."

Peer Exchange. P5 shared that she used collaborative pairing to support increased dialogue with her ELLs. She said, "I use, turn and talk a lot as well to kind help them." Turn and talk allows her students an opportunity to share information and ask questions about what they are learning in the classroom together. Another teacher added the academic benefits of having students work together in small groups. P4 said,

> I think [using] small groups, [and] relating to other kids when they do small group work [is beneficial]. Being in small groups like that helps them to observe and then to speak and listen with other students. They absorb it so quickly. I think we all probably use small group work as well.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the qualitative and quantitative data collected in the study aligned with the four research questions. The data were gathered and analyzed to help better understand beginning teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs along with the training they have received to support ELLs in their classrooms. Chapter 5 helps connect the study findings to the current body of literature discussed and provides suggestions for using the study in the field of education.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Purpose

The number of students identified as ELLs in the U.S. continues to rise. According to Shevchuk (2018), ELLs are anticipated to make up 40% of the K-12 student population by 2030. As the number of ELLs continues to increase, so does the challenge for beginning teachers to meet the cultural and linguistic demands of their diverse students. Without adequate training, beginning teachers may not have the skills to meet the academic, linguistic, and cultural needs of their students. This study was designed to gain a better understanding of beginning teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs. The study also sought to understand what support beginning teachers have been provided to feel more equipped to work with ELLs in their mainstream classrooms and what training they would like to receive in order to feel more prepared. This chapter explores the data collected and how they relate to the critical job of building administrators and school districts in supporting the needs of beginning teachers working with ELLs.

Four research questions guided this study.

1. What are the self-perceptions of mainstream beginning teachers concerning their readiness to effectively teach ELLs?
2. What type of professional development or preparation has been provided to beginning teachers to effectively meet the needs of diverse learners both before and after entering the classroom?
3. What professional development or experiences would be perceived as beneficial to increase teacher efficacy when working with ELLs in the mainstream classroom?

4. What techniques are beginning teachers putting in place within their classrooms to support language and academic learning for ELLs within the regular education setting?

The study queried beginning teachers in the first 4 years of teaching from two neighboring districts. Data were comprised of self-efficacy ratings on the CRTSES, open-ended questions, and focus group interviews. The findings from this research could be used to inform districts of how best to support beginning teachers working with ELLs in mainstream classrooms by guiding the selection of professional development opportunities provided to beginning teachers and determining how that professional development is implemented. The results of the study will be added to the body of research surrounding beginning teacher self-efficacy when working with ELLs. The study results were analyzed by research question using a lens of social learning theory.

Findings

Research Question 1: What Are the Self-Perceptions of Mainstream Beginning Teachers Concerning Their Readiness to Effectively Teach ELLs?

Research Question 1 was focused on understanding the self-perceptions of beginning teachers and their level of preparedness to work with ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. Bandura (1994) studied self-efficacy and how a person's actions are affected by their perceptions of their ability to accomplish something. Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, (2007) also studied self-efficacy as it relates to teachers. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy concluded that teacher self-efficacy is context-based and subject-based. Teachers may have an increased sense of self-efficacy when working with specific subjects, grade levels, or groups of students (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Data to support Research Question 1 was comprised of self-efficacy ratings on the CRTSES, open-ended questions, and focus group interviews. Combined results show trends in areas where teachers rated themselves more confident and areas where teachers need additional support to feel prepared: preservice preparation, positive relationships, and cultural awareness.

Preservice Preparation. The results from the study show that beginning teachers are receiving some preparation in their preservice teacher preparation programs to work with ELLs. The teachers were able to provide some specific examples of differentiation and training they had received to support their work with ELLs from college. Beginning teachers felt more confident in their preparedness to work with Spanish-speaking ELLs since the majority of their college coursework was geared toward working with Spanish-speaking students. The teachers were also more familiar with cultural celebrations and language connections with their Spanish-speaking students.

Positive Relationships. Study results show that beginning teachers value their students regardless of their language. Teachers rated themselves high on their level of confidence in their ability to develop positive relationships with their students and help them feel like important members of the classroom community. Teacher ratings on the CRTSES survey reflect increased levels of confidence in their ability to build positive relationships with their students and help them feel connected to the classroom family. The teachers shared a desire for students to be successful and feel like they were included in the mainstream classroom environment.

The teachers felt positive about their ability to form close relationships and their ability to get to know their students regardless of the language they speak at home.

Research shows that when teachers have some prior experience with ELLs, whether through direct experience or coursework, they tend to display more positive attitudes and behaviors toward their ELLs (Capella-Santana, 2003; Duarte & Reed, 2004). Some of the teachers in the study shared that they had received some training during their college preparation programs to work with their students who are culturally and linguistically diverse. Teachers expressed high levels of confidence in their ability to group students based on student preferences. Teachers also felt higher levels of confidence in being able to design their instruction to meet the developmental needs of their students and connect to their students' interests. Teachers also exhibited a higher level of confidence in their ability to create meaningful, engaging classroom lessons that match the academic needs of their students based on data.

Cultural Awareness. The teachers expressed a desire to create positive connections with their students and cited frustration from a lack of communication due to language differences. Many of the teachers in the study expressed frustration over their inability to communicate directly with students and parents. The teachers in the study also exhibited a lack of awareness of the contributions of cultures other than their own and a low sense of efficacy in their ability to celebrate or communicate with their students on cultural aspects from their perspective.

Teachers cited frustration and a lack of preparedness to be able to utilize the students' native language or cultural contributions in the classroom setting. Prior research shows that the majority of teachers are Caucasian, middle-class, English speakers who often lack experience with others who are linguistically and culturally diverse. Research shows teachers need explicit professional development in cultural awareness so they will

have a better idea of how to embrace and celebrate cultural differences within their classrooms (Feliz, 2018; Samuels, 2018). The elements rated at the lowest level on the CRTSES were connected to the teachers' perceived abilities to integrate cultural elements into their classroom instruction. Teachers were unfamiliar with how to integrate other cultures into academic areas like math or use examples that would be more familiar to students of different cultural backgrounds.

Teachers did not feel comfortable integrating the students' language and culture into classroom practices and instruction. Anthony (2017) found that 70% of teachers felt unprepared to teach students who were culturally and linguistically different from themselves without formal training. Ladson-Billings (2005), the seminal researcher on culturally responsive pedagogy, encouraged teaching practices that would help maintain the cultural identity of the student within a mainstream school culture when the mainstream culture is much different from their own. The survey results show culturally responsive teaching strategies as the largest area of deficit for beginning teachers when working with ELLs. The teachers who had prior experiences working with other cultures and languages expressed an increased sense of efficacy in working with ELLs.

The teachers also shared frustration at a lack of resources designed for ELLs who speak languages other than Spanish. The teachers shared that they have students from other cultures represented in their classroom, like Marshallese, Hmong, Cambodian, and Philippine. The resources provided to the teachers to support ELLs were helpful, but they were limited to Spanish-speaking ELLs.

Research Question 2: What Type of Professional Development or Preparation Has Been Provided to Beginning Teachers to Effectively Meet the Needs of Diverse Learners Both Before and After Entering the Classroom?

Research Question 2 was centered around the professional development that had been provided to teachers to effectively meet the language, academic, and cultural needs of their ELLs. Many of the teacher participants cited some preservice training through their teacher preparation program but an overall lack of training focused on ELLs since entering the teaching workforce.

Limited In-Service Preparation. Many of the beginning teachers who participated in the study cited limited in-service training to meet the needs of their ELLs. Prior research conducted by Schneider (2019) also showed limited professional development provided to in-service teachers. The lack of training led to feelings of frustration and guilt over their inability to adequately address the needs of their students. The teachers were frustrated at the time that was needed for their ELLs to show mastery compared to the amount of time they felt was available to teach their curriculum. Prior research connects feelings of frustration, isolation, and guilt to a lack of adequate preparation to work with ELLs (Ramos-Velita, 2018).

Research Question 3: What Professional Development or Experiences Would Be Perceived as Beneficial to Increase Teacher Efficacy When Working With ELLs in the Mainstream Classroom?

Through his work with SCT, Bandura (1994) suggested that people learn by observing the behavior of others. Bandura (1994) also described the process of learning how to do something by observing others as vicarious experiences. Vicarious experiences

can help increase the self-efficacy of the observer if they can closely identify with the model. The teachers in the study shared a strong desire to observe other teachers effectively working with ELLs. One suggestion provided through the focus group was to observe other teachers in their building during their planning time. Others suggested utilizing the ELL teachers to support ELLs in an inclusion model within the classroom.

Research Question 4: What Techniques Are Beginning Teachers Putting in Place Within Their Classrooms to Support Language and Academic Learning for ELLs Within the Regular Education Setting?

Beginning teachers were able to identify some strategies they were using in their classrooms to support ELL access to vocabulary and content. Study participants were utilizing visuals, vocabulary instruction, and sentence stems. The research shows that the use of visuals has been an effective strategy to help ELLs make connections to vocabulary. They also spoke of grouping students to encourage the use of language and access to peer help.

There was an absence of a wide variety of strategies identified to support ELLs. Research shows utilizing physical gestures, also known as total physical response, supports increased achievement for ELLs (Calderon et al., 2011; Fenner & Snyder, 2017). Research also supports the use of cognates to support vocabulary instruction with Spanish-speaking students; however, that also was not mentioned by participants in the study (Schneider, 2019). Research shows that building background knowledge is important when teachers are trying to support students in learning vocabulary and concepts in a new language (Calderon et al., 2011; Ferlazzo & Sypnieski, 2018). The teachers discussed using visual supports but failed to mention linking it to background

knowledge.

Implications for Practice

The study confirmed the current body of research and supports that beginning teachers need to receive training specifically designed to support ELLs. The results from this study can be used by both building administrators and school districts to better prepare their beginning teachers for the challenges they will face in instructing ELLs. The teachers in the study stated that overall, they had limited training to work with ELLs since entering the classroom. Prior studies have shown that teachers who received training on how to build language and content knowledge had higher levels of student achievement than those who did not have specialized training, and they were better prepared to meet the educational needs of their ELLs (Byrd, 2016; Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018; Irby et al., 2019; Odell & Ruvalcaba, 2019; Scott & Mohr, 2019). The teachers in the study were open and receptive to the idea of receiving additional training specifically designed to support ELLs. They want their students to be successful, and they understood the need to have additional professional development in order to be able to best support their students.

Intentional Ongoing Professional Development

Districts need to be intentional to provide professional development for beginning teachers. One permeating theme from the study was the lack of consistent training for the teachers once they entered the classroom. Several of the teachers mentioned that they had received training in their college teacher prep coursework; however, they had not received any training specific to supporting ELLs once they entered their own classes. Prior research shows a connection between teachers being able to use a wide variety of

learning strategies and ELL academic success (Irby et al., 2018). The teachers in the study were only able to provide a limited number of strategies that benefit ELLs. Previous studies have shown that teacher self-efficacy is lower when teachers do not feel adequately equipped to meet the academic needs of their students (Correll, 2016; Odell & Ruvalcaba, 2019; Schneider, 2019).

One challenge many teachers face is being able to teach academic concepts while the students are still learning the language. Teachers need to receive additional training on instructional strategies they can use to support language acquisition and content learning. The teachers were able to provide some examples of support but were not able to provide a wide variety of instructional strategies, as suggested by Irby et al. (2018), necessary to adequately meet ELL needs. Teachers need to receive professional development strategies for teaching ELLs since ELLs are learning academic content but have not yet mastered the language of instruction (Schneider, 2019).

SIOP training offers specific training that can support beginning teachers. SIOP prepares teachers for how to incorporate language strategies into content learning. One participant mentioned that she attended SIOP training within the district; however, the training was only a few days long at the beginning of the school year with no follow-up provided. For professional development to be implemented in a way that supports change in practice, the training needs to be spread out over time and multiple sessions (Ramos-Velita, 2018).

Teachers also need to receive training on culturally responsive teaching practices. Teachers felt more comfortable with building positive relationships, learning about their students and their families, and making positive connections, but the study showed

beginning teachers lacked awareness of how to integrate student culture into classroom activities and lessons. Integrating elements from a culture other than one's own requires training. Integrating culturally responsive practices into the SIOP training would allow the teachers opportunities to increase their confidence in that area as well.

LETRS

Many of the beginning teachers in the study cited the benefits of LETRS training in helping them better understand strategies to help all students, including their ELLs, learn to read in English. The activities presented in the training also helped build empathy for students who were learning a new language. Continuing to provide support for teachers as they proceed through the training and ensuring that future hires also received the training are beneficial to the efficacy of the teachers, which should support increased levels of reading achievement for students.

Implementation

The beginning teachers are often just beginning to understand the curriculum and classroom management strategies. Principals and districts need to be sensitive about when to plan professional development. The teachers need to receive manageable pieces of information strategically designed to support the work they do in their classrooms with ELLs. The training also needs to be delivered over an extended period of time, so teachers have the opportunity to digest and try out strategies before moving on to the next thing. The beginning teachers need opportunities to try out the strategies and ideas that are being taught in their own classrooms and then come back together to the group to discuss their successes and struggles before receiving additional information or being released to manage it on their own.

Intentional Placement

Teachers also need opportunities to learn from other educators. Prior research speaks to the power of mastery experiences (Bandura, 1994). Mastery experiences are identified as perceived successful attempts at a specific task. According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007), teacher self-efficacy is situational and can change depending on the groups of students, grade level, or content being taught. The beginning teachers in the study cited their firsthand experiences as beneficial to increasing their perceptions of their own abilities to meet the needs of their ELLs. Mastery experiences in the classroom lead to an increased expectation of future success (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Those successful moments working with their ELLs will increase their confidence in their ability, thus increasing their probability for higher perceptions of self-efficacy and increased student achievement.

Providing beginning teachers with opportunities to have mastery experiences working with ELLs prior to entering their own classrooms can help increase their self-efficacy when working with ELLs later in their own classrooms. School districts have the opportunity to select specific schools when local teacher preparation programs begin assigning fieldwork placements, internships, and student teaching. Being intentional to assign preservice teachers to schools and classes where they are going to get firsthand experience working with ELLs and observing effective teacher strategies when working with ELLs will help them when they move into their classrooms.

Peer Support

When asked what supports beginning teachers felt would be most beneficial to helping them while working with ELLs, the teachers cited peer modeling. Bandura's

(1994) tenets of SCT reiterate the benefits of learning by observing the behavior of others. Bandura (1994) also reinforced that the observer needs to closely identify with the model. The beginning teachers in the study craved an opportunity to see effective modeling of ELL instruction. Allowing teachers to observe other educators in their building working with ELLs during their planning time or supplying class coverage so they could visit others would allow the beginning teachers opportunities to gain insight into how to effectively teach their students in their own classroom.

Providing peer modeling within their classroom with their students can also support beginning teachers. Prior studies have illuminated the benefits of having peer models when working with ELLs (Odell & Ruvalcaba, 2019; Zúñiga, 2019). The study by Zúñiga (2019) utilized former ELL teachers in the role of instructional coach. The ELL coaches were then utilized as models for classroom teachers who needed to learn specific instructional practices that could be used to help ELLs. Having a colleague, instructional coach, or the ELL teacher model for the beginning teacher provides vicarious experiences for the beginning teachers to observe. The process also demonstrates effective instructional strategies for beginning teachers that they can try to replicate later with their students.

The modeling process also opens opportunities for stronger communication to develop between the beginning teachers and the ELL teachers. Focus group participants also said they felt like meeting with the ELL teacher or their colleagues to gain suggestions would be helpful in their work with ELLs. This connects to prior research by Bandura (1994) on the influence of verbal persuasion, also known as coaching. The ELL teacher who has been trained to work with ELLs can work closely with beginning

teachers who lack strategies and provide feedback to the teacher, which will support their success. The ELL teacher can also help provide additional strategies that the teacher can use to help make cultural connections with their students.

Recommendations for Further Study

Further study could be conducted on other groups of teachers. The participant group for this study was limited to beginning teachers; however, veteran teachers might also need additional professional development to meet the academic and cultural demands of their students. Research by Gándara and Santibañez (2016) stated that even teachers who have been effective with other groups of students may struggle to meet the needs of ELLs. Depending on the community, veteran teachers may or may not have had prior experiences with students who were culturally and linguistically diverse. The research shows that with the influx of students learning language, veteran teachers likely will find themselves teaching ELLs. Without prior experience or professional development in working with ELLs, teachers may become frustrated and respond with a deficit mindset.

The study also did not address beginning teachers who are coming into the teaching profession through residency licensure programs. In North Carolina, applicants who hold a 4-year degree can apply for a 1-year provisional teaching license. Applicants must be hired by a school system within North Carolina and are required to enroll in an approved educator preparation program during the year (NCDPI, 2022). As the teacher shortage continues, many schools, including my own, have had to rely on teachers coming through the residency licensure program to fill vacant teaching positions within the building. These teachers have not yet had formal training through a teacher

preparation program and likely lack any awareness of research-based instructional methods or pedagogical practices for instructing ELLs. Residency-licensed teachers may need much more support than teachers who have attended traditional teacher preparation programs.

This study was focused on beginning teachers working with ELLs in mainstream elementary school classrooms. Studies could also be conducted focusing on beginning teachers in middle school or high school. It would be interesting to see how the self-efficacy of teachers was impacted when the deficit between the grade-level content and the level of the student was wider than typically happens in elementary school. This study was also conducted in districts where the majority of ELLs are Spanish-speaking. It would be interesting to repeat the study in districts that have more than one dominant second language.

Limitations and Delimitations

This study was limited by several factors. One limitation of the study was the number of participants for both the survey and the focus group. In an effort to maintain the anonymity of the survey participants, I was unable to reach out directly to potential study participants to encourage participation. Another limitation was the number of ELLs are not evenly distributed across districts and schools. In several schools, beginning teachers were not serving ELLs. Other schools had ELLs; however, they were not being served by beginning teachers. This limited the number of participants who were eligible to participate in the study.

A delimitation to the study is that I supervise the largest population of beginning elementary teachers working with ELLs in the district; however, due to the supervisory

nature of my position, I chose to exclude teachers from my location. This reduced the number of beginning teachers available to participate in the study.

Another limitation of the study was the length of the online survey. I chose to use the CRTSES as a portion of my research study. In gaining permission to use the CRTSES, I agreed to not make changes to the survey in any way. This left 41 total items on CRTSES, which resulted in a longer length of time mandated to complete the survey. The length of time required to complete the survey lowered the number of participants. The 11-point Likert scale was also unamendable, which resulted in a wider range of possible responses. With the large number of questions, large scale, and a small number of respondents, there were several questions that did not pass the chi-square goodness of fit test. I do not believe this was caused by an error in the research but rather by the wide variety of options available on the survey itself.

Conclusion

As the number of ELLs continues to increase in public schools across America, beginning teachers will continue to serve those students in their mainstream classrooms. It is important that beginning teachers receive adequate training in order to be able to meet the academic, cultural, and linguistic demands of their students. Districts will need to provide professional development to beginning teachers specifically designed to adapt their instruction. The training provided to beginning teachers will need to be ongoing and targeted to the specific areas needed by beginning teachers when working with ELLs.

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