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U.S. Secondary Teachers' Concerns About Videoconferencing as an Instructional Modality for English Language Learners

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Abstract

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Videoconferencing (VC) instruction has become more prevalent in education due to a variety of factors, one of which was the COVID-19 pandemic, which required online teachers to plan relevant and purposeful VC lessons. Secondary English Language Learner (ELL) teachers have expressed concerns about the quality of instruction being delivered. The problem for this study was that U.S. secondary teachers of ELLs had concerns when using VC for instruction. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the concerns that secondary teachers have about using VC with secondary ELLs. The concerns-based adoption model formed the conceptual framework of this study. The research questions focused on ELL teachers' perceptions of their concerns related to the use of VC and on how those concerns influenced their teaching practices. A basic qualitative approach was used to capture the insights of 12 ELL teachers through semistructured interviews; a purposeful sampling process was used to recruit the participants through social media groups. Emergent themes were identified through open coding, and the findings were developed and checked for trustworthiness through member checking, rich descriptions, and researcher reflexivity. The findings revealed that the participating ELL teachers were concerned about ELL student engagement with VC. Addressing these concerns would allow them to create a more supportive and productive virtual learning environment for learners, they indicated. This study may contribute to positive social change by increasing educators' knowledge of practices to promote effective ELL instruction via VC.

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Dedication

This work is also dedicated to my wife, children, and living family that has supported me over the years. And to my mother, may she rest in peace knowing I did it!

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

In this qualitative study, I examined the concerns of secondary English Language Learner (ELL) teachers related to the use of videoconferencing (VC) technology for daily instruction. Research shows that teachers encounter several challenges in using VC, which include student disengagement and apathy, lack of appropriate technology, social-emotional learning issues, lack of buy-in among colleagues, lack of effective professional development (PD), and lack of technology proficiency (Çiloğlan & Bardakçı, 2019; Hall & Trespalacios, 2019; Rivera et al., 2021; Maimaiti. et al., 2021; Serhan, 2020). Several researchers have analyzed teacher concerns by using the concerns-based adoption model (CBAM). They have analyzed how challenges in the field of education and online learning can be solved or improved by incorporating teacher concerns into ongoing PD (Birisci & Kul, 2019; Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021; Dinc, 2019; Georgiou & Ioannou, 2019; Lee et al., 2018; Trapani & Annunziato, 2018).

I begin this chapter by providing background information for the study. I also include the problem and purpose statements and the research questions (RQs) for the study. The conceptual framework is presented as well as the significance of the study. I also discuss the nature of the study, assumptions, scope and delimitations, and limitations and define key terms. The chapter concludes with a summary and transition to Chapter 2.

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in much learning occurring online for almost 2 years, with educators making many adjustments for learning to take place (Chraa et al., 2020; Eman, 2021; Hietanen & Svedholm-Häkkinen, 2021; Song et al., 2020; Tsakeni,

2021). Many school district leaders in the United States implemented some type of online learning either for credit recovery, home or hospital schooling for the infirmed, or for standard, credit seeking students. Various VC platforms facilitated online learning around the world. These platforms include Zoom, Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp, and Google Meet (Correia et al., 2020).

In the state of Maryland, reading skills are assessed through the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program. ELL scores were last reported in the 2019 school year because testing did not occur during the following school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the 2019 school year, 2.9% of ELLs scored proficient in the area of English Language Arts, which was below the state performance metric of 42.6% (Maryland State Department of Education, 2020). The low proficiency level may be attributed to instructional strategies. Researchers have examined how instructional strategies can improve the overall educational experience, increase student engagement, and reduce apathy for both staff and students (Chraa et al., 2020; Epps et al, 2021; Kayaduman & Demirel, 2019; Maimaiti et al., 2021).

As research has shown, the advantages of VC instruction include greater flexibility for learners and instructors alike, including the ability to teach without being at a centralized physical location, and the ability to use messaging for private communication (Serhan, 2020). However, teachers have also encountered challenges, such as students not turning on their cameras, students not being responsive to teachers, and students not being able to overcome the language barrier in virtual class sessions (Serhan, 2020). Research also shows that technological problems can emerge that require

instructors to be equipped with a relatively high level of technical knowledge to respond to these issues, especially with web-based VC tools (Correia et al., 2020; Ockey et al., 2019).

Worldwide VC instruction is a newly diffused technology. VC instruction, however, is not new, with the hardware dating back to the 1990s (Sonday & Sonday, 1995). However, there is limited research on how teacher concerns can influence this version of instruction. Several researchers have examined the usefulness of VC instruction and the challenges that ELL teachers are facing (Dinc, 2019; Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2020; Tran, 2018; Trapani & Annunziato, 2019).

A key finding of this research is that language barrier issues are exacerbated when newcomers and students with low English language proficiency are required to learn in VC environments (Çiloğlan & Bardakçı, 2019). The language barrier can make technology troubleshooting more difficult, and virtual environments may not be conducive to asking questions (Serhan, 2020). A gap remains in understanding the concerns of U.S. teachers of ELLs and how to best use VC technology to meet the needs of secondary ELLs.

Teacher reactions to change can either facilitate the technology implementation process or impede it altogether (Birisci & Kul, 2019; Hall & Trespalacios, 2019). Studies have shown that having teacher input can assist instructional designers with improving ELL instruction (Freiermuth & Huang, 2021; Raman et al., 2019). There is a need for more research on the full-time usage of VC instruction for ELLs and how teacher concerns influence their use of VC.

Problem Statement

The problem addressed in this study is that U.S. secondary teachers of ELLs have concerns when using VC for instruction. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers and administrators in the study setting were not prepared to move to virtual instruction. According to a district administrator, the school system made a last-minute decision to go virtual without a lot of PD for teachers.

Because virtual instruction was not addressed with teachers before the last-minute implementation, concerns arose when the teachers were exploring the use of online educational technologies in delivering the lessons. Some teachers did not have access to adequate training in the use of online resources to carry out the lesson and these concerns affect teachers' readiness, which in turn can affect the quality of the instruction (Wen & Kim Hua, 2020).

Teachers' concerns about technology use is an ongoing concern that has been exacerbated by the increased use of VC for instruction since the emergence of the COVID pandemic. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the requirements for social distancing, ELL teachers have had to move away from face-to-face (F2F) lessons and adopt online teaching using VC platforms like Zoom (Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2020). Most schools in the United States were closed for F2F learning for over a year and continued with hybrid learning after reopening (Heath & Segal, 2020). In this context, it is important for ELL teachers to develop efficacy with the use of VC for instruction. Research suggests that this is possible. VC platforms such as Zoom, Google Hangouts, or Skype can allow ELL educators to develop activities that support language learners'

communication and develop their spoken language skills (Tran, 2018). The need to better prepare teachers of ELLs in the pandemic era and the lack of research on the use of VC systems with ELLs (see Correia et al., 2020) were motivations for this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the concerns that secondary teachers have about using VC with secondary ELLs. I conducted semistructured interviews to explore perceived concerns and how those concerns influence teacher practice. Participants were ELL teachers with at least 1 year of teaching experience with online learning who were recruited via online social media sites and communities of practice.

Research Questions

RQ1: What are the perceived concerns of teachers of ELLs about using VC with secondary students?

RQ1a: How do perceived concerns influence secondary ELL teachers' practice when using VC technology during instruction?

Conceptual Framework

I used the CBAM as the study's conceptual framework. A key proposition of this model is that change is a process, not an event; it is facilitated by PD, personal growth, and the ability to accept new methods (Anderson, 1997). The CBAM includes the following stages of concern:

1. awareness: The teacher has little knowledge about or interest in the change.
2. informational: The teacher is interested in learning more about the innovation.

3. personal: The teacher typically has strong anxieties about their ability to implement the change.
4. management: The teacher begins to experiment with implementation.
5. consequence: Teachers focus on the impact of the change on students in their classrooms and on the possibilities for modifying the innovation or their use of it to improve its effects.
6. collaboration: Teacher work with other teachers in the school to jointly improve the benefits of change implementation for students.

At some point in the change process, teachers may reach refocusing; at this point, the teacher is thinking about making major modifications in the use of the innovation or perhaps replacing it with something else (Anderson, 1997).

Although researchers who use the CBAM often use a quantitative measurement, I used the constructs of the stages of concern to develop an interview protocol to collect qualitative data on teachers' concerns when using VC systems. For many teachers, troubleshooting and innovation happen simultaneously due to lack of experience with technology (Anderson, 1997). Collecting qualitative data through teacher interviews gave insight on teacher perceptions of these platforms.

Nature of the Study

I used a basic qualitative research design with semistructured interviews as the data source. By using this design, I was able to examine how perceived concerns of secondary teachers of ELLs about using VC may influence their practice. Interviews fit best for this study for several reasons. Direct contact with me gave participants a chance

to ask follow-up questions while their data were being gathered, which is not possible in research involving the administration of surveys or questionnaires (Burkholder et al., 2019). I based the interview questions on the RQs. The interview questions anticipated follow-up probing questions that I used to further enhance participant responses (see Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

I used several means to recruit potential participants beginning with emails that are publicly available on school websites. Invitations were posted on personal learning networks. Invitations were posted using social media tags often used by secondary teachers of ELLs. Also, I contacted moderators of private LinkedIn and Facebook groups where secondary ELL teachers meet virtually. I asked these moderators for permission to post an invitation for potential participants in their groups. For example, I am part of the Internationals Network, which is a U.S.-based organization for teachers of ELLs; its leaders allowed me to post an invitation to my study in the organization's digital newsletter and on its social media. Participant inclusion criteria included the following: currently work as a secondary teacher (Grades 9–12) of ELLs, earned a degree or certificate in teaching ELLs or have taught ELLs for 5 years, currently work in a setting where 80% of the secondary population are ELLs, have used VC technology with ELLs for a minimum of a year, and have tried multiple instructional practices when using VC with ELLs. Participants were given a $25 gift card after completing the interview.

Definitions

Concerns-based adoption model (CBAM): A model that offers a framework for classifying teachers' concerns about various changes and helping them through the adoption process (Georgiou & Ioannou, 2019).

English Language Learners (ELL): Students who speak a language other than English as their first language (Luo & Huang, 2019).

Teacher concerns: Teachers' feelings, preoccupations, thoughts, considerations, and beliefs about the integration of technology in the classroom (Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021).

Videoconferencing instruction: A technology-based approach that involves the use of audio and video to teach students who are not in the same physical location as the instructor (Correia et al., 2020).

Assumptions

Assumptions are defined as shared experiences that speak to core meanings mutually understood through a phenomenon commonly experienced (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I assumed that each participating teacher was honest and forthright when answering the qualitative interview questions. I also assumed that each participant met the eligibility criteria for the study and that they were honest about their qualifications and use of VC technology. Finally, I assumed that all teachers who volunteered for the study had an interest in improving virtual instruction for ELLs in the future. According to Patton (2002), a key assumption of a qualitative study is that the world consists of patterns that are known and can be explained. Interview questions are appropriate to gain data to explain these patterns of concern, which can be analyzed for commonalities.

Assumptions are needed in qualitative studies due to multiple perspectives of participants, which makes the data subjective; the accuracy of such assumptions is necessary to the study's validity, trustworthiness, and overall accuracy of its findings (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Scope and Delimitations

The problem that was addressed in this study is that U.S. secondary teachers of ELLs have concerns when using VC for instruction. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in all instruction being virtual for most U.S. schools during school year 2020-2021 (Chraa et al., 2020). Many school systems in the country have adopted virtual learning in some matter since this event (Chraa et al., 2020). Further investigation is needed to determine how teacher concerns can be used to inform instructional strategies for virtual leaning. In many cases, teacher input can bring attention to issues with instruction (Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021). This study contributed knowledge of how teachers are adjusting to virtual learning and how their concerns can be used to enhance VC instruction.

By using social media and personal community of practice, I was able to reach a broad audience within the United States. Exactly 12 teachers were included in the interviews, which is appropriate for a qualitative study. According to Guest et al. (2006) data saturation can be achieved after analyzing 12 interviews. Participants were selected according to the following criteria: work as a secondary teacher (Grades 9–12) of ELLs, earned a degree or certificate in teaching ELLs or have taught ELLs for 5 years, work in a school with 80% of the secondary population consisting of ELLs, have used VC

technology with ELLs for a minimum of a year, and have tried multiple instructional practices when using VC with ELLs.

Limitations

This study had limitations, which I discuss in more detail in Chapter 4. Limitations included my need to use financial incentives to find participants and my challenges in obtaining permission from schools in the Internationals Network. Also, I conducted the interviews during the winter break/holiday season; many participants wanted to wait until after the holiday. When the study flyer was first published on social media, there were no responses for 3 weeks. I obtained approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board to offer a financial incentive. Once the new flyer was posted on social media sites, there was an immediate response. Some of the respondents provided generic information regarding credentials; upon asking follow-up questions and performing internet searches, I was unable to verify their credentials. These individuals were not included in the study. Participants recruited from social media sites were only chosen if they were using a school system-generated email address.

At the time of the study, the Internationals Network was comprised of 31 schools in the continental United States (Internationals Network, n.d.). The possibility existed to have around 500 school staff as potential participants in the study. However, it was very difficult to gain approval from the principals in the network. In the end, only one school in the network was able to be approved for this study.

I alleviated some of the potential bias by using social media to recruit participants throughout the United States. I did not interview any teachers who I knew personally or

had supervised in any capacity. Neo-positivist interview tactics were used to minimize bias through a neutral stance, controlled body language, and stoic facial expressions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Significance

This study is significant in that it addressed an issue of ongoing relevance, which is the use of online tools such as VC to conduct distance learning and the challenges faced by secondary teachers of ELLs in doing so. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the impetus for a shift to online distance teaching has required many teachers, students, parents, and administrators to rely on VC systems for synchronous communication (Correia et al., 2020). This study contributed to positive social change by providing practical suggestions that could be shared in PD trainings or on social media to better support ELL teachers. Implementation of the study's findings could be useful to educational leaders in improving how VC is used with this student population across the United States. Better informed ELL teachers may contribute to improvements in the overall quality of virtual education in the United States.

Summary

The use of VC for instruction increased during the COVID pandemic, which began in 2020. Many U.S. school districts have continued to offer some version of online learning for those concerned about social distancing (Epps et al., 2021). There is a need to address the inconsistencies experienced by secondary ELL teachers in engaging in virtual learning and to address their concerns. An emerging field of research is centered on how teachers' concerns about virtual learning can be a basis for improving instruction

(Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021; Georgiou & Ioannou, 2019). The diffusion of VC technology has evolved over the past few years. However, there is a need for more research in this area because it is a new method of teaching. Surveying teacher concerns was the focus of this study; I analyzed how to alleviate challenges and problems.

In Chapter 2, I will review relevant literature that supported the study. The chapter begins with an overview of the literature search strategy and further discussion of the study's conceptual framework. Then, I will discuss previous studies to demonstrate the potential impact of analyzing teacher concerns on improving VC instruction for ELLs.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The problem that was addressed in this study is that U.S. secondary teachers of ELLs have concerns when using VC for instruction. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the concerns that secondary teachers have about using VC with secondary ELLs. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the nature of pedagogy, with many U.S. schools moving from F2F to remote instruction (Correia et al., 2020; Goddard, 2020; Kang Shin & Borup, 2020). Research, some of which was conducted before the pandemic, shows that instructors face challenges in integrating VC in the classroom. These include learning to use new technologies in a short period, designing instructional materials that fit the new environment, providing interactive remote learning environment, and adopting new assessment techniques (Birisci & Kul, 2019; Correia et al., 2020; Dinc, 2019; Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2020; Ockey et al., 2019; Serhan, 2020).

Integrating new technology is normally promulgated from a school district, state, or federal level, and many teachers and administrators are simply following mandates (Birisci & Kul, 2019; Raman et al., 2019). New technology integration also contributes to teacher anxiety and concerns especially if they feel that effective training and/or PD has not taken place. During the pandemic, teachers had no other option than to use whatever technology they were comfortable with or were directed to use for instruction. Teacher perceptions of instructional technology is an important factor in the success or failure of implementation (Dinc, 2019; Hall & Trespalacios, 2019; Lee, et al., 2018). Most school systems do have a teacher representative on the school board of education;

however, there is not much evidence that these teacher representatives influence decisions based on teacher challenges and concerns (Birisci & Kul, 2019).

There are many challenges that teachers face when conducting VC learning with ELLs including lack of facial gestures to help with learning, lack of ad]equate data analysis of test scores, and technology issues (Hilliard, 2020; Ockey et al., 2019; Tran, 2018). Instructional challenges include the need for intercultural sensitivity and the need for teachers to be comfortable with using technology for online learning and using various platforms to meet the needs of students (Çiloğlan & Bardakçı, 2019). This is also a challenge because some teachers are required to use specific software based on what is mandated by schools and school districts which they may not be comfortable using (Raman et al., 2019).

In this chapter, I will give an overview of the strategy used to search for the appropriate literature, the conceptual framework for the study, and literature that supported the need for this study. Topics include ELL learning strategies, history of VC instruction, the use of VC platforms for ELL instruction, characteristics of various VC platforms, challenges faced by teachers, technology integration, student disengagement, staff buy-in, PD remediation and training (Freiermuth & Huang, 2021; Rivera et al., 2021; Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2020; Nilayon & Brahmakasikara, 2018).

Literature Search Strategy

I used the following library databases: EBSCOhost, Explora Secondary Schools, Explora Educators Edition, EBSCO Discovery Service Academic Search Complete, ERIC, Teacher Reference Center, eBook Collection, Education Source, and SAGE

Reference Encyclopedia. The search terms were *English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teaching strategies*, *ELLs*, *videoconferencing and ESOL learning*, *videoconference instruction*, *videoconference platforms for ESOL instruction*, *challenges with online learning AND ELL*, *Social Emotional Learning AND ELL AND online learning*, *ELL teacher concerns AND online learning*, and *history of videoconferencing.* I used SAGE Knowledge to find seminal information on the history of VC. The search strategy used denoted peer reviewed articles within a range of 3 years or less. The primary search was for literature on ELL teacher concerns with VC instruction. The secondary search included the combination of *teacher concerns* and *ELL videoconference instruction*. The tertiary searches included the combination of the following: *ELL teacher concerns with VC instruction*, *ELL or English Language Learners or Language Learners AND videoconferencing.* Each search yielded useful data sources. This process was repeated until saturation was achieved.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this dissertation was CBAM. CBAM is a model that outlines the process of implementing change by persons acting in change-facilitating roles (Anderson, 1997). CBAM includes the following stages of tracking innovation implementation: information (Stage 1), personal (Stage 2), management (Stage 3), consequence (Stage 4), collaboration (Stage 5), and refocusing (Stage 6). CBAM provides a trajectory for classifying different types of concerns in relation to an innovation ranging from low-level concerns (Stages1–3) to high-level concerns (Stages 4–6; Anderson, 1997).

Key components of the CBAM are the stages of concern, levels of use, innovation configuration, change facilitator styles, and interventions (Anderson, 1997). CBAM has been used to improve curriculum and instruction and the implementation of various innovations. Educational researchers have used the CBAM framework to investigate means to facilitate and improve positive changes in the classroom by integrating teacher concerns into the design of PD (Birisci & Kul, 2019; Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021; Dinc, 2019; Georgiou & Ioannou, 2019; Lee et al., 2018; Trapani & Annunziato, 2019).

Teachers are often placed in situations in which they are expected to implement new policies, instructional practices, and curriculum that have been mandated by school system or school authorities without the expressed request or consent of the teachers themselves; this is one of many teacher concerns (Georgiou & Ioannou, 2019). The COVID pandemic resulted in nearly every teacher in the United States being asked to teach remotely for a period of time regardless of their comfort level using information and communications technology (Piccolo et al., 2020). Many online learning policies are new to teachers and administrators alike, and the concern about productive PD exists (Hall & Trespalacios, 2019; Raman et al., 2019).

The CBAM includes the following assumptions related to the implementation of change: (a) change is a process, not an event; (b) change is accomplished by individuals; (c) change is a highly personal experience; (d) change involves developmental growth in feelings and skills; and (e) change can be facilitated by interventions directed toward the individuals, innovations, and contexts involved (Anderson, 1997). The assumption—change is a process, not an event—was not as relevant as it normally would be. In the

events of 2020, the process of shifting to online learning was spurred on by an event that was unpredictable (Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021). Normally, change comes over the slow process of trial and error. Currently, schools in the U.S. are still undergoing the process of change and incorporating VC instruction in many ways (Dinc, 2019).

Educational Research Featuring the Concerns-Based Adoption Model

Past researchers have used the CBAM to frame change efforts in educational contexts. Trapani and Annunziato (2018) used a series of interviews and surveys to access teacher concerns to facilitate instructional change. Dele-Ajayi et al. (2021) used CBAM survey findings to provide practical insights into how to better create effective teacher PD interventions focused on adopting and integrating information and communications technology to enhance the learning experience of young people within the classroom. Georgiou and Ioannou (2019) investigated the concerns of 31 in-service teachers before, during, and after their participation in PD. Teacher concerns included the lack of PD, lack of infrastructure, lack of motives, and lack of disciplinary teams in the technology adoption process.

Change is accomplished through the work of individuals first and then building a school culture that encompasses positive attitudes toward change (Piccolo et al., 2020). There may be outliers that need more assistance and the CBAM process provides a hierarchical structure which describes each level of participant. Dele-Ajayi et al. (2021) used the participants' descriptors such as the "worried, the "co-operator", the "opponent", the "overachiever", the "ideal implementer" or the "resistor." Each descriptor comes with

its own level of concern and teacher willingness to participate, which is relevant to the study of how teacher concerns influence the VC instruction implementation process.

Trapani and Annunziato (2019) examined the efficacy of instructional change by engaging teachers in reflecting on the change process using CBAM as an instrument of measurement. CBAM was selected as the conceptual framework to assess the process of implementing change. In this case study, the change was the introduction and implementation of the understanding by design instructional framework by teachers. The authors noted that instructional change is often not implemented in the time frame envisioned by policy makers and that resistance to change is frequently a factor in the timing of implementation.

CBAM has been used to determine the concerns of distance learning teachers over the course of transition from F2F teaching. Teacher PD is important to implementing new information and communications technology (Hall & Trespalacios, 2019). Moving from F2F to distance education can be a challenging process for instructors, as they learn unfamiliar technologies and face new pedagogical challenges (Kayaduman & Demirel, 2019). Educators conducting distance learning need a wide variety of technology skills to be effective (Hall & Trespalacios, 2019). The study used PD in order to bridge the gap faced by educators that had concerns with moving from F2F instruction to a virtual learning management system. Researchers focused on the fundamentals of distance education, the implementation process, and the responsibilities of instructors and details of using the learning management system and virtual classroom (Kayaduman & Demirel, 2019). Teacher participants reported the following concerns: the provision of ongoing

concern-based interventions that incorporate technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge; providing examples related to distance education from which instructors can learn vicariously; and encouraging collaboration among instructors (Kayaduman & Demirel, 2019). The authors found that ongoing CBAM interventions can be effective in ensuring that teachers are comfortable with the change to a virtual format.

In summary, the use of CBAM will be appropriate for this proposed study of ELL teacher concerns using VC for instruction for several reasons based on past research using the model in the context of implementing changes in educational practice. The rapid implementation of VC instruction left many teachers with concerns of how effective they would be with VC instruction. Trapani and Annunziato (2019) found the resistance to change can influence the timing of implementation. CBAM has been used to measure and examine teacher concerns with various stages of technology implementation and instructional change (Trapani & Annunziato, 2018). Kayaduman and Demirel (2019) and Dele-Ajayi et al. (2021) analyzed teachers' concerns with implementation of information and communications technologies. Providing teachers with effective PD has also been facilitated by using CBAM surveys (Hall & Trespalacios, 2019). This framework will be used to identify ELL teacher concerns for the study.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts

English Language Learner Learning Challenges and Strategies

ELL teachers face numerous challenges in the instruction process during their academic careers. Challenges range from low performance on standardized testing, implementing creative strategies, lack of efficient PD, and pressure to perform on

standardized tests (Çiloğlan & Bardakçı, 2019; Rivera et al., 2021; Luo & Huang, 2019). The United States Department of Education requires that states meet adequate yearly progress based upon increased percentages for all sub-population group including ELLs (Okey et al., 2019). Teachers pressured for achievement can resort to ineffective teaching strategies such as test-oriented teaching. The normalization of testing as learning in the classroom can provide test scores but not enough detailed information to help guide VC instruction and planning for ELL students (Çiloğlan & Bardakçı, 2019; Reyes & Gentry, 2019).

The ELL population has nearly doubled in the last 10 years (Reyes & Gentry, 2019). However, the ELL achievement remains among the lowest compared to all students. For example, on the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress, 72% of 8th grade ELL students scored below basic in mathematics compared to 26% of non-ELL students (Reyes & Gentry, 2019). This speaks to the need for research in instructional strategies designed to achieve better outcomes with ELL students.

English Language Learner Instructional Strategies

There continues to be a lack of knowledge and training of effective research-based learning strategies for ELLs among education preparation programs; these programs had challenges focusing on populations like ELLs, due to the structural limitations of courses and departments and the requirements of state credentialing bodies (Reyes & Gentry, 2019). This results in teachers who may not be prepared to provide thoughtful instruction to ELLs. Research-based strategies are helpful in developing data driven instruction.

Some examples of commonly used instructional strategies unique to ELL instruction are cognates. The use of cognates for ELLs is a beginning stage for learning basic vocabulary which is a challenge for newcomer ELLs. When language learners know the meanings of cognate words in the first language but not in the other language and are aware of cognate relationships, then they could use their cognate knowledge to access the meanings of unknown words in the other language (Garcia et al., 2020). Instruction must include the contrasting orthographic (OS) and phonological similarity (PS) to be effective; cognates with high PS are processed faster than words with a lower PS (Iniesta et al., 2021). This strategy is not without its challenges since there are also false cognates—words that sounds alike but have different definitions (Cañizares-Álvarez & Gathercole, 2020).

Ali and Zaki (2019) show a vacillating between the experiential and traditional modes of vocabulary learning but also the reasons behind the insufficient vocabulary size of ELL learners in myriad contexts. Also, the lack of Translanguaging can be detrimental to vocabulary development when conducting instruction with newcomer ELLs. Translanguaging has been defined as the use of the native language to explain concepts in the second language; ELL education is in the midst of using traditional methods as well as the experimental methods of virtual learning.

The following questions were raised by the study conducted by Ali and Zaki (2019): how many words to be targeted for learning; how much time and attention should be devoted to strategic vocabulary learning in ELL curricula; which strategy or method, experiential or traditional, is effective when obtaining vocabulary; does a particular

strategy reveal the personality traits, cultural, social, and academic prowess of learners; is the choice of a particular strategy affected by cultural background; and in particular, how much do learners plan, monitor and carry on their vocabulary development in their personal lives. Rivera et al. (2021) proposed a model of metacognitive instructional strategies like planning, directed attention, monitoring, problem solving, selective attention, and evaluation to ensure vocabulary comprehension.

Metacognition is defined as the awareness and understanding of one's own thought processes (Teng, 2020). Metacognition is complex but also simple as it is the ability to think about our own thinking—and to think about how we process information (Rivera et al., 2021). Research has shown many factors into what exactly makes up metacognitive strategies in the area of ELLs. Learners can understand the process of learning more fluidly if they are able to understand their own thinking process and take responsibility for their own learning. Currently, there is not much research examining the use of metacognitive strategies in VC instruction.

Rivera et al. (2021) found the following: a correlation between English listening comprehension scores and general English scores. General English scores for ELLs encompasses speaking and listening skills—both of these components are supported during VC instruction. Standardized testing scores have long been used to determine a baseline used to begin planning instructional strategies. Teachers have shown concerns with preparing instruction for ELLs that will improve performance on standardized testing. There is not much research showing how VC instruction has affected performance on these tests.

ELL standardized testing in the areas of speaking and listening are important to most school district instructional plans. Results also show a lower anxiety in speaking English when it is practiced more often. There is also a correlation between motivation for learning English and English listening comprehension scores. The amount of over testing and the great emphasis school districts place on testing has led to an increased teacher concerns because of the level of test anxiety in ELL classrooms (Khoshhal, 2021).

Teachers also have challenges with ELL reading comprehension instruction. Hilliard (2020) examined the listening comprehension of both low-intermediate and advanced ELLs when shown a lecture in three different conditions: audiovisual including gestures and face, audiovisual showing the face but no gestures, and audio-only. They found that the low-intermediate learners performed best when shown the audiovisual with both face and gesture, but the advanced learners performed best when shown the audiovisual with the face but no gestures (Hilliard, 2020). The study concluded that having an audio and visual connection was important to delivering effective ELL instruction. This will present a challenge when the students are not using their cameras or present for instruction. Students also showed the greatest improvement in reading comprehension when inference skills were enhanced through various strategies such as multisyllable word study, explicit instruction in inference generation, and guided practice in thinking aloud about text (Hall et al., 2020).

Videoconference Instruction

VC technology is a communication medium that allows connected users to share visual and audio facilities in real-time (Al-Samarraie, 2019). The concept of speaking to someone that was not in the same physical proximity dates to the AT&T Picture Phone of the 1960s and the first VC systems were constructed in a dedicated room costing up to $100,000 (Sondak & Sondak, 1995). These technologies were mainly used by governments and large corporations. With the development of technology, the restrictions to specialized equipment and computer networks decreased, and the use of VC became more popular (Correia, et al., 2020).

The first affordable system for smaller organizations was the Intel ProShare Video System which could be purchased for $2,500 and could only transmit a point-to-point connection. This means that people on more than two locations could not join the meeting (Sondak & Sondak, 1995). The most affordable options for the public were SGIs InPerson which cost $495 and Sun Microsystems ShowMe for $1,295. Both of these platforms included document sharing and whiteboarding (Sondak & Sondak, 1995).
A live connection between two or more persons or a group of people located at different locations for the purpose of communication or interaction, is an essential part of many forms of online education (Al-Samarraie, 2019). There are several case studies dedicated to sharing the experience of VC-based learning; but there is limited literature focused on the influence of different VC systems to online learning and teaching (Correia et al., 2020).

Videoconference Platforms for ELL Instruction

E-learning has the potential to promote self-directed learning by increasing students access to information, increasing interactivity between student and teacher, improving collaborative efforts, eliminating geographical barriers, and building self-confidence (Ghazal et al., 2018). Online learning for ELLs has several key components to create a successful experience including having comfortable social and intercultural relationships (Freiermuth & Huang, 2021). The importance of the social-cultural aspect of VC should be considered since a robust learning environment is key to having positive instructional outcomes (Nilayon & Brahmakasikara, 2018). Instructional technology has a relationship with distance education because it mediates the separation between teacher and learner (Epps et al., 2021). Most schools have turned to synchronous instruction using one or more platforms and this expanded greatly since the COVID 19 pandemic (Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2020; Serhan, 2020).

Various platforms are available for online learning and school districts use what is readily available to them and what is most convenient. Zoom, WhatsApp, Skype, and Microsoft Teams are low-cost or free options that many ELL instructors are using (Correia et al., 2020). The use of online learning platforms like Quizlet, Kahoot, Flipgrid provide interactive lessons can reinforce various instructional ELL mini lessons such as vocabulary, reading comprehension, and cognates (Garcia et al., 2020; Tran, 2018).

In the United States, Zoom has become one of the most preferred platforms to use. It includes several features, such as annotation tools, polls, breakout rooms and video and screen sharing. As shown in Table 1, Zoom offers every feature available on the

chart when compared to other platforms; Microsoft Teams is the only other platform that comes close. WhatsApp has the least number of features.

Table 1

Features of Videoconferencing Platforms

Learning-related feature	Zoom	Skype	Teams	WhatsApp
Audio (mute)	1	1	1	1
Video (turn off camera)	1	1	1	1
Recording and playback	1	1	1	0
Screen sharing	1	1	1	0
Application sharing	1	1	1	0
Remote control	1	0	1	0
File transfer	1	1	1	1
Chat	1	1	1	1
Annotation tools	1	0	1	0
Breakout rooms	1	0	0	0
Polling/Q&A tools	1	1	1	0
Virtual hand-raising	1	0	0	0
Instant reaction	1	1	0	0
Captioning	1	1	1	1

Note. Zero indicates that the platform does not have this feature; 1 indicates that it does. From "Evaluating Videoconferencing Systems for the Quality of the Educational Experience," by A.-P Correia, C. Liu, and F. Xu, 2020, *Distance Education*, *41*(4), p. 441 (https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2020.1821607). Copyright 2020 by Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

These functions facilitate communicative language learning using authentic language instruction in interactive synchronous classes (Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2020). There is the opportunity for students to speak out using the mic and chat functions; both functions can also be disabled by the host to insure attention during the direct instruction portions of class (Eman, 2021).

Ling et al. (2021) found that it was best to focus on the instruction and not get bogged down with the technology. Some teachers have expressed concern with the various platforms being used by school systems due to perceived lack of user friendliness, lack of confidence using the platform, and feeling the need for more processional development (Hall & Trespalacios, 2019). Many school systems have given teachers the option to use what they want. For example, the Zoom platforms allow teachers to work with either individual students or small groups (Freiermuth & Huang, 2021). The Skype platform is best used for small organizations since there can be no more than 50 participants in one video session (Correia et al., 2020). WhatsApp is probably one of the least used applications for education in the Unites States; however, it is used in other countries around the world (Javadi & Shehni, 2020). The system allows up to four people to communicate for unlimited time across the globe at no cost (Correia et al., 2020). Microsoft Teams allows 250 participants in one regular meeting.

VC also provides ELL students an opportunity to expand their intercultural competence which is important since learners of a new language rarely have the chance to meet people from another culture in person (Shih-Yin & Beasley, 2019). Among Arabic teachers of ELLs, VC platforms had one of the highest usefulness ratings of all

the Web 2.0 tools evaluated including YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The audio component enables the development of phonic skills, while the visual component helps the students to analyze the body language and facial expressions that play a role in non-verbal communication (Jarrah & Alzubi, 2021).

In a study of Iranian ELLs, VC instruction was used to bolster vocabulary acquisition and language development. The analysis of the test scores indicated that auditory learning activities through WhatsApp had a statistically significant effect on vocabulary acquisition of Iranian ELL learners (Javadi & Shehni, 2020). Microsoft Teams can be used by ELL teachers to share documents, conduct lectures, and assist students with language acquisition (Morozova et al., 2020). While the usage of VC platforms has become more widespread, there are still many challenges and concerns ELL teachers have with virtual instruction.

Technology Integration Challenges

Technology has been accessible in most areas but there are certain situations in which access to adequate technology has become a concern. Rural schools do not always have adequate infrastructure and computer hardware (Correia et al., 2020). Also, some inner-city schools do not have updated technology. Dinc (2019) describes first-order barriers as external factors including access to technology, time, support, and PD training; and second-order barriers are internal factors, which are teacher's confidence in using technology and their belief in the usefulness of technology use in education. Institutions must have a clear understanding of VC capabilities before committing to the

use of VC technology. Thus, the effective use of teleconferencing services can be associated with the technological readiness of an organization (Al-Samarie, 2019).

Because the transition to online classrooms was done with little or no preparation by the instructors most schools conducted emergency PDs in order to get staff prepared to deliver online instruction once the COVID lockdowns began (Tsakeni, 2021). In a study conducted at the onset of a distance learning program, initial evidence suggested trainers and trainees transitioned swiftly to virtual learning, marked by high levels of engagement; however only 80% of staff were delineated as being thoroughly trained in the process (Chraa et al., 2020). There still exists a need for ongoing PD in order to ensure all teachers are comfortable and have the least concerns with teaching ELLs remotely.

Concerns of English Language Learner Teachers Using Videoconferencing

The COVID pandemic created a situation where schools and teachers had to change their approaches to instruction. E-learning still suffers from some difficulties such as lack of F2F interaction with instructors and classmates, high initial costs for preparing online courses, substantial costs for system update and maintenance, and the need for flexible instructional support (Ghazal et al., 2018). Some teachers' concerns are lack of adequate technology, student disengagement and apathy, lack of effective PD, and lack of technology proficiency (Hall & Trespalacios, 2019; Maimaiti et al., 2021; Serhan, 2020).

The overall level of apathy in schools has increased since online learning became instituted since 2020. The lack of safe, in-person social interaction for students has caused many of them to be difficult for teachers to keep engaged in learning. Teachers

are concerned about students that are not coming to virtual classes regularly and truancy rates have been high. Furthermore, students in e-learning environments may experience feelings of isolation, arbitrariness, confusion and frustration, or reduced interest in the subject matter (Ghazal et al., 2018).

Teachers have encountered challenges with various instructional expectations including the limited use of online breakout rooms, teachers or students not using webcams, the lack of online non-verbal cues, not using private messaging or chats, no incentive for online class participation, lengthy student presentations, and different expectations of student and instructor online roles (Maimaiti et al., 2021).

The teacher's role as facilitator of learning has remined the same. However, this nature of the role shifts considerably when conducting online learning. Being in the physical proximity of challenged students lessens the anxiety in the learning environment (Bordet, 2021). The onus is on the teacher to maintain student engagement online; this is achieved by encouraging student curiosity, enhancing teachers' social presence, and fostering a sense of belonging are highlighted as predictors of engagement in the online classroom (Epps et al., 2021).

The effective use of web cameras is also a challenge for many teachers. Most school systems require teachers to have on their cameras at all times. Many students feel like using a webcam is an invasion of privacy into their personal space (Bordet, 2021). There have also been numerous issues with students engaging in disruptive behaviors such as nudity or inappropriate clothing, smoking, drug use, and invectives. This becomes an administrative issue outside of the teachers control and it is important that

school principals establish clear directives (Raman et al., 2019). It is impossible to force a student to turn on the camera and it would be unethical to have a system to spontaneously turn on the students' cameras. Most VC platforms do not allow this. Microsoft Teams does allow students to mute themselves, classmates, and the teacher. This does often present concerns in the online learning environment.

Instruction has been affected if teachers do not have a system for discussions or for students to ask questions during the lesson. Using the chat feature can be helpful and also be a cause for solicitude. For example, some teachers might find it difficult to conduct a Socratic Seminar (Heath & Segal, 2020). Others are concerned that students will use the chat inappropriately. The use of private messaging and chats can be a useful tool if monitored and controlled correctly. Teachers can use the chat for student questions and comments including the use of emojis which are commonly used by 21st century students (Berges et al., 2021). Zoom features a setting in which chats can be turned off completely or limited to contacting only the host of the meeting.

Many teachers have expressed concern over student disengagement which manifests in several different ways (Epps et al., 2021). Students sometimes will refuse to turn on cameras or respond to prompting in class. There have also been instances of students having other people log into their classes for them just so they can be marked present. Truancy rates have also been high in certain schools and areas. There is limited research investigating how teachers kept ELL students engaged while using these online learning environments. Compared with engagement, research on student disengagement has received less direct attention from scholars (Maimaiti et al., 2021; Spitzer, 2021).

Concerns About Social-Emotional Learning

A Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) survey in an online program in the mid-Atlantic states school system reported that 72% of students felt that they had not made one friend during the online learning process and overall, many students miss the F2F interaction of peers (K. Bullock, personal communication, February 9, 2022; Ghazal et al., 2018). Mental health has been a concern of all stakeholders in the online learning process including teachers, parents, and administrators. Teachers have been finding creative ways to assuage these concerns and the social piece of online education is being addressed. Social and emotional support to each other and to the students emerged as an important need for PD as teachers were experiencing emotional and social ups-and-downs with remote teaching and the stay-at-home order (Song et al., 2020).

A large portion of SEL for ELLs depends upon how well-versed teachers are in diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as implicit bias and world citizenship. The realization of the importance of incorporating culture into language learning and the increasing capability and accessibility of technology has greatly altered how a language classroom looks today (Lenkaitis et al., 2019).

Teachers have long been concerned about the social challenges faced by ELLs coming into a new society and beginning the assimilation process expected by a new way of life. Çiloğlan & Bardakçı (2019) found that English proficiency levels increase in situations where the intercultural sensitivity is of great importance to the teachers. There is not a lot of research in the area of online SEL and teachers are concerned about how to

relate to students and include community building into online lessons using chats, emojis, and off topic discussions (Heath & Segal, 2020).

Buy-in to the concept of learning through technology is vital, so whether teachers embrace technology may be a deciding factor in its success. The speed with which the transition to distance learning occurred in the 2020 pandemic meant that few teachers had time to consider the practical implications of this medium of teaching (Epps, 2021). While staff conduct is normally an administrator concern, lack of buy-in can affect staff morale and make implementation more difficult. In the pre-COVID school environment, teachers sometimes had the option of using web 2.0 tools and implementation would be slow. The lack of training also affected many teachers' attitudes toward distance learning and concerns were based upon the teacher's skill level. Also, some teachers had not willingly attended PD and they were unable to implement VC instruction effectively for some time (Hall & Trespalacios, 2019).

Summary and Conclusions

The literature has shown several commonalties and themes of teachers concerns with implementation of VC instruction. There have been instances of schools providing teachers ongoing training and support; the literature also has reported teacher concerns with rapid introduction of VC instruction during the COVID pandemic (Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021; Eman, 2021; Hall & Trespalacios, 2019; Chraa et al., (2020). Various challenges have been encountered during ELL teacher implementation of VC instruction including technology issues, students' disengagement, staff buy in, and social-emotional learning issues (Al-Samarie, 2019; Çiloğlan & Bardakçı, 2019; Chraa et al., 2021; Correia et al.,

2019; Epps, 2021; Heath & Segal, 2020; Tsakeni, 2021). There have also been challenges conveying conventional F2F strategies in the VC platform such as small groups, peer to peer groupings, and behavior management (Freiermuth & Huang, 2021; Ghazal et al., 2018; Reyes & Gentry, 2019).

The use of CBAM to address teacher concerns has resulted in strategies to improve various educational settings. Educational researchers have used CBAM to investigate how to facilitate and improve positive changes in the classroom by integrating teacher concerns into the design of PD (Birisci & Kul, 2019; Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021; Dinc, 2019; Georgiou & Ioannou, 2019; Lee et al., 2018; Trapani & Annunziato, 2018). ELL teachers face many challenges during in-person learning and some of these concerns were also a part of online learning. Some teacher concerns range from low performance on standardized testing, implementing creative strategies, lack of efficient PD, and pressure to perform well on standardized tests (Çiloğlan & Bardakçı, 2019; Rivera et al., 2021; Luo & Huang, 2019). There continues to be a lack of knowledge and training of effective research-based learning strategies for ELLs (Reyes & Gentry, 2019).

ELL instruction has been difficult to transfer into the virtual world. Compared to engagement, there is less direct attention to disengagement by scholars (Maimaiti et al., 2021; Spitzer, 2021). Seventy-two percent of students in an online program reported not having made one friend during the virtual learning experience and they are missing the F2F experience with peers and teachers (K. Bullock, personal communication, February 9, 2022; Ghazal et al., 2018). Staff buy-in is also an important part of the VC instruction process. During the COVID pandemic, teachers did not have much time to train or

consider how VC instruction would look (Epps, 2021). There is a need for more research and PD in order to ensure all teachers have the least number of concerns with teaching ELLs remotely.

In Chapter 3, I will present the study design and rationale. The role of the researcher, methodology, procedures for recruitment, participation, data collection, trustworthiness, ethical procedures, and summary are included in the chapter. The purpose of this basic qualitative study is to explore the concerns that secondary teachers have about using VC with secondary ELLs.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the concerns that secondary teachers have about using VC with secondary ELLs. In this chapter, I describe the research design and the rationale for conducting the research. There is an overview of the setting, role of the researcher, methodology, trustworthiness, and ethical procedures. The discussion of methodology includes participant selection; instrumentation; procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection; and the data analysis plan. I conducted semistructured interviews to examine teachers' concerns with VC instruction and how those experiences can be used to improve instruction.

Research Design and Rationale

The RQs for this basic qualitative study were the following:

RQ1: What are the perceived concerns of teachers of ELLs about using VC with secondary students?

RQ1a: How do perceived concerns influence secondary ELL teachers' practice when using VC technology during instruction?

I conducted qualitative interviews with experienced secondary ELL teachers to find out if knowledge of teachers' concerns can improve the condition of virtual instruction. Experienced teachers were defined as certified educators who had worked with ELLs for at least 5 years. I also examined how these concerns can be the basis for addressing concerns such as PD, standardized test scores, student engagement, and instructional strategies (see Birisci & Kul, 2019; Hall & Trespalacios, 2019; Khoshhal, 2021; Serhan, 2020). A basic qualitative approach was chosen over approaches like case study,

ethnographic, or phenomenological research. The basic qualitative approach involves the study of the meaning of things and the perception of the participants about a problem; it is appropriate for the study of experiences that are practical and not intricate (Burkholder et al., 2016). Meaning does not inhere in the object, merely waiting for someone to come upon it; meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Ethnographic researchers study a group of individuals with a shared cultural background. The origins of ethnography lie in 19- and early 20th-century anthropology, where an ethnographic account was a description of some aspects of a community or culture, usually located outside Western society, and generally regarded as primitive or exotic (Hammersly & Atkinson, 2007). Although I sought participants from various ethnic backgrounds and cultures, I did not center the study around their cultural background. Rather, I focused on their experiences of teaching language learners in VC platforms.

Phenomenological researchers focus on common lived experiences of individuals. This research design emphasizes analysis of experience to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective structural analysis that portrays the essences of the experience (Moustakas, 1994). Researchers who use this approach seek to disclose the phenomena of behaviors as they manifest themselves, which was not appropriate for this study. This research project focused on concerns of the participants rather than the behaviors of teachers or students. Participants in this study did not necessarily share the same culture or lived experiences.

The essence of a case study is that it tries to illuminate a decision or sets of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result (Yin, 2013). A case study requires a combination of two or more sources such as documents, observations, and interviews (Yin, 2013). The use of multiple sources was not necessary or appropriate for the concerns-based RQs. For this study, a basic qualitative approach was more appropriate because the aim was to determine how teachers' concerns could influence VC instruction versus what decisions teachers make to influence VC instruction.

Role of the Researcher

My role as researcher involved being an observer and conducting qualitative interviews to gather data and determine if teacher concerns can be used to influence the process of VC instruction for ELLs. I worked with the Internationals Network for 2 years as a school testing coordinator. The position was a middle management position, so I did have authority over testing dates, enforcing state and College Board policy, and reporting testing irregularities and violations. The study did not take place in my current workplace, and I did not solicit participants from the former school at which I worked. Bias was reduced by not selecting any staff whom I knew on a professional or personal level. Also, bias was limited through the use of nationwide social media to recruit for participants. Teachers were not interviewed if they had previously been supervised by me in any capacity.

Methodology

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the concerns that secondary teachers have about using VC with secondary ELLs.

Participant Selection

I interviewed 12 teachers, which is an appropriate number for a qualitative study. According to Guest et al. (2006), data saturation can be achieved after analyzing 12 interviews. Participants were selected through email contacts and social media. I contacted ESOL principals and instructional coaches via email and social media for permission to recruit educators in their schools or districts as possible participants in the study. After permission was granted from two schools, emails and social media messages were deployed to invite participants who met the selection criteria needed to participate in the study. The necessary qualifications were included in the outreach email and social media post.

Purposeful sampling was used to identify participants for this qualitative study who had at least 1 year experience teaching ELL students through VC platforms. I established this criterion to avoid selecting participants whom I had directly supervised; I sought to reduce bias. Researchers use purposeful sampling to discover what occurs, the implications of what occurs, and the relationships that link occurrences (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). I assumed that all potential participants provided honest answers about their qualifications. Participant selection criteria included the following: currently work as a secondary teacher (Grades 9–12) of ELLs, have an earned degree or certificate in teaching ELLs or have taught ELLs for 5 years, currently work with 80% of secondary

population of ELLs, have used VC technology with ELLs for a minimum of a year, and have tried multiple instructional practices when using VC with ELLs. Using these criteria ensured that the population consisted of specialized educators who could share specific concerns associated with the use of VC when teaching ELL students (see Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

I emailed the instructional support staff at the Internationals Network, which is headquartered in New York, and school principals in California; New York; Washington, DC; Maryland; and Virginia. I also, searched for participants on Facebook and Twitter social media groups. During the selection process, I posted frequently, used hashtags, and sent direct messages to group administrators. After the selection process, I sent out follow-up emails to volunteers to verify that they met participant selection criteria and to share the informed consent document (see Harland & Roehl, 2021). Participants willing to volunteer for the study were required to respond to the invitation email and social media invites with "I Consent." Last, the interviews were scheduled. Participants were given a $25 gift card after completing the interview.

Instrumentation

The interview protocols were generated using the RQs and the framework as a guideline. A semi-structured interview format was used to provide the participants an opportunity to have more flexibility with their responses and to allow for follow-up questions (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Interviews questions were developed through a review process that included the dissertation committee and three outside professionals in the field of online education. The data collection tool (see

Appendix) is researcher-produced and has been reviewed by certified teachers and administrators skilled in virtual instruction. This process included the following: prescreening participants to insure they meet the minimum qualifications; having participants agree to consent forms; administering the interviews and reporting the results.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

The participant sample was obtained by sending email requests to the Internationals Network which has 30 schools across the United States. There were also participant requests send to ELL teacher groups on Facebook and Twitter. Individuals were be asked to participate if they met the following qualifications: currently work as a secondary teacher (Grades 9–12) of ELLs, have earned a degree or certificate in teaching ELLs or have taught ELLs for 5 years, currently work with 80% of secondary population of ELLs, have used VC technology with ELLs for a minimum of a year, and have tried multiple instructional practices when using VC with ELLs.

Once participants indicated they were willing to participate in the interview, they received a consent form via email and gave consent by replying “I consent” to the emailed form. Once they consented to the study, they were contacted to schedule an interview. To ensure privacy, the interviewees were assigned a pseudonym.

The interviews took place virtually through the Zoom platform and they lasted approximately 25–40 min. Each interview began with thanking the participants for agreeing to be interviewed, a short description of the study, and a summary of my qualifications. Once the interview was concluded I informed them that we were complete

and thanked them for agreeing to be a part of the study. For this study there was no plan to conduct follow-up interviews. Interviews were conducted and recorded using Zoom. Complete interview transcripts were shared with participants for member checking and accuracy. Participants were given a $25 gift card after completing the interview.

Data Analysis Plan

Data analysis was conducted by identifying codes and themes arising from the transcripts and aligning those with the RQ to research perceived ELL teacher concerns when using VC with secondary students. Interviews were transcribed using SONIX automated transcription software by the researcher and transcripts were decoded by the researcher in a Google spreadsheet. Themes were identified through open coding and enhanced through axial coding. Open coding is the labeling of any unit of data relevant to the study; axial coding is the relating of categories to each other and refining the category scheme (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As an additional measure, I took notes and kept a journal of running ideas as they emerged to follow a particular theme.

This data were then analyzed with the computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software NVivo; I ran more than one round of analysis to increase dependability. The analysis focused on the participants perceptions in the categories of perceived concerns and how these concerns influence VC instruction. Data were coded with words or short phrases; if those codes are elusive or unclear, the final set of codes or categories were transformed into longer-phrased themes (Saldaña, 2016).

Discrepant cases should be expected, and these cases were examined for potential sources of bias and also to determine whether they affected the data in any way (Saldaña,

2016). These cases are defined as data that expresses ideas outside of the expected norm. These cases can also be analyzed in discrepant case analysis, if necessary (Merriam &. Tisdell, 2016). The options for addressing discordant findings include reanalyzing the data, seeking understanding from conceptual frameworks, collecting more data, and considering the soundness of the constructs (Burkholder, 2019).

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of study depended on the ethics of the investigator to a large extent (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Once participants start to complete the interview, the tendency is for them to be honest, especially if you have already shown that you are trustworthy (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I used semistructured interviews to delve deeper into the sample's perceptions. The validity of the data depends on the direct trustworthiness of the researcher who collected and analyzed the data as well as their professional competence (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Credibility

Basic qualitative research is judged on depth, richness, subtlety, balance, thoroughness, and above all, credibility (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Credibility of the study relies of the integrity of the researcher and one strategy to insure this is to look for data that supports alternate explanations; failure to look for these alternate explanations can lead to an increase of bias toward the initial explanation you have found (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). To enhance credibility, I chose interviewees who are knowledgeable, and I built into the interviews a variety of checks for candor, memory, and consistency (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I used semistructured interviews to

give flexibility to the process and give the participants more leeway and comfort in the process to ask follow-up questions and increase rapport. Member checks were another important tool for establishing credibility and it is the act of forwarding findings or summaries of findings to participants for their review to ensure that their responses were not prejudiced by the researcher's biases. (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Transferability

The transferability of a research finding is the extent to which it can be applied in other contexts and studies (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). The process should be described in robust, thick detail so it could be replicated or enhanced by future researchers. To achieve effective transferability, I will include a detailed analysis of the teacher concerns and the process of collecting data, analyzing data. And reporting results and identify participants by carefully selecting the study sample (Burkholder et al., 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Rich description and specific details about the context of the participants' responses is inherent in an interview study. These details increase the potential for transferability of the study results. Individuals seeking to replicate the results to a different context are responsible for making the judgment of transferability.

Dependability

Dependability was established by utilizing audit trails and member checks, conducting peer debriefing, analyzing discrepant cases, and reaching data saturation (Burkholder et al., 2019). All steps were taken to eliminate threats to the dependability of the study including looking at the accuracy of self-reported data, the effect of the research context, and the effect instrument structure has on response outcomes (Guest et al.,

2012). A peer review panel and the committee reviewed the process; also, I also ran more than one round of NVivo which contributed to dependability (Burkholder et al., 2016). The peer review panel used by this researcher included the following: Dr. Charles Guilford, Dean of Culture and Climate for a school system in the mid-Atlantic states, Dr. Regena Williams, an Assistance Principal for a school system in the mid-Atlantic states, and Dr. Troy Grant, a department chair and teacher with 15 years' experience.

Confirmability

Qualitative research aims at objectivity, extracting the researcher from the study as much as possible so that the findings of the study are disassociated from any researcher bias which gives the study confirmability (Burkholder et al., 2019). I used a research journal to record all the processes and steps I took during the participant selection, collection, data analysis, and conclusions. The use of journals will help to establish reflexivity on the researcher's part, acknowledging my own position in the context setting as an important research tool and the possible effect of this on the research process and outcomes (Gupta & Awasthy, 2015; Merriam & Grenier, 2019). Establishing confirmability and reflexivity ensured that the research can be replicated by another set of objective researchers and still produce ethical and credible results. Objectivity includes being sure that the research resonates with a variety of audiences, makes a significant contribution, attends ethical considerations, and meaningfully connects peer reviewed literature, RQs and findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Ethical Procedures

At the core of the expectations and obligations that are part of a research relationship is assuring that the interviewees do not come to harm as a result of the research (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). There are several steps that were taken in order to establish ethical procedures and maintain credibility throughout this study. The responsibilities I undertook included being honest, showing respect, honoring promises, not applying pressure, and most importantly, doing no harm.

I submitted an application to the Walden University Institutional Review Board to gain approval to conduct the study before beginning the recruitment of participants and the research process. After the application was approved (approval no. 11-08-22-1010759) , I contacted the administrators of the International Schools Network to gain their approval. For social media participants, I contacted the moderators of the groups I wished to interview and gained their approval before contacting potential participants.

Participants were selected according to the established aforementioned criteria and those who did not qualify were excluded from the study. Participants were not contacted until I received official approval. They were contacted via email, Twitter direct messages, and Facebook Messenger. A signed informed consent form was obtained from each participant and it will be kept on file for 5 years on a password-protected laptop in my home office. All participants were informed that interviews will take place virtually using Zoom and they have the right to leave the study at any time. In order to maintain participant confidentiality, I assigned pseudonyms for each participant (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). Data will be kept in password-protected files on a computer in my home

office which can only be accessed by the researcher. Walden University requires that data be kept securely for 5 years and after this time it will be destroyed.

Summary

In Chapter 3, I described and outlined the research methods used in the study. The introduction included a synopsis of the chapter, and the purpose of this basic qualitative study is to explore the concerns that secondary teachers have about using VC with secondary ELLs. A basic qualitative design was used, and interviews were conducted with experienced educators with at least 5 years teaching ELLs and at least 1 year teaching ELLs via VC instruction. The study examined how teachers' perceptions and concerns can be used to improve PD and instructional strategies. The role of the researcher was defined, and instances of possible bias were outlined, and solutions were suggested to minimize bias.

Participants were selected from a baseline pool of teachers that have met a minimum criterion. A semistructured interview format was used and the data collection instrument was developed by the researcher. The instrument was reviewed by three professionals in the field of online education and the dissertation committee. Interviews took place virtually through the Zoom platform and they lasted about 25–40 min.

Data analysis was conducted using Google Sheets and NVivo qualitative analysis software. Discrepant cases were identified and examined for potential bias and if they affected the data in any way. Credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability was monitored through audits and analyzing journaling reflections. Ethical

procedure and expectations were outlined in the chapter and will be followed. In chapter four, I will present results from the research conducted.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore the concerns that secondary teachers have about using VC with secondary ELLs. VC learning has been a part of educational strategies for years, but its use increased rapidly due to the COVID pandemic (Chraa et al., 2020). I conducted semistructured interviews over the course of 3 weeks. The RQs for this study were (a) What are the perceived concerns of teachers of ELLs about using VC with secondary students? (RQ1) and (b) How do perceived concerns influence secondary ELL teachers' practice when using VC technology during instruction? (RQ1a). In this chapter, I present the results of the semistructured qualitative interviews. I also provide an overview of the setting, discuss data collection and data analysis, and present evidence of trustworthiness.

Setting

The COVID pandemic spurred increased usage of VC instruction as many school systems around the United States went to full-time online learning during the quarantine of 2020 (Neumann & Smith, 2020). The research sites for this study included an international high school in the state of Maryland and another high school in Southern California. Participants were recruited through online social media platforms and represented states including California, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Florida, Texas, and Missouri. All interviews were conducted virtually using Zoom. The only potentially disruptive condition that existed during this study was the threat of study participants contracting COVID and missing scheduled interviews.

Demographics

All participants interviewed were certified teachers who met the following criteria: (a) currently work as a secondary teacher (Grades 9–12) of ELLs, (b) earned a degree or certificate in teaching ELLs or have taught ELLs for 5 years, (c) currently work with 80% of secondary population of ELLs; (d) have used VC technology with ELLs for a minimum of a year, and (e) reported having tried multiple instructional practices when using VC with ELLs. Participant demographics are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Participant Demographics

Participant	No. of years spent teaching ELLs	No. of years spent using VC
1	10	1
2	11	1
3	12	1
4	6	3
5	32	1.5
6	15	3
7	6	1
8	9	1.5
9	11	1.5
10	5	3
11	9	1.5
12	19	1.5
13	9	2

Note. ELL = English Language Learner; VC = videoconferencing.

Data Collection

I collected data from 13 participants. One participant interview was discarded from the data set because the participant was identified as a discrepant case. Invitations were sent through email to the principals at 15 schools in the Internationals Network and

public schools in Southern California. Permission was received from two principals. The administrators for 20 Facebook groups for ELL teachers were sent a recruitment flyer, seven of whom provided permission to recruit participants from their groups. Because of the slow pace of recruitment, I decided to offer a $25 gift card as an incentive.

Virtual interviews took place over a 2-week period in January 2023. Semistructured interviews were conducted using Zoom. The interview protocol was designed to elicit robust answers and thick description by using open-ended questions (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Interviews lasted from 20 to 40 min; several participants had to be redirected due to verbose and wandering answers. Some participants had to be encouraged to expand their answers and drill down more into personal experiences relevant to the study when they gave short or superficial answers.

To record data, I used the functions of the Zoom platform. In line with Walden regulations, participants were not required to keep their cameras on for the interview, and only the audio portion was used for the recording. Audio MP4 files were uploaded to SONIX transcription software and proofread to correct any misinterpretations the software may have caused. Transcripts were then downloaded into Microsoft Word files and then uploaded into NVivo for data analysis.

The data sample contained 12 interviews that did not deviate from the study criteria established in Chapter 3. Guest et al. (2006) stated that between 10 and 12 teachers should be interviewed in a qualitative study. Guest et al. noted that data saturation can be achieved after analyzing 12 interviews.

There was only one unusual circumstance encountered during the data collection process. I excluded Participant 13 from the interviews after the participant responded to the questions with answers that were not appropriate for the study. My suspicions were aroused after the participant responded to Question 3 by stating that they had no training with online resources. The participant responded to Question 4 by stating that they did not know what PD and training was. As such, I lacked confidence that this participant was right for the study. The interview was ended after that question.

Data Analysis

I downloaded audio recordings from Zoom into SONIX transcription software. These transcriptions were edited in SONIX, and then transcripts were downloaded as Microsoft Word files. The Word files were then uploaded into NVivo to be analyzed. Nodes were created in NVivo, and important passages from each transcript were highlighted and color coded. Transcripts were copied into a spreadsheet, and second-cycle codes were developed. Themes were then developed from these codes. Themes emerged using two rounds of NVivo coding. NVivo was also used to generate word frequencies to compare the themes generated from NVivo coding; the word frequencies represent words that were frequently used by participants, which matched the codes used from NVivo coding.

I first entered nodes into the NVivo software with coding stripes added and important quotations from participants highlighted. Table 3 displays the category codes and themes that emerged from the data analysis. Illustrative participant responses are included.

Table 3

Themes, Codes, and Participant Responses Related to Videoconferencing Instruction

Theme	Coding category	Example quote
Concerns	Teacher concerns	"Oh, I was nervous that I would struggle to teach online because I had very limited experience."
	Apathy and health	"Apathy was one thing that we really talked about because it was. It was trying to define the difference between apathy and inability."
	Student behavior	"If we have a student who's doing something inappropriate, which did happen, we were able to kick them out of the zoom or put them in a private room, switch over, talk to them and let them back in."
	Technology concerns	"Yes, sometimes the Internet doesn't work or the students complain that I sound like a robot. They can't hear me clearly."
Training	Professional development	"Well, for me, there was years of professional development provided through the district because we kind of saw the technology coming."
	Teacher preparation	"I didn't prepare. That's the problem. We were told we don't need to do anything. We're going back to school and then we didn't."
	Technology training	"It was really difficult. We had zero training going into this and it was a trial and error type situation."
Support	Systemic support	"My director, she did a lot of mentoring. She did a lot of shadowing, a lot of coming in your classroom and kind of monitoring."
	Addressing concerns	"Kids were able to bring their Chromebook in and troubleshoot it right there and they would fix their Chromebook there on the spot."
		"Administrators, I would say they did everything they could. They tried to boost morale. They tried to provide flexibility."
Mindset	Comfort level using videoconferencing	"So like everybody with the pandemic. I switched to virtual. And I ended up staying virtual for over a year. And I had a lot of success."
	Tech skills level	"I feel extremely confident about my technology skills. So for listening, normally I use Google Classroom, WhatsApp, Kahoot, EdPuzzle."

The coding process generated 11 categories of codes: comfort level using VC, teacher preparation, technology training, PD, tech skill level, systemic support, apathy and health, tech concerns, student behavior, teacher concerns and addressing concerns. NVivo was used to analyzed word frequencies within the interview transcripts. Transcripts were placed into a spreadsheet and organized by the first cycle phrases. Second cycle analysis consisted of high level, mid-level, and little to none level as category results after the second cycle analysis of participant answers.

Discrepant Case Analysis

Discrepant cases were defined as any participant that provided information that the researcher deemed inappropriate or inaccurate (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). For example, the discrepant case in this study answered one question with "My spirit does that." That type of response cannot be explained with empirical evidence. The interview transcript from this participant was not included in the data analysis. The following section will report results based on the themes identified in the analysis.

Participant 13 was analyzed as a discrepant case. This data was not included in the results of this study. The participant was recruited from an ELL teacher Facebook group. The participant answered that they had the necessary qualifications to participate in the study and granted consent to be a part of the study. Their answers to questions were not appropriate for the study conducted. The participant was asked the question "What type of professional development did you attend prior to beginning online teaching & learning?" The participant replied, "What is professional development?" I asked him the follow-up question about any experience with PD and training with technology. They

responded that they did not know what that was. When asked the question, “What is your skill level using technology?” The participant responded, “My spirit does that.” When asked the question, “Describe the assistance and mentoring you were provided when transitioning to videoconference teaching and learning,” the participant responded, “It's been lots of fun. There you are.” At this point, I responded that the participant was not appropriate for this study due to not answering the questions appropriately, and I ended the interview.

Results

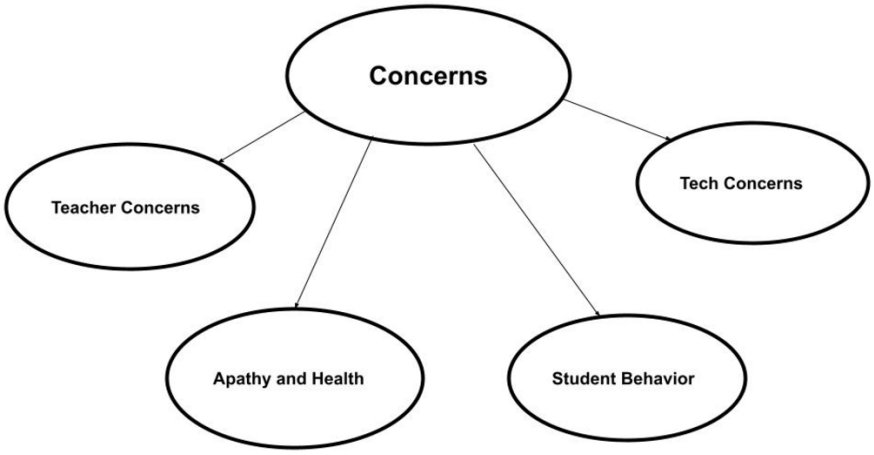
The RQs in this study were intended to determine teachers of ELLs perceived concerns when using VC with secondary students and how those concerns influence their practice when teaching in VC environments. The interview protocol was designed to elicit robust and appropriate answers from the participants with a semi-structured format to allow for follow-up questions by participants or the researcher. Four themes and 11 categories of codes were identified in the results.

Concerns

The first theme to develop was teacher concerns which can be defined as concerns about technology which are a representation of their feelings, preoccupation, thoughts, consideration, and beliefs as regards the integration of technology in the classroom (Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021). The following categories were related to this theme: teacher concerns, apathy and health, student behavior, and technology concerns (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Theme of Concerns and Categories



Teacher Concerns

Seven participants expressed perceived concerns regarding their teaching with VC instruction. Participant 3 expressed concerns with grading students during VC instruction:

> Staff was very concerned and upset about distance learning and all of the things that I told you about the failing grades. Being kind of forced to pass students that didn't do anything led to a heightened sense of animosity between teachers and staff themselves…but also teachers and administrations; and teachers and the district; and even teachers and the government with you know, making the distance learning kind of like a mandatory thing.

The participant expressed a feeling of not being in control of what was happening in the virtual classroom environment. They felt that too many factors outside of their control were being thrust onto them with minimal support and written administrative procedure.

Participant 4 stated the following concern: “I was nervous that I would struggle to teach online because I had very limited experience. All my experience was teaching in person.” This teacher lacked the necessary confidence with VC instruction, and they also mentioned they had many struggles during virtual instruction. Participant 6 felt unprepared and unsupported stating that “I showed up to work in person in 2020 of March and it was my first day and they sent me home to work online. That was a really major shock for me and I was kind of thrown to the wolves.” Participant 3 stated: “For us, the main one was really attendance. That was our biggest concern. The other concern was how can we hold them accountable? How can we grade them? When some students are doing the work, some students aren’t doing the work.” Participant 8 expressed a concern about cameras: “We addressed not having cameras on. And the feasibility of making kids turn cameras on. We as teachers did not always agree on that.”

Apathy and Health

The category of apathy and health was also a concern for some teachers in the study. Participant 1 stated that students were complaining about their eyes not being used to staring at the computer screen for long periods of time. The participant stated that there were “problems of eyesight due to interacting with a computer system for long periods of time; they were complaining about the effects on their eyes, their eyesight. And they can at times stop following the classes and leave the system only just hanging there”. This teacher had issues with students getting screen tired and staying logged into the class but not being responsive or participatory. Apathy was also an issue for some teachers. Participant 3 stated when asked, “Yes, absolutely. There’re some students that are not

equipped for online learning. Students that are doing well in school, in person, that really were not functioning online. I felt like some kids felt very depressed about being online, which is why they failed the COVID year."

Participant 3 stated: "I would say lending itself to mental health. Yes, absolutely. It's a different mentality. You have to tread a lot lighter. You can tell that there's going to be quite a gap in getting back to where it was, the loss of schooling for a lot of my students specifically. It's still building back and it took a toll on them being isolated. The social interactions now are just not there."

Participant 9 stated, "Sure. I mean, I saw students lose motivation and just become less and less tethered to the school and the school community. And then in turn, I saw that happen to myself as well. I thrive on student energy. I thrive on the community and community energy that is at our school. And when that was removed, it was quite hard to motivate myself to do some of the elements of the job." According to this participant, apathy affected students and teachers.

"There's a lot of apathy and I think with the level ones and level twos newcomer ELLs you know, they come in and at the very beginning they're either very nervous or very excited to be here. But then there's this culture shock. And after a few months, a lot of them, they realize they're not going home. And I see a lot of depression. We have a huge problem with kids skipping classes or just flat out not coming to school. It's an enormous problem", said Participant 12, an ELL teacher from the state of Georgia. This teacher had an overall positive experience with VC learning but still had to deal with some student apathy and the teacher felt there were signs of students being withdrawn.

However, participant 5 had a different experience. They stated, “Apathy. I had way less than other teachers I know because I had those preexisting relationships and I had small groups and I did lots of family contact. I think having small groups really helped. And because, like I said, I started the year by sending personalized cards to each kid, telling them how excited I was to have them in class. I think I kind of thwarted some of the apathy.” This teacher felt that having preexisting relationships from the students during in -person learning reduced the level of student apathy.

Student Behavior

Student behavior was also a concern for several teachers in the study. Participant 2 stated, “If the students are virtual, the behavior problems as far as like that is what’s disrupting learning because they’re being rude or they’re being apathetic or they’re being talkative. The issue was they just didn’t do anything. That was the biggest problem.” Participant 4 expressed the following concern about student engagement: “Some of the students, they speak in Portuguese and Spanish. Even when I remind them not to do that. The schools don’t allow us to speak any other language besides English. The teacher can only speak in English. The students can only speak in English.... Some of the students are driving a car and watching me on their cell phone.” Participant 8 also had a concern with students not being on camera: “You know, 90, 95% of students would not turn their cameras on. And I think they had some legitimate reasons why they didn’t want to turn it on because. There was too much going on in the household. Students logging in to class but not being there. Common problem.”

Several teachers reported having little to no behavior issues and participant 5 had a positive experience with student behavior. They stated, “I found that it improved. I mean, they weren’t yakking and yakking with each other, and you could turn off the chat function or turn it on and off. You know, give them permission to chat with each other or not...some of the behaviors that I see in person I didn’t have to deal with at all.” For example, participant 9 had no issues with student behavior: “No. No, not for me, because my classes were very small., but for me at least I could tell that they were tired of sitting in front of the screen. But in terms of like rude behaviors or anything like that, I did not see that.” Participant 11 also expressed limited concerns with student behavior. “There was never really too much of a behavior problem beyond being silly in the chat or the occasional student being silly with their camera wanting to show like show a video game or something when they shared their screen,” they stated when asked the follow-up question about what type of specific behavior they had seen. Participant 3 stated that the school had an effective system for dealing with student behavior: “Not so much problems with student behavior. I don’t think during virtual learning, because we were instructed by our administration that if we have a student who’s doing something inappropriate, which did happen, gestures or signs or playing music, whatever it was, to get the attention back on them, that we were able to kick them out of the zoom or put them in a private room, switch over, talk to them and let them back in.”

Technology Concerns

Technology concerns were also an issue that teachers using VC for instruction had to deal with during online learning. Every teacher interviewed expressed some sort of

technology concern from lack of reliable internet, students not having hotspots, and students not having reliable computer hardware. Participant 2 stated: “It kind of hearkens back to what I was saying about the technology just not being sufficient to engage students in learning.” In addition, participant 3 commented that “there were not enough hot spots to go around, so some didn’t have fair access to the education that we were trying to provide. Some of the students we didn’t know needed help. They didn’t know how to reach out, especially some of the students who couldn’t get in touch with our language interpretation] systems. And so they definitely slipped between the cracks. A lot of them did.” Participant 7 also expressed concerns with technology issues saying “Lack of Wi-Fi was a huge problem. And in that time, our major network charter had rapidly unveiled a program for hotspots. But the hotspots were very difficult to come by. Or when they were given to students, they didn’t know how to set them up.” And finally, participant 11 spoke of major concerns when asked about technology issues: “Yes, massively so. My students are our schools like 98% free and reduced lunch. So that means the majority of our students are below, well below, the poverty line with at the time maybe only half of them having access to the Internet. So the first big hurdle was access to the Internet. Second big hurdle was technology. Technology like literacy, computer literacy, so new students to the country who had not been with us in person at all, had probably never touched or used a Chromebook before.”

Dealing with these concerns virtually was also exacerbated by the language barrier and the fact that some students did not have the computer literacy to be successful with VC instruction. This was also complicated further by the many technology issues

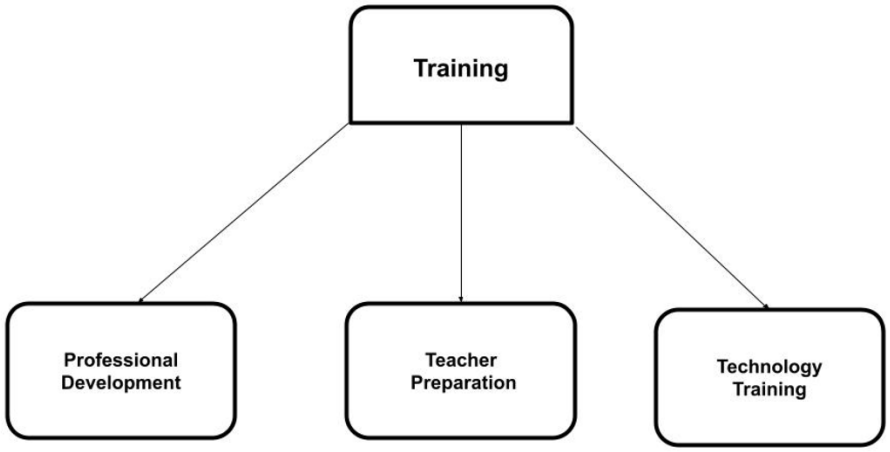
such as lack of Wi-Fi in the home, inadequate number of hotspots, and working laptops for students.

Preparation and Training

The second theme that emerged from the teacher interviews was the subject of teacher training which including the categories PD, technology training, and teacher preparation. Teachers commented on training that took place before and during VC instruction. The following categories were related to this theme: PD, teacher preparation and technology training (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

*Theme of Preparation and Training and Categorie*s



Professional Development

Some teachers did not have a lot of PD before or during the periods of VC instruction. For example, participant 1 was only instructed "how to access LAN computer systems and how to interact with Microsoft office." In addition, Participant 4 expressed "that personally, I feel as though we didn't get a lot of professional development**.** I'm not

sure if this would be considered professional development. When the pandemic started, we had a training session at the school. We all got together, teachers and administrators, and they taught us how to use Zoom. I don't know if you would call that professional development or just a regular training session." Participant 9 also stated that "it wasn't, it probably was not sufficient. It was I think just a lot of times, it was, it was just like basically a share out of some best practices that some teachers at our school were doing or maybe even just watching like a quick YouTube video on like tips and tricks or something like that that the principal sent out. But, you know, it was ad hoc." And finally, participant 3 admitted "I've done a ton of professional development, but not around telecommunications, not any of that."

Teacher Preparation

Teacher preparation was also a category of training in which participants were asked about their own personal preparation for VC online learning. There were participants that expressed concerns about the online learning process because they were not properly prepared to being online learning. This was confirmed by Participant 2 who stated: "Well, I didn't prepare. That's the problem. We were told we don't need to do anything. We will come back to school. And the next day we were told we aren't coming back. So most of the teacher's materials were left in the classroom and it was really a fly by the seat of your pants type of thing." Participant 9 added: "I mean, I talked to a lot of other teachers about best practices. I looked online, some about best practices. A lot of it was done kind of ad hoc. And in the moment, I was a lot of it was kind of trial and error and seeing what could work via video and what could not."

Some teachers like participant 4 had a different experience: “I can say it was a not perfect, but they need me to be my level best. VC was able to share more information and able to record some information and send to the students who missed their classes online.”

Technology Training

Effective training in various online platforms and application was also a concern of ELL secondary teachers interviewed for this study. Many participants shared opportunities they had for effective training before and during online learning. Participant 7 stated: “I think as COVID unfolded and we realized that we were not going back, there was a huge push of professional development to find resources that we could use readily available to create a more fluid classroom environment.” In addition, participant 4 added a wide variety of technology training experiences: “Okay, so I use Google Classroom, I use the different features like the document sharing. I use Kahoot and Quizlet. I showed them very small videos on YouTube. Sometimes I record myself making videos for students. I post those videos on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. So again, online games, Google Classroom. I use the breakout room.” Participant 7 also had a lot of training experiences: “We used Canvas at that district, my next district, I went to a district with Google Classroom. I currently use Google Classroom, Nearpod, Ed Puzzle. IXL for math. I teach both. Imagine learning at the time. Last year we did Alexa.”

Several participants expressed a minimal or little amount of technology training. Participant 9 stated: “Uh, training was kind of minimal. I mean, I guess how to use Zoom using Google Classroom extensively. I would say some with like Nearpod, some teachers

kind of push that more. Yeah, there wasn't an extensive amount of training." Participant 3 added, "We weren't training anything. We got real good at Zoom. Of course, we had just switched our student learning management system over to Canvas that year, which is easy to do. The online virtual with Canvas. But back then we didn't. We had zero training going into this and it was a trial and error type situation."

There were also some participants that had a different experience with training and reported undergoing a tremendous amount of PD. Participant 6 said the following about PD: "So basically the professional development I just recently attended was how to, funny enough, how to use technology to enhance the learning experience for l:l. And then I learned on that professional development about Padlet and all these other different resources that I can incorporate that I didn't know about. My professional development is ongoing, but that stuff like that is kind of what they put us to learn before we did start a transition to online." Participant 2 added, "Well, for me, there was years of professional development provided through the district because we kind of saw the technology coming. As far as using 1 to 1 Chromebooks. Having a platform online not necessarily as the only option as was in COVID but there were seminars in Palm Springs that were very useful. It was like a weekend long thing that we did every year. There were experts from all over the country that would come to share their products, their expertise, and so at that time my goal was going paperless." Participant 11 experienced a high volume of PD: "So this was summer 2020, and I was able to participate in like a 6-week level ones like a certification course prior to the start of the full online learning year. And then there was training through the county that I work with or [redacted] had. It was like two or three

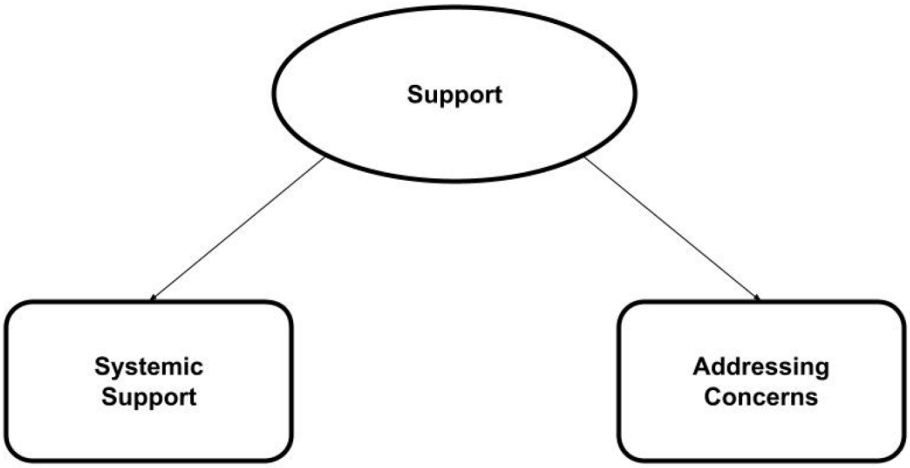
days. Of webinars and trainings on Peardeck, Screencastify to Zoom and all of some of the other programs that were going on, Canvas was popping up at the time and things like that."

Support

Systemic support and mentoring was another theme emerging in this study. The following categories were related to this theme: systemic support and addressing concerns (see Figure 3).

Figure 3

Theme of Support and Categories



Systemic Support

Participants had varying experiences with administration and district support systems during online learning. Participant 2 reported a large amount of mentoring and support:

> Basically, there was this thing they called the tech cadre. And so there was, I believe it was a monthly session where the technology teachers on special

> assignments, along with the directors, would provide professional development on various topics. Try and get us up to speed on just all of the cutting edge education stuff with technology. And so I we did that for several years and I received a, I don't know, like a certificate.

Participant 8 added: “All of the mentoring was done in-house by our teachers. Whoever there was, there was a system of sharing out practices. And I'm just thinking back. Teachers signed up for different platforms that they were familiar with, and we shared best practices.”

Other participants had an experience either with little support or an experience lacking much support entirely. Participant 1 stated: “We as teachers, we were given some. Some intruders were brought to school to offer us training about the technology and how to interact with the computers and to attend classes using the platform. Some. And they kept us until we were able to catch up with the tools we use.” In addition, Participant 3 added: “We were not provided anything. We had administration checking in on us to make sure that our students were showing up or that if they were not, that we logged in, that we tried to email, that we tried to call home, that we tried to make that initial parent contact, I guess, just to document and cover ourselves. But as far as training goes, here's what we're going to do and here's how we're going to service our students. During these times, we weren't given anything.” Finally, participant 9 stated: “I mean, a lot of times it was just like, good luck. You know, do the best you can. We understand this is a difficult situation. I think it was just the nature of the situation that it was insufficient.”

Addressing Concerns

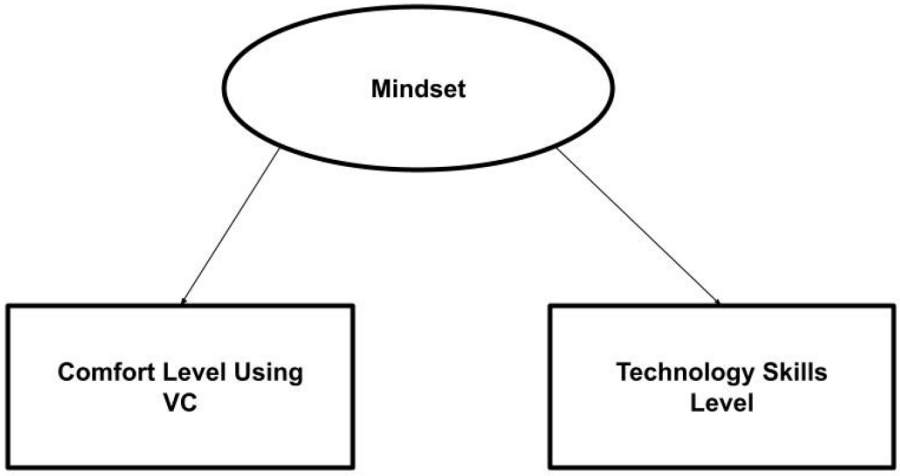
Participants had various experiences and they shared how technology concerns were addressed by school districts and school administrators. There were some participants that expressed high levels of support and some that reported they did not have as much support. Participant 2 stated: “The districts kind of utilizes themselves as like community hubs. And so students and parents and teachers were still able to go to and from the school to collect technology. So if you had like a physical technology technological obstacle, then you would come to the school, you'd get a new device.” Participant 5 added: “So our district was really good about providing stuff to kids. Headphones with microphone for each student. We got a hot spot to their house for each student. We also, in Austin, had internet buses that were stationed in neighborhoods.” Participant 9 stated: “You know, I mean, we got hotspots, which was good. We did roll out the Chromebooks. I mean, it was good. I feel like the district honestly did a pretty good job with what they could.” In contrast to these interviewees, Participant 12 expressed the support as the following: “I think inconsistently. Unfortunately, inconsistently. So many times it just didn't work.”

Mindset

Teacher mindset toward VC instruction was also queried during the research interview process. The following categories were related to this theme: comfort level using VC and technology skills (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

Theme of Teacher Mindset and Categories



Participants had varying perspectives with comfort level of delivering VC instruction and varying levels of confidence in their technology skills. Participant 1 stated: “At some point I feel comfortable. Because I was able to get comforts of my own without too much travelling. And it was all very comfortable to some point. Despite some challenges faced by students.” Participant 3 stated: “For me, specifically with high school, it had the hype. The first couple of weeks and then after that you would see attendance less and less for the wide range of proficiency levels that I have. The students who are newcomers or new to the country really struggled with just the technology capabilities. In addition, Participant 4 commented that “based on my experience, it's harder to engage students online compared to in-person because online some of the students get bored. Some of them do other things like drive their car and watch me on their cell phone. It's not all of them, but some of them.” When asked about how they feel about VC instruction in general, Participant 9 responded, “Uh, I mean, in general, I

would say it was very difficult and it made certain elements of the job more difficult. And it, it particularly made teaching ELLs more of a challenge. Yeah. Don't feel great about it."

Comfort Level Using Videoconferencing

Teacher attitude toward VC instruction was also queried during the research interview process. Participants had varying perspectives with comfort level of delivering VC instruction and varying levels of confidence in their technology skills. Participant 1 stated: "At some point I feel comfortable. Because I was able to get comforts of my own without too much travelling. And it was all very comfortable to some point. Despite some challenges faced by students." Participant 3 stated: "For me, specifically with high school, it had the hype. The first couple of weeks and then after that you would see attendance less and less for the wide range of proficiency levels that I have. The students who are newcomers or new to the country really struggled with just the technology capabilities. In addition, Participant 4 commented that "based on my experience, it's harder to engage students online compared to in-person because online some of the students get bored. Some of them do other things like drive their car and watch me on their cell phone. It's not all of them, but some of them." When asked about how they feel about VC instruction in general, participant 9 responded, "Uh, I mean, in general, I would say it was very difficult and it made certain elements of the job more difficult. And it, it particularly made teaching ELLs more of a challenge. Yeah. Don't feel great about it."

Technology Skill Level

The technology skill level of teachers was also a theme developed in this research study. Teaches reported various level of technology skill. Participant 3 said, “Far as technology is concerned? I would say I'm pretty advanced now as far as utilizing technology in my classroom to get those language domains to get some data on that. But doing it virtually, I, I'm probably still novice.” Participant 4 stated, “I feel extremely confident about my technology skills. So for listening, normally I use Microsoft. Sorry, Google Classroom, the word processing feature. I also use WhatsApp and Kahoot.” Participant 5 added, “I would say I'm expert at everything. The writing if they've had a typing class. I think I'm an expert level on teaching writing.” Participant 6 expressed that “my mind is expert. You kind of have to be an expert if you're going to teach students online.” Some like participant 9 were not as confident in their technology skills: “It's a good question. I mean, I would say I think it's decent. But I think there are definitely more tech savvy teachers out there.” Finally, participant 12 stated: “At this point, I think the skill level is pretty high. I've gotten, I've gotten good at it. I've gotten good at, I can, I can find things.”

Evidence of Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of study depended on the ethics of the investigator to a large extent (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Once participants start the interview, the tendency is for them to be honest, especially if you have already shown that you are trustworthy (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I used semistructured interviews to delve deeper into the participants’ perceptions. The validity of the data depends on the direct trustworthiness of

the researcher who collected and analyzed the data as well as their professional competence (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Credibility

Basic qualitative research is judged on depth, richness, subtlety, balance, thoroughness, and above all, credibility (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Credibility of the study relies on the integrity of the researcher and one strategy to insure this is to look for data that supports alternate explanations; failure to look for these alternate explanations can lead to an increase of bias toward the initial explanation you have found (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). To enhance credibility, I chose interviewees who are knowledgeable, and I built into the interviews a variety of checks for candor, memory, and consistency (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I used semistructured interviews to give flexibility to the process and give the participants more leeway and comfort in the process to ask follow-up questions and increase rapport. Member checks were another important tool for establishing credibility and it is the act of forwarding findings or summaries of findings to participants for their review to ensure that their responses were not prejudiced by the researcher's biases. (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Member checking was achieved by emailing interview transcripts to participants and having them to respond to me with questions, comments, or concerns. There were 13 participants in the study, one participant's transcript was excluded due to discrepancies in their responses to interview questions. Data saturation was achieved after interviewing 12 participants.

Transferability

The transferability of a research finding is the extent to which it can be applied in other contexts and studies (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). The process should be described in robust, thick detail so it could be replicated or enhanced by future researchers. To achieve effective transferability, I included a detailed analysis of the teacher concerns and the process of collecting data, analyzing data. and reporting results and identify participants by carefully selecting the study sample (Burkholder et al., 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Rich description and specific details about the context of the participants' responses is inherent in an interview study. These details increase the potential for transferability of the study results. Individuals seeking to replicate the results to a different context are responsible for making the judgment of transferability.

Social media participant selection was conducted with heavy vetting and screening of potential applicants. The researcher used email signatures to search for specific schools in which the potential participants were supposed to be employed. If the potential participant had a school system generated email address, it was easy to search for them online and find that they were attached to a credible school.

Dependability

Dependability was established by utilizing audit trails and member checks, conducting peer debriefing, and analyzing discrepant cases (Burkholder et al., 2019). Also, once a discrepant case was identified, the data from that interview was not included in the results. All steps were taken to eliminate threats to the dependability of the study including looking at the accuracy of self-reported data, the effect of the research context,

and the effect instrument structure has on response outcomes (Guest et al., 2012). I kept a researcher journal to record the various steps I took during the research process. After each interview I would listen to the transcript and reflect on my voice inflection and how I addressed each participant in order to make sure there was no bias in my tone of voice. A peer review panel and the committee reviewed the interview protocol; also, I ran more than one round of NVivo which contributed to dependability (Burkholder et al., 2016). Running more than one round ensured that mistakes were not made due to the results coming out identical. The peer review panel used by this researcher included the following: the Dean of Culture and Climate for a school system in the mid-Atlantic states, an Assistance Principal for a school system in the mid-Atlantic states, and a department chair and teacher with 15 years' experience. The peer review panel analyzed the interview protocol for practicality as they were all experienced educators with over 5 years' experience with VC instruction.

Confirmability

Qualitative research aims at objectivity, extracting the researcher from the study as much as possible so that the findings of the study are disassociated from any researcher bias which gives the study confirmability (Burkholder et al., 2019). I used a research journal to record all the processes and steps I took during the participant selection, collection, data analysis, and conclusions. The use of journals helped to establish reflexivity on the researcher's part, acknowledged my own position in the context setting as an important research tool, and the possible effect of this on the research process and outcomes (Gupta & Awasthy, 2015; Merriam & Grenier, 2019).

Establishing confirmability and reflexivity ensured that the research can be replicated by another set of objective researchers and still produce ethical and credible results. Objectivity includes being sure that the research resonates with a variety of audiences; makes a significant contribution; heeds ethical considerations; and meaningfully connects peer-reviewed literature, the RQs, and the findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Summary

The RQs for this basic qualitative study were the following: (a) What are the perceived concerns of teachers of ELLs about using VC with secondary students? and (b) How do perceived concerns influence secondary ELL teachers' practice when using VC technology during instruction? Analyzing teacher concerns, mindset, training, and systemic support can be used to affect the quality of VC instruction for secondary ELLs. The teachers interviewed for this study expressed various level of comfort and confusion; support and neglect; success and struggles.

In the theme of concerns, participants expressed issues with student and staff apathy and health, student behavior in VC learning, and technology concerns. Every teacher interviewed in the study had some sort of technology issues during VC instruction. these issues were mainly problems with student internet connections, the availability of laptops and hotspots for students. Apathy was also an issue for many participants in the study. Many students experienced apathy and some participants reported experiencing apathy toward VC instruction as well. Health concerns were also an issue for participants in the study. Participants reported students having trouble with eyesight after viewing the screen for long periods of time. Disruptive student behavior

was also a concern for some participants; students would not stay on camera; some students would display video games during class time; and some student would abuse the chat function or the mute function in Microsoft Teams.

Teacher responses in the theme of training indicated that the amount of PD, teacher preparation, and technology training affected the quality of VC instruction. Some teachers reported having little or no PD. Oftentimes these participants had the greatest amount of concerns with not feeling productive during VC instruction. The most confident and successful participants were the ones that had undergone some type of proficient PD and training. The amount of personal preparation also affected the amount of concerns for the teachers interviewed. Some participants reported not preparing at all and that was a concern for them. The amount of technology training also was a concern for participants that did have proficient technology skills. The participants with the most technology training often had the least amount for concerns with VC instruction.

The theme of support reported results that participants experienced varying amounts of systemic and administrative support during VC instruction. Some participants had a lot of mentoring and support; most of these participants reported a more efficient experience with VC instruction. The manner in which these concerns were addressed also affected the perceived success rate and perceived concerns that participants had with VC instruction.

The theme of mindset indicated results that participants experienced varying level of confidence regarding their comfort level using VC instruction and their technology skill level. Some of the more successful participants reported that they were confident

that they produced quality instruction with VC. Many of these confident participants also expressed high skill level with numerous applications and online learning tools. There were also a group of participants that did not express confidence in the technology skill and they also had a low level of comfort with VC instruction. Chapter 5 will provide a discussion of the interpretations of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, and conclusions.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore concerns that secondary ELL teachers have with using VC instruction. I conducted semistructured interviews to explore perceived concerns and analyze how those concerns influence teacher practice. The COVID-19 pandemic changed the nature of education, with the delivery of instruction moving from F2F to VC instruction in many schools (Correia et al., 2020; Goddard, 2020; Kang Shin & Borup, 2020). Instructors faced challenges in learning to use new technologies in a short period of time, designing instructional materials that fit the new environment, providing an interactive remote learning environment, managing a lack of student engagement, managing student apathy and sickness, and adopting new assessment techniques (Birisci & Kul, 2019; Correia et al., 2020; Dinc, 2019; Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2020; Ockey et al., 2019; Serhan, 2020).

Teacher perceptions of instructional technology are an important factor in the success or failure of technology implementation (Dinc, 2019; Hall & Trespalacios, 2019; Lee, et al., 2018). Most school systems do have a teacher representative on the school board of education; however, there is not much evidence that these teacher representatives influence decisions based on teacher challenges and concerns (Raman et al., 2019). Many online learning policies are new to teachers and administrators alike, and the concern about productive PD exists (Hall & Trespalacios, 2019; Raman et al., 2019). This study was conducted to examine this gap in research.

The theme of concerns encompasses participating teachers' concerns including apathy and health of students and staff, student behavior, and technology issues. One

participant reported being nervous teaching online because they had never done it before. The category of apathy and health was also a concern for both students and staff members, especially during the COVID shutdown. Participants reported feeling apathetic about VC instruction. They also reported that many students were also apathetic. Student behavior was also a concern for participants in this study. Zoom bombing (entering an online platform without an invite and disrupting the meeting), lack of student camera usage, and unresponsive students were concerns for participants during VC instruction. Technology issues were also a concern for every teacher in the study. Participants reported that students did not have adequate access to the internet. They also reported encountering sound issues with distorted, robotic voices during Zoom sessions.

The theme of training includes teacher experiences with PD, teacher preparation, and technology training. Results showed both positive experiences and challenges. Successful participants described a robust and thorough PD experience that made them feel successful throughout VC instruction. One interviewee shared a less confident experience and reported that there was little or no preparation for VC instruction. Also, this participant reported that their school administration and school district were not prepared for online instruction. Many of the policies and practices were done ad hoc. Training was minimal and was mainly focused on being proficient with Zoom and Google Classroom.

The participants' perceptions of support included the categories of systemic support and how concerns were addressed. Several participants in the study expressed appreciation for the support they received. Teachers who felt supported expressed that

administrators were shadowing, mentoring, and checking into VC classes on a regular basis. They also provided feedback to teachers on what they saw during VC instruction during PD sessions. Students were also supported by system technology centers where students could get their laptops repaired or switched out on the spot. Administrators also tried to boost staff morale and be flexible during VC instruction to make teachers feel more condiment and comfortable.

The theme of mindset indicates how teachers felt about the overall VC instruction experience and includes the categories of tech skill level and comfort level using VC. The participants who had the most comfortable overall VC instruction experience also had a variety of training with VC instruction applications including Google Classroom, WhatsApp, Kahoot, Flipgrid, and EdPuzzle. In contrast, participants with less training had a more difficult experience because they felt more confident with in person instruction. These participants reported that they struggled with not being able to really see what students were doing, especially if the students were not turning on their cameras.

Interpretation of the Findings

In this section, I interpret the findings from the data analysis. Interpretations are organized by theme. Data are also interpreted in the context of the study's conceptual framework, the CBAM.

The use of CBAM to address teacher concerns has resulted in strategies to improve various educational settings. Educational researchers have used the CBAM framework to investigate strategies to integrate teacher concerns into planning and PD

(Birisci & Kul, 2019; Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021; Dinc, 2019; Georgiou & Ioannou, 2019; Lee et al., 2018; Trapani & Annunziato, 2019). CBAM includes the following stages of tracking innovation implementation: information (Stage 1), personal (Stage 2), management (Stage 3), consequence (Stage 4), collaboration (Stage 5), and refocusing (Stage 6).

The move to VC instruction was unlike most CBAM-inspired technology integration programs. Change is a process, not an event; it is facilitated by PD, personal growth, and the ability to accept new methods (Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021). Most of the participants in this study experienced the opposite of this. At the onset of the COVID pandemic, government mandated social distancing requirements forced many school districts to conduct VC instruction without much PD, personal preparation, or the option of accepting new methods. There were government and school system mandates to adopt virtual platforms, and teachers had to adjust very quickly. The transition to online classrooms was done with little or no preparation. Most school leaders offered emergency PDs to prepare staff to deliver online instruction once the COVID lockdowns began (Tsakeni, 2021)

The themes of this study—training, support, apathy and heath, and mindset—compare closely to the six stages in CBAM of tracking innovation implementation and improving the process through analyzing concerns. Educational researchers have used CBAM to examine teacher concerns; these concerns are used to plan effective PD (Birisci & Kul, 2019; Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021; Georgiou & Ioannou, 2019; Trapani & Annunziato, 2019). Participants in this study that report being most comfortable with the

move to VC instruction were the most prepared, trained, and supported by school administration and districts.

Concerns

One theme that emerged from the interviews was concerns in terms of understanding how to instruct using VC. One of the primary concerns of participants was the need for PD focused on VC instruction. The results from my study confirm the findings from the literature in Georgiou and Ioannou (2019) which investigated teacher concerns including lack of PD in the technology adoption process. Research also shows that effective PD can improve the overall educational experience, increase student engagement, and reduce apathy for both staff and students (Chraa et al., 2020; Epps et al., 2021; Kayaduman & Demirel, 2019; Maimaiti et al., 2021). This research study confirms these results as participants felt that student behavior and engagement improved with effective VC instruction. Participants that felt they were better trained for VC instruction had less apathy with themselves and their students as they were better prepared for virtual classes. According to Al-Samarie (2019), various challenges have been encountered during ELL teacher implementation of VC instruction including technology issues and this result was confirmed by my study. The literature indicated concerns that students did not have reliable access to the internet or hotspots and the results of this study confirmed that some teachers provided inadequate education services due to the students' lack of reliable internet.

Study findings also confirmed teachers' concerns with access to adequate technology training and technology proficiency (Hall & Trespalacios, 2019; Maimaiti et

al., 2021; Serhan, 2020). The most successful participants in my study had a huge amount of support from their school districts and school administrations which confirmed what is found in the literature; when teacher's concerns are addressed and used for planning and PD, there is a better experience using VC technology (Serhan, 2020).

The theme of concerns can be compared to the CBAM stage 1 (Information) and stage 2 (Personal). The teacher's concerns provided the information needed for a school administration to identify what are the issues and how can these concerns be reduced. Also, the teachers interviewed felt that PD was the most effective when it was run by teachers that were also experts in VC instruction and when teacher concerns were addressed during PD. It is a personal experience for the teachers involved in that they interact directly with students. Some know exactly what needs to be done to improve instruction and technology integration. Other teachers interviewed were less confident and needed more PD to feel comfortable with VC instruction. Data collected on apathy, student behavior, and technology concerns can be used to gauge teacher comfort with VC instruction.

Preparation and Training

Another theme that emerged from my research is teacher preparation and technology training. Results of the interviews showed that the most successful and comfortable teachers with VC instruction had participated in ongoing technology training and teacher preparation which confirms the results of Dinc (2019) who found that the most successful teachers had attended ongoing training. The category of teacher preparation examined how teachers personally prepared themselves for VC instruction.

Hall and Trespalacios (2019) indicated that the most effective and confident teachers in VC instruction had personal learning and PD before beginning online learning. However, according to the results of this study even some of the more confident and highly trained teachers still felt unprepared for virtual instruction which disconfirms the aforementioned study.

Participants indicated they had a rushed and mediocre experience with technology training and this confirms what is seen in the literature finding a relationship between the speed at which training occurred leaving teachers feeling that they did not have necessary skills to conduct effective VC instruction (Epps et al., 2021). This result is further confirmed by Dinc (2019) who found that poor training reduced the level of teachers' technology use and the effectiveness of virtual instruction.

The theme of training relates to CBAM Stage 3 (Management), Stage 5 (Collaboration), and Stage 6 (Refocusing). According to Georgiou and Ioannou (2019), teachers will enter the management stage once they are using the technology and at least attempting to use it effectively; collaboration exists when teachers are actively looking for training and opportunities to improve; and refocusing is when the teacher reaches a high enough skill level, and they are looking for improvements on their own. In this study of teacher concerns, the researcher found that the teachers with the most training in VC instruction and applications were the most comfortable with the implementation of virtual instruction.

Support

Another theme that emerged from this study was the need for systemic support and how school administrations and school districts addressed teacher concerns. During VC instruction and the COVID pandemic, many teachers were placed in situations in which they were expected to implement new policies and instructional practices that were mandated by school systems or school authorities without the expressed request or consent of the teachers themselves (Georgiou & Ioannou, 2019). In their interviews, participants voiced open resentment toward the school system and the local governments that decided to make virtual learning mandatory without considering the input of teachers and families which confirms Georgiou and Ioannou's findings.

Research indicated that school administrators are the crucial driving force for technology integration in schools and their continued support is needed to conduct effective VC instruction (Raman et al., 2019). Teachers either went into VC instruction with a strong support network or a weak, non-existent support structure. Results of my study showed that the most effective school systems provided nearly unlimited support for their teachers and family stakeholders, and this produced effective and robust VC instruction programs. These findings from my study also confirmed what was found in Raman et al. (2019) which found that leadership and support of school principals and school districts is crucial to effective VC instruction.

Using teacher concerns to determine where support is needed increased the likelihood of success because schools created policies most likely to support teacher needs (Trapani & Annunziato, 2019). Participants in this study indicated that proactive

administrations enforced rules to eliminate Zoom bombing and allowed teachers to use waiting rooms in order to screen out potential interrupters. The policies created to support VC instruction by effective school systems addressed teacher concerns immediately with tech department office hours and a 24-hr turnaround time.

Dele-Ajayi et al. (2021) indicated that teachers' peak concern was the school administration and what type of support they would require to adopt and integrate VC instruction within their classrooms. This was confirmed by this study in that the teachers who struggled the most during VC instruction had little to no support from the school administration. The literature did show instances where faculty members did not have sufficient time, knowledge, or support for the transition to VC instruction and these teachers felt like their voice was not being heard and their concerns did not matter (Hietanen & Svedholm-Häkkinen, 2021).

Findings confirm the outcomes indicated in the literature; designing support with teacher concerns at the core of best practices and PD has the potential to positively impact teachers' comfort levels with technology tools and self-efficacy toward teaching with technology (Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021; Hall & Trespalacios, 2019; Raman et al., 2019). School systems focused on teacher concerns around support needs developed innovative ways of addressing concerns including mobile Wi-Fi buses for low-income areas, multiple hotspots for families with multiple children, a live person tech support line for teachers and families, immediate tech repair or exchange, and ongoing PD. New strategies implemented with little or no advance notice, caused concern from teachers and administrators (Hall & Trespalacios, 2019; Raman et al., 2019).

The theme of support relates to the CBAM stage 4 (Consequence) in which teacher concerns focus predominantly on the impact of the change on students (Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021). Many of these changes were incurred through mandates promulgated from state and local governments to conduct full-time VC instruction as a policy. The amount of support consistently given to teachers was a concern of the participants in this study. Participants reporting ineffective support during distance learning also expressed a low comfort level with VC instruction.

Mindset

The theme of mindset emerged from my analysis indicating teacher's hesitation because of their perceived comfort level using VC and technology skill level. Results indicated that participants experienced lack of motivation at times to teach virtually and according to Epps et al. (2021), lack of buy-in can affect staff morale and make implementation more difficult which was confirmed by my research. Online learning for ELLs has several key components to create a successful experience including having comfortable social and intercultural relationships (Freiermuth & Huang, 2021).

Camera requirements also made for very little comfort using VC instruction. Student cameras being on during VC instruction was a concern for many of the teachers in this study and the participants in the studies conducted by Serhan (2020) and Freiermuth and Huang (2021). The results of my study confirmed that some students do not want to be on camera at all for various reasons including bandwidth or technology hardware/software issues, inappropriate or embarrassing home environment, or just not

wanting to be seen on camera. This has caused teachers discomfort due to them having to enforce the policy of cameras being mandatory.

The mindset theme corresponds with CBAM stage 2 (Personal) which typically reflects anxieties about the teacher's ability to implement the change and meet the demand, the appropriateness of the change, and the personal costs of getting involved (Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021). The results of this study confirm that effective just-in-time PD should respond to teacher-expressed concerns; also, a teacher's abilities with technology integration may not be as important as their abilities as a leader and the attitude toward virtual instruction (Dinc, 2019; Neumann & Smith, 2020). It is the teacher's responsibility to keep students engaged and excited about online learning which can be enhanced by the teacher's positive presence and fostering a sense of social engagement during VC instruction (Epps et al., 2021).

Overall, data from this study indicates that teachers can be successful in VC instruction if teacher concerns are addressed and included in the planning of PD and systemic support. Also, successful teachers expressed that the following conditions must exist for success with VC instruction. First, teachers must possess a flexible mindset and be eager to learn how to implement new technology including online learning applications, learning management systems, and VC tools like chat and breakout rooms. In this study, teachers that reported using a variety of applications to assist with VC instruction felt they successful.

Limitations of the Study

This study had limitations associated with qualitative research. Limitations included the following: the researcher needed to use financial remuneration to entice subjects to participate in the study, there was difficulty obtaining permission from many of the schools in the Internationals Network, and I conducted the interviews during the winter holiday season. When the study flyer was first published on social media, there were no responses for 3 weeks. I applied to the Walden University Institutional Review Board for permission to offer a financial incentive and this was approved. Once the new flyer was posted on social media sites, there was an immediate influx of emails from potential participants. Some of them provided generic information regarding credentials and upon asking follow-up questions and doing internet search, I was unable to verify their credentials. These individuals were not included in the study. Participants recruited from social media sites were only chosen if they were using a verifiable school system generated email address.

The Internationals Network is comprised of 31 schools in the continental United states. The possibly existed to have around 500 school staff as potential participants in the study. However, it was very difficult to gain approval from the principals in the network. In the end, only one school in the network was able to be approved for this study. Conducting research during the holiday season extended the time for collecting data because many participants were on vacation, or they did not want to do the interview until after the winter break was over.

Recommendations

Recommendations for this study include examining the social-emotional learning connection to VC instruction, expanding participant recruitment from any school with ELLs, and having a plan to screen participants recruited from social media. A Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) survey in an online program in the mid-Atlantic states school system reported that 72% of students felt that they had not made one friend during the online learning process and overall, many students miss the F2F interaction of peers (Ghazal et al., 2018). Teachers should be interviewed on how they are using VC instruction to increase the social interactions of students during virtual learning. Compared with engagement, research on student disengagement has received less direct attention from scholars (Maimaiti et al., 2021; Spitzer et al., 2021). Student engagement was a key component for conducting successful VC instruction and this study has shown that the most successful teachers had a relationship with their students and created a virtual environment with positive social interactions.

Some recommendations for future research include hybrid programs, after school enrichment, and VC instruction for homeschool ELLs and General Education. Examining teachers in hybrid learning programs would bring a different data set and outlook to VC instruction since it would include more of a social, in person aspect. Many students in hybrid learning environments are also turning to afterschool enrichment programs especially for College Board assessment practice, music instruction, and performing arts. These programs are offered both in person and virtually. Since before COVID, companies and schools have offered virtual homeschool curriculums and some of these

come with optional live VC instruction. There is not current much literature or research on the subject of VC instruction when homeschooling ELLs.

Teachers in this study who reported the most success with VC instruction described supports put in place to assist teachers with student behavior, technology concerns, and administrative support. It would add insight for future work to examine how schools structure supports for teachers, and which school policies and practices address teacher concerns.

Participant recruitment should be expanded to include ELL teachers from any school. Recruiting from the Internationals Network proved very difficult, and it limited the pool of applicants greatly when schools did not respond. In the future, researchers should open recruitment to more schools and use social media to find participants. There should be a screening plan to only include social media participants whose credentials can be verified. I recommend using only participants responding with school system generated email addresses when recruiting from an open social media platform which is what was done in this study.

Implications

The results of the study indicated that addressing teacher concerns can improve the quality of VC instruction through PD and systemic supports which confirms what has been seen in the literature. (Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021; Dinc, 2019). These concerns influence teacher practice in many ways and the results of the qualitative interviews confirmed what was seen in the literature. Support and continued PD and mentoring during the VC instruction process leads to a more positive teacher mindset, a higher

comfort level with VC instruction, and an increase in the teacher skill set (Birisci & Kul, 2019; Dele-Ajayi et al., 2021). The teachers who had more training and full systemic support were the most confident and they felt like they were thriving. Also, these teachers felt their students were thriving and developing academically. Two teachers also mentioned that they developed a great rapport with their classes and the students genuinely enjoyed VC instruction which confirms the results of Serhan (2020) that found many secondary students acclimated well to online learning. This study confirmed peer-reviewed research in that teachers perform better in VC instruction with extensive technology PD before and during the school year (Georgiou & Ioannou, 2019; Hall & Trespalacios, 2019).

The findings from this study can affect virtual leaning in several positive ways. Teachers feel more positive about the instructional experience when their concerns are taken seriously and are made a part of PD which is confirmed by Kayaduman and Demirel (2019), Trapani and Annunziato (2018), and Georgiou and Ioannou (2019). The data from this study has shown that effective teachers with a positive mindset will lead to better virtual learning experiences for students. Also, school districts and school administrators can learn from what progressive school districts have done to support their staff.

Raman et al. (2019) indicated that guidance and support of school administrators is critical to the success of VC instruction. This outcome was covered in this study and the teachers who felt more supported were the most successful. The data from this study has shown that the most effective teachers had effective technology training,

administrative and district support, ongoing mentorship, and updated technology resources confirming the results of Dinc (2019).

This research study shows that it is important to address teacher concerns to improve VC instruction especially since more school districts are offering an online option for learning. This option is important for students and families with health concerns during this era of COVID. Virtual learning also offers a convenient, at home learning option for families. These virtual students need to have a robust learning experience within the free and appropriate public education guidelines which also applies to rigorous virtual learning experiences and positive social change.

Conclusion

Using teacher concerns to improve VC instruction is an important consideration that can improve the quality of virtual instruction. Analyzing teacher concerns is a critical part of preparing and conducting effective PD for teachers before and during virtual instruction. The COVID pandemic caught most teachers across the country unprepared for full-time virtual instruction. According to the results indicated from the interviews conducted, participants in this study that were trained on virtual instruction and technology-based learning applications before beginning virtual instruction reported fewer concerns. These teachers also reported having ongoing mentoring and training during virtual learning. Using teacher concerns in this process also lead to a more positive teacher mindset, a higher comfort level with VC instruction, and more effective PD sessions.

This study supports the literature in that the results are consistent with prior studies. Studies conducted by CBAM researchers Dele-Ajayi et al., Georgiou & Ioannou, and Kayaduman & Demirel found the same evidence and confirmed the results found in this study. The results have shown that teachers feel more successful and comfortable with online learning when their concerns are taken seriously, and schools address these concerns in effective, ongoing PD sessions (Birisci & Kul, 2019; Hall & Trespalacios, 2019; Serhan, 2020). VC instruction can be an effective educational experience when teacher concerns are addressed through ongoing PD sessions conducted by skilled educators and VC experts.

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Appendix: Interview Protocol

We have planned this interview to last no longer than one hour. During this time, we have several questions that we would like to cover. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to interrupt you in order to push ahead and complete this line of questioning.

You have been selected to speak with us today because you have been identified as someone who has a great deal to share about teaching English Language Learners through virtual platforms. The study does not aim to evaluate your techniques or experiences. Rather, we are trying to learn more about teaching and learning, and hopefully learn about practices that help improve student learning online.

Research Question	Interview Questions
RQ1: What are the perceived concerns of teachers of ELLs about using VC with secondary students?	How do you feel about the use of VC when teaching ELL students? How did you prepare for full-time videoconference teaching and learning for your students? Describe the technologies you have you been trained to use to augment the online learning process for your students? What type of professional development did you attend prior to beginning online teaching & learning? What is your skill level using technology to assist with listening, speaking, reading, and writing language acquisition?
RQ1a: How do perceived concerns influence secondary ELL teachers' practice when using VC technology during instruction?	Describe the assistance and mentoring you were provided when transitioning to VC teaching and learning? Have you experienced any of the following: student apathy, health concerns (student and staff)? Have you encountered technology concerns during virtual teaching and learning for your students?

	If so, how have technology concerns been addressed during virtual learning?
	Has student behavior affected the usefulness of virtual learning?
	Were there any teacher concerns addressed during online learning?
	If so, how have teacher concerns and perceptions been addressed during online learning?