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Early Childhood Education Teachers' Perspectives of Their Self-Efficacy and Knowledge in Biliteracy Instruction

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This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

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Walden University
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Abstract

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Efficacy in Biliteracy Instruction

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MA, Arcadia University, 2000

BS, Arcadia University, 1997

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

The number of English language learners (ELLs) in early childhood education (ECE) continues to increase, particularly with students whose first language (L1) is Spanish. Recent studies have shown the connection between teachers' self-efficacy and student achievement, but very few specifically address early childhood education teachers' self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy instruction. Grounded in Bandura's self-efficacy theory and Krashen's second language acquisition theory, the purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore kindergarten (K) through third-grade teachers' perspectives of their self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy instruction. Nine K through third-grade teachers responded to an online flyer, completed a demographics questionnaire, and participated in a semi-structured phone interview. Data were analyzed by transcribing interviews, using three-cycle coding data, and deductive theme analysis, which led to distinguishing four themes: (a) knowledge of biliteracy, (b) focus on teaching English, (c) training attended, and (d) resources needed. The results also indicate that teachers perceived themselves to be competent and confident in serving ELLs but indicated the need for more training in biliteracy instruction regardless of them being bilingual or monolingual teachers. These findings have potential positive social change implications by addressing K to third-grade teachers' needs regarding biliteracy instruction for ELLs. Increasing teachers' knowledge about biliteracy instruction in their classroom may contribute to increasing ELLs' academic achievements independently of being part of a bilingual or dual language program.

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Dedication

   To my husband, Alan, who always inspires and believes in me reaching my goals, and because of whom this work has been possible. To Alex and Grace who also have been encouraging, patient, and loving during the completion my studies.

   I also dedicate this work to my mom for contributing to improve my ability to simply write what I mean and for inspiring me to continue exploring bilingual education. And to my dad, for being my forever grammar instructor who contributes greatly to enhance my biliteracy skills. Additionally, to Uncle Buddy, Lucho, Marta, Santander, and Aimee, who throughout their lives have also shown me the value of getting an education and inspired me along the way.

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I would also like to acknowledge and thank Dr. Cheryl Keen and the participants of the Sunday Clinics. Their feedback has been invaluable to improve my qualitative research methodology and is very much appreciated.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Overview

The number of English language learners (ELLs) in early childhood education settings continues to increase as does the need to explore teachers' perspectives on their self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy instruction (Atiles et al., 2017; Babino & González-Carriedo, 2017; Castro et al., 2017; Franco-Fuenmayor et al., 2015; Rodríguez, 2015). The literature concerning teachers' self-efficacy and ELLs' academic achievement suggests increasing training on biliteracy instruction to increase teachers' self-efficacy that will in turn positively affect ELLs' academic achievement (Atiles et al., 2017; Babinski et al., 2018; Çankaya, 2018; Franco-Fuenmayor et al., 2015; Garrity & Guerra, 2015; López & Santibañez, 2018; Tran, 2015; Wessels et al., 2017).

Additionally, the literature on bilingual education and biliteracy supports teaching literacy in L1 to develop L2 (Castro et al., 2017; Wessels et al., 2017). In the L2 learning theory, Krashen (1989) posited that students' continuous learning of their L1 increases competencies in their L2 and increases their potential to become bilingual. In self-efficacy theory, Bandura (1997) stated that teachers' knowledge will affect their self-efficacy and, hence, their performance in the classroom. In the present study, I explored these topics from the perspective of early childhood education teachers of kindergarten (K) to third grade who have ELLs in their classrooms.

ELLs in early childhood education may participate in different programs through which they are expected to learn English. A list of definitions of these various programs, is included later in this chapter for clarification along with the assumptions, scope,

delimitations, and significance of the study. This chapter also includes background information on the topics described above and the problem and purpose of the study as well as the research questions that guided the study.

Background

The contributions of early childhood education teachers to the process of biliteracy have been noted in the research (Butvilofsky et al., 2017; Castro et al., 2017; Miller, 2017; Rodríguez, 2015). Biliteracy involves being highly proficient in understanding, reading, and writing in two languages (Ducuara & Rozo, 2018). Biliteracy benefits in ECE were found in the literature through different aspects of biliteracy development. Notably, after 3 years of students participating in a biliteracy instructional program, they increased scores in reading and writing both in English and Spanish (Butvilofsky et al., 2017). Additionally, when proficient in their L1, students' literacy in their L2 increased as well (Raikes et al., 2019). Associating language instruction in Spanish to receptive vocabulary in English in Head Start programs was also shown to have a positive connection (Miller, 2017). These studies provide valuable information about the benefits of biliteracy from the perspective of academic achievement of students in early childhood education; however, they all focused on the implementation of biliteracy from teachers already involved in dual-language programs. There is scarce literature from the perspective of early childhood education teachers who have ELLs in their classrooms but are not involved in bilingual or dual-language programs.

Equally important, research exploring the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and teaching ELLs has been extensive (Atiles et al., 2017; Babinski et al., 2018; Çankaya, 2018; Franco-Fuenmayor et al., 2015; Garrity & Guerra, 2015; López & Santibañez, 2018; Tran, 2015; Wessels et al., 2017). Findings of such research include teachers having higher self-efficacy when working with Latino students as opposed to other cultural groups (Atiles et al., 2017) and high self-efficacy in practicing teachers versus student teachers (Çankaya, 2018). Additionally, research has shown high teacher self-efficacy for serving emergent bilingual (EB) students when teachers had bilingual training (López & Santibañez, 2018). Moreover, the implementation of a teacher professional development program for school readiness proved effective for children who were assessed in both languages, English, and Spanish (Castro et al., 2017). Teachers' experiences guide their beliefs and these in turn influence their instruction of language towards ELLs (Garrity & Guerra, 2015). Furthermore, it has been found that positive attitudes from teachers towards ELLs indicated greater likelihood for the teachers to use research-based practices for ELLs, more so in K–fifth-grade teachers than teachers of higher grades (Huerta et al., 2019).

When exploring the impact of professional development on English as a Second Language (ESL) strategies, research showed a positive impact with students increasing their literacy skills (Babinski et al., 2018). Likewise, in a study where knowledge of bilingual education was compared among bilingual teachers, ESL teachers, and teachers in one-way language programs, Franco-Fuenmayor et al. (2015) found that greater

knowledge was demonstrated by bilingual teachers. In the same study, they also found that knowledge about second-language acquisition (SLA) was not equally shared with all teachers working with ELLs.

Teachers' self-efficacy and knowledge of teaching influences their behavior in the classroom (Bandura, 1997). Likewise, effective bilingual education is recognized as having benefits to achieving biliteracy (Krashen, 1989). However, there was a gap in the literature specific to early childhood education teacher perspectives of their self-efficacy in teaching literacy development in two languages (i.e., biliteracy) and their knowledge of biliteracy instruction.

Problem Statement

While 77% of ELLs enrolled in U.S. schools speak Spanish at home, only 23% of the general population are bilinguals (Bialik et al., 2018; Zeigler & Camarota, 2019). There is a well-documented gap in academic achievement between Latino EB students and monolingual students, and often, this gap is attributed to Latino students' lack of English language skills (Bustamante & Hindman, 2018; Diamond et al., 2016; Olson et al., 2017). Teachers' beliefs in their capabilities to teach effectively involves their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Teachers' self-efficacy has been explored and linked directly to student achievement; however, specific studies addressing early childhood education teachers' self-efficacy and knowledge in teaching literacy development in two languages (i.e., biliteracy) are rare (Ahmad et al., 2015; Atiles et al., 2017; Castro et al., 2017; Hwang et al., 2016; Shahzad & Naureen, 2017; Spies et al., 2017). The problem

addressed in this study was the lack of research on teachers' perspectives of their knowledge and self-efficacy in biliteracy instruction.

As the population of ELLs is steadily increasing (McFarland et al., 2019), the importance of examining how to better serve ELLs also increases. Researchers have called for more studies to explore early childhood education teachers' self-efficacy and knowledge of teaching biliteracy in ECE (Atiles et al., 2017; Castro et al., 2017; Franco-Fuenmayor et al., 2015; Rodríguez, 2015).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to explore K–third-grade teachers' knowledge and self-efficacy in biliteracy instruction using a basic qualitative design.

Research Question

What are early childhood teachers' perspectives of their knowledge and self-efficacy in biliteracy instruction?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this basic qualitative study was derived from Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory and Krashen's (1989) second language learning theory. The literature on the topic of students' academic achievement includes two paths of inquiry: One relates teachers' general self-efficacy to student academic achievement, and the other connects bilingual education to student academic achievement. In this study, I examined early childhood education teachers' perspectives of their knowledge and self-efficacy in biliteracy instruction.

Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory relates to self-confidence and competence, whereas Krashen's (1989) second language theory explains the dynamics of effective teaching and learning within the context of biliteracy development with ELLs. These theories helped me describe whether early childhood education teachers' perspective of self-efficacy in biliteracy relates to their knowledge of biliteracy instruction and their experiences with other languages or cultures.

Nature of the Study

In this study, I employed a basic qualitative design and used a demographic questionnaire and semistructured, phone interviews to collect data from early childhood education teachers of K–third grades. This methodology was suitable for the present study because the design contributed to a greater understanding of knowledge on the phenomenon under study.

I sent an invitation letter and flyer to members of Facebook groups geared towards K–third-grade teachers. After receiving a reply from the teachers stating their interest in participating, a consent form was sent via email. Through the consent form, participants received more information about the nature of the study. I asked participants to reply to the email confirming their voluntary participation in the study. Upon receiving their consent, I sent each participant a demographic questionnaire (see Appendix A) to collect descriptive data to inform the qualitative analysis. At the end of the demographic questionnaire, the teacher was given the option to participate in the semistructured, phone interview. Phone interviews allowed for an exploration of early childhood education

teachers' perspectives of their knowledge and self-efficacy of biliteracy instruction as well as their own experiences (or lack thereof) with second-language acquisition. The interview guide (see Appendix B) included open-ended questions that afforded participants the opportunity to share their perspectives of biliteracy knowledge.

I continued to send the initial invitation and flyer until nine teachers completed the questionnaire, even though I had initially planned to recruit 12 participants. After collecting data from nine interviews, I stopped recruiting participants because they were not providing any new information, verifying that data saturation had been reached as explained by Saldaña and Omasta (2017). The data from the phone interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis as described by Castleberry and Nolen (2018).

Definitions

Bilingual education: Education provided in the United States to ethnic minority groups of students with limited or no English proficiency for the purpose of their learning of English as an academic language. In other countries, such as Canada, Sweden, New Zealand, and even Navajo Nation in the United States, bilingual education refers to white-majority students learning an ethnic minority students' language with the goal of being proficient in both languages (Bialystok, 2018).

Bilingualism: The ability to speak and understand in two languages. There are various degrees of bilingualism that range from basic understanding to being native-like in two languages (Hopp et al., 2019; Midgette & Philippakos, 2016)

Biliteracy: The ability to listen, speak, read, and write effectively in two languages. It also refers to being high proficient bilingual (Ducuara & Rozo, 2018).

Dual-language learners: Students from diverse backgrounds who are learning two languages at the same time (Spies et al., 2017).

Dual-language program: An educational program that contributes to the literacy development of students in two languages, English, and a partner language, defined by the needs of student population (Valdés, 2018).

EB: Students who are acquiring ESL to place emphasis on their potential to become bilingual students (López & Santibañez, 2018).

ELLs: Students whose L1 is other than English, of which in the United States, 77.2% are Spanish speakers, mostly from Latin America (Portes et al., 2016).

Immersion program: A language program in which the target language is used 100% of the time (Howard et al., 2018).

One-way: A type of dual-language program that provides biliteracy instruction to either EB students proficient in the partner language or monolingual students in English who are learning a foreign language (Howard et al., 2018).

Paired literacy: Literacy instruction in two languages, with no transition from the minority language to English. Instead, both languages develop equally (Soltero-González et al., 2016).

SLA: The process of learning a L2 similarly to the way in which the L1 was learned. Where awareness of the L2 exists within the content of being able to communicate using the L2 (Higgs & Krashen, 1982).

Second language learning: Similar to SLA, however, the process is a conscious one where grammar and rules are involved in the process of learning a L2 (Higgs & Krashen, 1982).

Sequential literacy: A model of bilingual education where the literacy process begins in the minority language to then introduce English-only literacy (Soltero-González et al., 2016).

Translanguaging: Within bilingual education, it involves teaching for meaning independently of the language used (Henderson & Ingram, 2018).

Two-way: A type of dual-language program that provides biliteracy instruction to monolingual students in English along with EBs or monolingual students in the partner language (Howard et al., 2018; Valdés, 2018).

Assumptions

I assumed that participants were honest about their knowledge and open to answering the interview questions. Another assumption was that participants were able to answer all questions presented to them, and their answers offered a pattern of experiences that helped in answering the research question. Additionally, I initially assumed that there were going be 12 participants in the study, but only nine participants were needed to

reach data saturation. Furthermore, while ELLs' L1 varies among the student population in the United States, in the present study, the L1 of participants' ELLs was Spanish.

Scope and Delimitations

This study's purpose was to explore the perspectives of early childhood education teachers' self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy instruction. Because the scope of the study involved early childhood education teachers, it made sense to enlist only K–third-grade teachers. Additionally, because the focus of the study was that of biliteracy in early childhood education, the inclusion criteria of the study necessitated that K–third-grade teacher participants had to have had at least two ELLs in their classroom. Furthermore, the population was limited to K–third- grade teachers who taught in brick-and-mortar classrooms in the United States during the school year of 2019–2020. Moreover, the present study was also limited to the biliteracy instruction framework and did not include ESL or multilingualism instruction. These concepts were beyond the scope of the study.

The results of this study on early childhood education teachers' self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy instruction may inform school administrators whether there is a need for increased professional development for all teachers on how to effectively teach for biliteracy with ELLs in their classrooms. The results may provide information about the professional development needs of both monolingual and bilingual teachers who have ELLs in their classrooms. I did not conduct the present study to determine how to increase self-efficacy in K–third-grade teachers who have ELLs in their classrooms.

Additionally, because of the number of participants, potential transferability to the general population of K–third-grade teachers may be limited.

Limitations

During the implementation of this study, I was not working within any school district and the country was facing the COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, a limitation was the lack of classroom observations. To address this limitation, I recommend further studies on the topic to supplement and confirm the findings of the current study.

Additionally, I focused on the K–third-grade teacher population with ELLs in their classrooms because there is a gap in the literature on the topic within this population. This focus, however, posed a limitation in terms of being able to transfer results to the general population of teachers of other grades who also have ELLs in their classrooms. Such a limitation will continue to stand because the experiences of K–third-grade teachers may not be compared to higher elementary or secondary grade teachers.

Furthermore, because participants were K–third-grade teachers who have ELLs in their classrooms, this included teachers in bilingual programs or who are bilingual themselves. Their perspectives of self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy instruction may differ from that of teachers who are not within such programs. Though listed as a limitation, being able to compare the teachers' responses based on them being bilingual teachers or monolinguals helped in analyzing the findings of this study. Lastly, the number of participants was small to allow for generalizations with the population of bilingual and monolingual teachers in K–third grades.

Significance

The significance of this research is supported by previous studies where teachers' self-efficacy has been found to influence student achievement (see Ahmad et al., 2015; Hwang et al., 2016; Shahzad & Naureen, 2017). Additionally, few recent studies have explored teachers' knowledge and self-efficacy on biliteracy instruction (López & Santibañez, 2018; Tran, 2015), and research on these topics was not exclusive to early childhood education teachers. The limited information about the effects early childhood education teachers' knowledge and self-efficacy of biliteracy instruction have on early childhood biliteracy development must be undertaken for various reasons.

The primary positive social change this research may bring about includes narrowing the academic achievement gap for Latino students. Additionally, it may contribute to the development of biliteracy for ELLs independently of their background as well as for monolingual students in English. Findings from the present study may heighten awareness of the importance of increased professional development for early childhood education teachers regardless of whether they are bilingual teachers, working within bilingual/dual-language programs, or working in ECE settings where EB children attend. Such information may provide a platform for increasing early childhood education teachers' self-efficacy in biliteracy instruction, leading to positive social change. Findings from this study can also contribute to an increased understanding of early childhood education teachers' perspectives on biliteracy instruction. All these implications may lead to an increased bilingual population in the United States.

Summary

Biliteracy within the ELL population of ECE has the potential to increase academic achievement; however, this is only one of the factors that contributes to academic achievement, others include teachers' knowledge, and their self-efficacy (see Babinski et al., 2018; Castro et al., 2017; Garrity & Guerra, 2015; Garrity et al., 2018; Henderson & Ingram, 2018; López & Santibañez, 2018; Spies et al., 2017; Tong et al., 2017). In the present study, I explored early childhood education teachers' perspectives on their self-efficacy and their knowledge of biliteracy instruction to increase understanding of their needs as they serve ELLs in their classroom since they are not always part of a bilingual/biliteracy program.

In Chapter 2, I will provide the research strategy I used and how I grouped the literature reviewed based on the concepts I researched. Additionally, I will present an analysis of the literature relevant to the present study, how the conceptual framework helped understand previous research, and the potential benefit of the present research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

As the population of ELLs continues to increase, it is important to explore how teachers contribute to their biliteracy development. The problem addressed in this study was the lack of information on teachers' perspectives of their knowledge and self-efficacy of biliteracy instruction. Currently, the literature is scarce on the topic of teachers' perspectives of their self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy instruction (see Correll, 2016; Franco-Fuenmayor et al., 2015; Hegde et al., 2018). Additionally, some researchers have explored the implementation of knowledge on strategies to teach ELLs; however, most of these studies were focused on English-only development and not biliteracy (see Babinski et al., 2018; Dressler, 2018; Sawyer et al., 2018) and only one was focused on biliteracy development (see Palmer et al., 2016). Only a few researchers have explored teachers' self-efficacy in biliteracy (see Garrity & Guerra, 2015; Garrity et al., 2018; López & Santibañez, 2018).

For this literature review, I expanded the parameters to explore the literature on related concepts. For example, I included studies in which researchers explored teachers' self-efficacy in teaching ELLs or culturally diverse students that included biliteracy or English learning with preservice teachers instead of practicing teachers in their classrooms (see Garrity et al., 2018; Malo-Juvera et al., 2018). The literature review also includes an overview of the conceptual framework I used for the present study, comprised of Krashen's (1989) second language learning theory and Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy.

Literature Search Strategy

Databases and resources I used to examine literature relevant to the present study included PsycINFO, Academic Search Complete, ERIC, Education Resource Complete, SocINDEX, ProQuest, *International Journal of Bilingual Education & Bilingualism*, and Taylor & Francis Online. I accessed all these databases through Walden University's Thoreau Library Portal. Additionally, I used Google Scholar to keep up to date with any new research published on the topic, verifying the Walden University Library results to ensure the search terms I used would yield the same results in any database. My search included research published within the last 5 years in peer-reviewed journals along with some relevant works that were published more than 5 years ago. To support an organized research process, I began reviewing the literature by grouping the concepts relevant to the research question into the following three subtopics:

- ECE biliteracy and bilingual education as it relates to academic achievement.

- Early childhood education teacher's knowledge of biliteracy.

- Early childhood education teachers' self-efficacy in biliteracy.

The first group of studies included the effectiveness of biliteracy or bilingual education concerning ELLs' academic achievement. The second group of studies included teachers' knowledge on biliteracy, even though it was not from their perspectives but through the implementation of professional developments on the topic (see Babinski et al., 2018; Castro et al., 2017; Henderson & Ingram, 2018; Spies et al.,

2017; Tong et al., 2017). The third group of studies included the exploration of teacher's self-efficacy.

I created a literature search log in Microsoft Excel while dedicating one page for each of the subtopics. Within each page, I adapted the Lit-Search Log found in Walden University's resources. I recorded findings from the different data sources in each block of information and designed it to have seven columns dedicated to logging the date in which the search took place, the concepts used, range of dates for the studies, limiters, number of results, references, and comments. These blocks of information helped to keep track of results for each combination of concepts used. I grouped the concepts I used to research the databases for each of the subtopics into three combinations of keywords:

1. ECE biliteracy and bilingual education as it relates to academic achievement.

   a. Effective biliteracy OR bilingual education OR dual language immersion.

   b. ECE or early childhood education OR kindergarten OR first grade OR second grade OR third grade.

   c. Academic achievement.

2. Early childhood education teacher's knowledge of biliteracy.

   a. Perceptions of ECE teacher OR early childhood education teacher OR kindergarten OR first grade OR second grade OR third grade.

   b. Knowledge OR preparedness.

   c. Biliteracy OR bilingual education OR English language learners OR Latino students OR multicultural classroom.

3. Early childhood education teachers' self-efficacy in biliteracy.

   a. Perceptions of ECE teacher OR early childhood education teacher OR kindergarten OR first grade OR second grade OR third grade.

   b. Self-efficacy OR beliefs.

   c. Biliteracy OR bilingual education OR teaching English language learners OR Latino students OR multicultural classrooms.

Within each subtopic, results varied according to the concepts added to the search and limiters. I noted the addition of concepts in each search box by the word "OR" because of the limited amount of research done on the topics and with the population of K–third-grade teachers, which was the target population of the present study. Additionally, because of the different terms used within the bilingual education umbrella, the words *biliteracy, dual language education,* and *bilingual education* were placed within the exact Boolean phrase to expand the search. For example, a search within Academic Search Complete using the terms *effective biliteracy* AND *early childhood education* AND *academic achievement* yielded no results. However, results yielded two studies when expanding the terms within each Boolean phrase, such as *effective biliteracy OR bilingual education OR dual language immersion* AND *early childhood education OR kindergarten OR first grade OR second grade OR third grade* AND *academic achievement*. Of these, only one was relevant to the present study.

Due to the nature of the present study, teachers' perceptions were rare as they pertained to the research questions. The words "perceptions of" were sometimes omitted.

Still, not all findings were related to the present study. Each of the databases explored yielded a different number of studies. I also used print resources to explore the conceptual framework. In all, there are a total of 58 studies included in the literature review. The small number of studies found about teachers' perspectives of biliteracy and their self-efficacy on biliteracy further reinforced the need for the study.

Conceptual Framework

Krashen's (1989) second language learning theory and Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory served as a framework to conceptualize the literature found about early childhood education teachers' perspectives on self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy instruction. Krashen's affective filter hypothesis that is part of the second language learning theory, helps explain biliteracy or dual language learning for the academic achievement of dual language learners (DLLs). In contrast, Bandura's self-efficacy theory helps to conceptualize teachers' knowledge of and self-efficacy with biliteracy.

Second Language Learning Theory

In a hypothesis of language acquisition, Krashen (1989) differentiated acquisition from learning in that when a language is acquired, the learners internalize it and its use happens unconsciously. Ways in which the learners internalize this knowledge are related to the emotions attached to the information presented. Krashen's affective filters hypothesis explains how the learners develop a positive or negative relationship with the language depending on how the language is presented to students. For example, when a teacher teaches English only and an ELL's heritage language is not accepted or is

minimized in value, the student may develop a negative relationship with learning English. These emotions are the driving force for DLLs to either learn the language or acquire the language. Krashen defined *comprehensible input* as meaningful information that learners can associate with their L1 and apply to the L2. This transferability of knowledge adds to the value of biliteracy in early childhood education. Thus, it is valuable for early childhood education students to have teachers with the knowledge of biliteracy instruction, and it is essential to explore teachers' perspectives of their knowledge on biliteracy, as was the purpose of the present study.

Self-Efficacy Theory

Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory helps explain teachers' perspectives because they understand their knowledge, competence, and beliefs on biliteracy related to their ability to instruct ELLs. Additionally, within this theory, Bandura's reflectance motivation concept relates to a person's drive for continuous engagement in an activity, and teachers' beliefs of capabilities also affect their motivation for continuous engagement. Equally important is that high or low self-efficacy is not hereditary; instead, experiences can shape self-esteem. Metacognitive skills allow the person to recognize the knowledge acquired and this recognition feeds into the person's self-esteem.

Self-efficacy is also stronger when social validation occurs. Social validation in adults is related to their self-efficacy according to the levels of effort exhorted. With low efforts and high social validation, adults do not develop high self-efficacy, whereas with high efforts and high social validation, there is an increase in self-efficacy.

The importance of exploring ways to teach ELLs within ECE settings relies on their first and second language development, and this is dependent on their teachers' knowledge and their self-efficacy. The following studies and their findings contribute to understanding the importance of the present study on teachers' perspectives of knowledge of and self-efficacy on biliteracy.

Literature Review

I have grouped the information in this literature review based on three different concepts that are related to the research question of the study: (a) biliteracy and academic achievement in early childhood education, (b) teachers' knowledge on biliteracy, and (c) teachers' self-efficacy on biliteracy. The literature is discussed within each group using the conceptual framework of Krashen's (1989) second language learning theory for the first group and of Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory for the second and third group.

Biliteracy and Academic Achievement

When studying ELLs in the United States, the historical trend has been to explore the academic achievement gap between ethnic minority students and the general English-monolingual population (Paschall et al., 2018). Solutions presented to close that gap have varied, including providing ELLs with English-only immersion programs or ESL one-way or two-way dual language programs (Howard et al., 2018; Portes et al., 2016; Valdés, 2018), SLA (Higgs & Krashen, 1982), sequential literacy, and biliteracy with paired literacy (Soltero-González et al., 2016). The sequence in which these have been presented in schools is varied, though the order in which I list these programs ranges

from having the goal of transitioning ethnic minority students from their L1 to English-only to developing students as biliterate on their L1 and English as the L2.

From English-Only Goal to Biliteracy Without Teachers' Perspectives

Based on the affective filter hypothesis, having no balance between academic instruction (i.e., literacy and language activities) and socioemotional support at an early age is counterproductive (Krashen, 1989). Findings from research on the quality of family literacy programs for Latino students has shown a lack of quality academic instruction, with assessment results falling from low to medium from the 20% of the time that students spend in the ECE program (Jung et al., 2016). Additionally, socioemotional support toward Latino ECE students in the classroom proved to be low- to midrange (Jung et al., 2016). Jacoby and Lesaux (2017) found a lack of consistency in the instruction time dedicated to language and literacy lessons in DLLs' Head Start classrooms. With lessons ranging from 23 to 82 minutes per day (i.e., 10%–34% of the total time within a 4-hour day) and teacher-centered instruction it did not give students a chance to engage and practice their oral vocabulary.

Despite these results showing the lack of effectiveness in ELL instruction, other research has shown the success of bilingual programs. Wei (2018) demonstrated that children in the bilingual program outperformed their monolingual peers in academics, such as reading, writing, math, and science. The program implemented at the study site school in Wei's study was a dual language with a 50/50 model and with a total separation of the two languages by subject; however, teachers of both components (i.e., Chinese and

English) planned together every week. English teachers at the school reinforced the content, paying attention to not repeating the same information and making it meaningful to students, following Krashen's (1989) concept of comprehensible input.

There have also been various studies that emphasize the importance of transferability from L1 to L2 acquisition for academic achievement (See Miller, 2017; Nascimento, 2016; Taub et al., 2017). For example, Nascimento (2016) analyzed results from assessments performed with students from K to third-grade in a single school where students were tested every year from K to third-grade based on the program/grade they attended using six different tools. Findings suggested that dual language, bilingual education is beneficial for academic development in English. These results highlight the successful implementation of L2 learning within the bilingual program that directly relate to teacher knowledge.

Academic Achievement in Dual Language Programs

Studies that support cross-language instruction or transferability of L1 to the L2are very few. Through a longitudinal study of 3 years, Miller (2017) examined associations between academic achievements in English of Spanish-speaking students who were instructed in Spanish in Head Start. The findings of this study included those students instructed in Spanish scored higher in receptive English vocabulary than students not instructed in Spanish. Also, Taub et al. (2017) conducted a study on second language reading fluency with third-grade students enrolled in a dual language/two-way bilingual program. After comparing participants' scores of pretests and posttests, Taub

found that Spanish speakers' scores on English reading fluency were higher than English speakers on Spanish reading fluency.

Choi et al. (2018) studied 3-year-olds from Head Start who had varying levels of English over 2.5 years. He examined participants four times during the period attending the program and in kindergarten. EBs continuously scored lower than bilingual or English monolingual students. This information is crucially important given that academic gaps within DLLs have been related to lower English language knowledge, and emergent bilinguals carried lower scores through the study than bilinguals. It is also important that not all ELLs are at the same level of knowledge on either language when categorized as ELLs and this in turn also affects instruction.

Academic Achievement and Transferring Knowledge

Other researchers also raised the importance of transferring knowledge from the first to the L2relating it to DLLs academic achievements (see Burkhauser et al., 2016; Castro et al., 2017; Fabes et al., 2016; Lindholm-Leary, 2014; Lucero, 2016; Schwartz, 2014). Burkhauser et al. (2016) explored the effectiveness of a dual language immersion program for students in K to eighth grades whose home language is Spanish compared to students whose language is English only. In this two-way dual language immersion program, students were tested in English and Spanish using computer-based assessments. This longitudinal study showed positive outcomes in the four components of literacy development in Spanish (listening, reading, speaking, and writing), and it showed further advancement within listening and reading than speaking and writing.

However, Fabes et al. (2016) explored an association between learning academic skills in Spanish and learning academic skills in English within Spanish-speaking preschoolers. Fabes found an interdependence of language learning or cross-linguistic transfer with math skills in English and Spanish and English and Spanish word-letter recognition. Nonetheless, Fabes et al. also found interdependence with English vocabulary learning and Math skills in English. Findings suggest that Spanish vocabulary, English vocabulary, and letter-word recognition may develop independently, not relying on either one of the languages (Spanish or English) to learn them, thus suggesting it is due to cross-linguistic transfer.

Additionally, Lindholm-Leary (2014) explored L1 and L2 learning among bilingual kindergarten, first, and second-grade students. Lindholm-Leary used scores from standardized assessments at the beginning and end of their school year. Findings from this study support biliteracy's efficacy because students who scored to be most proficient in Spanish at the beginning of their school year and entered a bilingual program scored higher at the end of their school year when tested in English. Findings indicate that students who began kindergarten as Mostly Proficient in Spanish and went on to bilingual programs in first and second grade showed scores higher in English than students who were Mostly Limited in Spanish who also went to bilingual programs. Findings also showed that Spanish proficiency in later grades was higher for students in a bilingual program while kindergarteners instructed in English score lower in Spanish when they reach higher grades.

Moreover, Lucero (2016) explored bilingual children's oral narrative retelling skills in the DL immersion program with a 50:50 model. Students were assessed with oral narrative retelling in Spanish first (because participants were all Spanish speakers) and a week later assessed in English. Participants scored higher in Spanish for macrostructure which involves more complex thinking. Though in English, they scored higher for microstructures that involves vocabulary. Finding positive cross-language references helps explain the importance of dual-language instruction to contribute to ELL's biliteracy development.

Additionally, Schwartz's (2014) study informed transferability of language knowledge beyond Spanish-English instruction by exploring EB preschoolers' learning of vocabulary depth in two languages (Russian and Hebrew) through the model of L1 first. Schwartz compared their learning in bilingual (Russian-Hebrew) preschools and monolingual preschools in Israel. This study suggested that preschoolers in the bilingual preschool tested for depth vocabulary showed a greater likelihood of developing bilingually than preschoolers from the monolingual preschool. Schwartz also found transference of conceptual knowledge from L1 to L2 by preschoolers attending the bilingual program and not by preschoolers in the monolingual school.

Academic Achievement and Biliteracy

In exploring the authenticity of enhanced cognitive skills found in ECE bilingual students compared to their monolingual counterparts, a couple of studies focused on assessing attentional and executive skills. Nicolay and Poncelet (2015) matched the

cognitive levels of participants before their preschool year and tested for attentional and executive skills. They found that preschool students who attended bilingual schools outperformed their monolingual peers in attentional/executive skills. Also, Thomas-Sunesson et al. (2018) evaluated executive control functions of 8 and 9-year-old bilingual third graders. They confirmed that with higher levels of bilingualism, students demonstrated higher performance on the cognitive function of non-verbal tasks. Students who had scored higher in their levels of bilingualism also scored high in both tests for executive tasks (working memory and conflict resolution skills). In both studies, researchers found that bilingual students had greater executive functions than either monolingual or bilinguals with lower levels of biliteracy.

There are various studies that support a circular effect among factors that affect academic achievement in ECE (See Burkhauser et al., 2016; Castro et al., 2017; Choi et al., 2018; Fabes et al., 2016; Jacoby & Lesaux, 2017; Jung et al., 2016; Lindholm-Leary, 2014; Lucero, 2016; Miller, 2017; Nascimento, 2016; Nicolay & Poncelet, 2015; Schwartz, 2014; Taub et al., 2017; Thomas-Sunesson et al., 2018; Wei, 2018). This circular effect might begin with executive functions as one of the most crucial in developing academic skills. This function increases with balanced bilingualism in Latino children, and the development of bilingualism is greatly affected by the quality of instruction in early childhood education settings that is also affected by early childhood education teachers' knowledge.

For Latino students to continuously acquire content knowledge in their L1 and acquire English as their L2 to evolve as biliterate, they need socioemotional support and comprehensible input with quality of instruction for ELLs (Krashen, 1989). Quality instruction comes from prepared teachers with high self-efficacy, who put significant effort and receive social validation to continue to increase their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). This narrative includes all teachers who work within the bilingual programs regardless of their language abilities or training. Therefore, it is essential to inform on biliteracy development and its effect on the academic achievement of early childhood education students.

Studies by Castro et al. (2017), Collier and Thomas (2017), Mendez et al. (2015), Lutz (2016), and Soltero-González et al. (2016) all explored the effect that being biliterate at an early age has on academic achievement. Castro et al. studied the effect of implementing a specific school readiness program called Nuestros Niños School Readiness (NNSR) with 350 preschoolers and 56 of their teachers from three different states (California, Florida, and North Carolina). Before implementing the program, the preschool teachers received specific training, including concepts, strategies, and resources to support DLLs. This training had a positive effect on quality classroom interactions with all students. Assessments on students' biliterate academic skills also supported the use of the program as there were positive outcomes on English vocabulary, receptive Spanish vocabulary, early math skills, writing, and alphabet scores were higher in students participating in NNSR program than those not participating. Even though the

number of teachers participating in that program was limited, this study supports quality instruction in both English and Spanish to increase school readiness that positively affects academic achievement in later years.

Collier and Thomas (2017) analyzed data collected from dual-language programs in North Carolina on student academic achievement and compared it to students not attending dual-language programs. They found that all ethnic minority groups attending dual language programs outperformed their peers not attending such programs. These included low-income African American students attending dual language program in Spanish who performed two grades ahead of their monolingual peers and learned Spanish with near-native pronunciation skills. Findings confirmed that metalinguistic awareness and teachers implementing strategies for DLLs benefit all students because of the need to scaffold, repeat, and provide meaningful associations.

Meanwhile, Lutz (2016) explored the effect that biliteracy on Latino students who are English proficient has on their academic achievement, specifically in math and reading skills. Lutz collected language proficiency data from National Educational Longitudinal Survey while measuring math and reading skills in English were measured with a standardized test during students' senior year. Lutz found that Latino students who were biliterate in English and Spanish performed better academically in math and reading in English compared to Latino students who were monolinguals. Participants who were orally proficient in Spanish (not Biliterate) did not show the same achievement.

In contrast, Mendez et al. (2015) conducted a study with Spanish-speaking preschoolers to assess their bilingual outcome (in English and Spanish) after being instructed in two different modalities. One group using a Culturally Linguistically Responsive Approach instruction and the other using English Culturally Responsive Approach (ECR) instruction. Participants' posttest and follow up test favors the preschoolers in the Culturally Linguistically Responsive Approach group, scoring higher in both English and Spanish languages than participants in the ECR group. Additionally, Mendez et al. found that Spanish vocabulary learning was limited in the ECR group compared to the Culturally Linguistically Responsive Approach group. In this study, Mendez et al. stressed the risk of losing L1 when not purposefully instructing in their L1 to Spanish-speaking preschoolers.

Additionally, Soltero-González et al. (2016) compared the biliteracy effect in reading and writing skills of students in K to third grade who had been in two different bilingual programs: a paired literacy program and sequential literacy program. Students in the paired literacy program learned academics in English and Spanish simultaneously from K to third grade. Students in the control group had been in the sequential program from K to second, where students learned in Spanish first and gradually increased their English instruction. However, once they began their third grade, they were instructed in the paired literacy program. Findings included students who participated in the paired literacy program from K to third grade scored higher when assessed for reading and writing in both languages, Spanish and English. The end goal of both programs was

different; the paired program was for developing biliteracy, whereas the sequential program was for students to transition to English-only instruction. The relevance of this study lies in that simultaneous instruction of English and Spanish does not hinder the L2acquisition but instead supports the development of biliteracy that in turn supports academic achievement in both languages. It is important to note that professional training for effective paired literacy programs at these schools included English literacy development training to implement English language teaching with content similar to the one presented in the Spanish component of the program. This similarity allowed students to transfer literacy skills from one language to another (Soltero-González et al., 2016).

Several studies (see Castro et al., 2017; Collier & Thomas, 2017; Lutz, 2016; Mendez et al., 2015; Soltero-González et al., 2016) stress the value of biliteracy instruction for increased academic achievement as well as teacher training for effective instruction of DLLs in early childhood education. However, as important as it is to value increased academic achievement through biliteracy, teachers' knowledge is crucial for implementing such instruction. None of these studies explored teachers' perspectives on the instruction of DLLs or their knowledge of biliteracy instruction. Following is an analysis of the literature about teachers' perspectives on their knowledge of biliteracy instruction, followed by an analysis of the literature related to their perspectives of self-efficacy in teaching for biliteracy.

Teacher's Perspectives of their Knowledge in Teaching ELLs

Within the realm of biliteracy or bilingual education in any of its models, there is no formula for all ECE to claim being the most effective for children to develop as biliterate. Some variables to consider are the context to plan for biliteracy, the setting, culture, and its population (Bialystok, 2018). Within that context, exploring teachers' knowledge of bilingual literacy is a complex issue to generalize, as each state and school district of the United States develops and adapts their language programs as they see fit the population they serve. However, how children effectively develop as biliterate have been recognized, and as such, it is essential to explore how much of this knowledge has been acquired by K–third-grade teachers serving ELLs.

Once teachers are in their classrooms, their way of gaining more information to implement is most commonly through professional developments. Hence, the first group of studies included in the following analysis is of studies where teachers were professional development participants involving biliteracy instruction as the primary training topic. The second group of studies consists of teachers who were participants exploring teaching ELLs in their classrooms. In comparison, the third group of studies includes those exploring teachers' perspectives of their knowledge to teach ELLs.

Teachers' Professional Development for Biliteracy

As stated before, the development of biliteracy is unique in each community. It depends mainly on the program implemented in each school, usually based on the population attending each school. As mentioned before, Castro et al. (2017) studied the effect of implementing the NNSR program with preschoolers of three different states (California, Florida, and North Carolina). The program provided teachers with specific training on concepts, strategies, and resources geared to support DLLs. The use of the program helped the quality of interaction with all students and the assessments on students' biliterate academic skills. However, limitations of this study include the lack of teacher retention in the program (19% over the 2 years). As reported by Castro et al., even though replacement teachers also went through training, these came into the program while it was already in progress. The final number of participants was 22, and only 12 teachers implemented 55% of the program. The other 10teachers reported 45% implementation of the program. However, despite these scores, DLLs' academic readiness was still higher than their peers who were not using such a program.

Additionally, Mellom et al. (2018) expanded their study from professional development of a biliterate program to include beliefs, attitudes, and practices of third and fifth-grade teachers when teaching ELLs. They created and implemented the Instructional Conversation tool as professional development, which they used in their study. Such professional development included contextualization as a standard that represents meaningful information and making connections for understanding. These

concepts are ones represented by Krashen's (1989) second language learning theory when talking about comprehensible input. Mellom et al. collected data through biweekly online logs for teachers to answer questions, a survey at the beginning of the study, and video recordings of teachers in their classrooms twice the same year. They found that teachers who previously had negative attitudes and beliefs towards ELLs within 1 year of professional developments using the Instructional Conversation model improved over time.

On the other hand, Spies et al. (2017) designed a six-session professional development program for early childhood educators and aides to shift their beliefs and practices to more pedagogically effective practices for teaching DLLs. Their study had a mixed-method approach where teachers and aides for three and 4-year-old (53 and 45, respectively) completed a pre- and post-survey about their beliefs and practices while teaching DLLs. Then, Spies et al. organized two focus groups, each group having five to six participants of various backgrounds in terms of their experiences with biliteracy, bilingualism, or monolingualism. Findings from their study included that the professional developments modified the teachers' practices with DLLs. The teachers also were found to empathize with DLLs and their families and change their expectations of DLLs.

The qualitative portion of Spies' et al. (2017) study provides greater insight into what early childhood educators regard as essential to providing quality education to DLLs. Even though teachers modified their own beliefs and practices because of the professional development, Spies et al. reported that the overall support to maintain those

changes lacked from their administration. The lack of connection between what they know as best practices and their conditions to put those practices in place was evident. Especially when placing great value on their students' L1 but sharing resources on that language were scarce and with not enough time to develop and produce them themselves.

Furthermore, Tong et al. (2017) designed a study to explore the impact a professional development on English cognitive academic language would have on the time spent instructing second and third grade ELLs on two different programs: Transitional Bilingual Education and Structured English Immersion Program. They developed their study first through professional development workshops held every 2 weeks for 3 hours each. The complete training provided to participants averaged 50 hours for the school year, and it focused on English cognitive academic language through implementation, L2 learning methodologies, and the needs of bilingual/ESL teachers. The second component focused on instructional time that increased according to the grade taught. Additionally, teachers were observed in their classrooms three times a year for bilingual pedagogy. Findings from this study indicate that quality professional developments affect the learning of ESL for ELLs as the knowledge teachers gain contributes to their effective allocation of time for instructions for English cognitive academic language.

Mellom's et al. (2018), Spies' et al. (2017), and Tong' et al. (2017) studies contribute to the rationale of the present research in that teachers' gaining knowledge on how to serve ELLs better in the classroom do help in increasing ELLs' English skills.

Though, they lack information for ELLs to develop as biliterate because students of participant teachers were only measured within one of these studies in their English skills and not their Spanish skills (See Tong et al., 2017). However, these studies help clarify that acquiring the knowledge to teach DLLs does not go hand in hand with teachers' self-efficacy to teach them as the latter does not depend solely on the teachers' knowledge.

The contribution of teachers to increasing biliteracy in the ECE field is as complex as the methods to achieve such biliteracy. Henderson and Ingram (2018) explored the translanguaging effect a third-grade teacher had for students to make meaningful connections and develop metalinguistic awareness. Translanguaging involves teaching for meaning independently of the language used. Though the implementation of this method did not follow professional development, this bilingual (Spanish-English) teacher was chosen purposefully from a survey sample of 323 teachers as a case study because of his ideologies about being bilingual while not isolating languages and very much in favor of translanguaging pedagogies.

As a bilingual teacher, this participant was against separating subject matters by language (science and social studies in Spanish and math and language arts in English). Henderson and Ingram observed this teacher 16 times, took field notes, video recorded, and interviewed him. This study suggests that while the teacher engaged in translanguaging, this was directly related to his students' pedagogical purposes, community, and metalinguistic awareness. Ways in which translanguaging affected the pedagogy was translations that allowed students to understand key concepts in their L1.

Additionally, the teacher would shift between L1 and L2 according to his students' needs to foster a positive emotional connection, to the environment and the L2. This study informs us of the connections between the students' L1 and finding meaning of content through translanguaging. However, Henderson and Ingram do not inform on the effects this approach to pedagogy has on the students' academic achievement even though the concept of translanguaging aligns with Krashen's (1989) best practices to teach ELLs, allowing for comprehensible input and positive affective filters.

Similar to translanguaging, Sawyer et al. (2018) explored the language interactions of four DLLs in early childhood where one student was monolingual in English, another monolingual in Spanish, and two were bilingual in English and Spanish. Sawyer et al. used a language interaction tool measure these students' interactions with their teacher, teacher assistant, or peers for 25 minutes. During these interactions, the trained bilingual data collectors reported the language used for interactions with peers, with the teacher, with the assistant, or when the teacher spoke with the assistant. The findings of this study included those teachers and assistant spoke in English most of the time, and there was little implementation of best practices for biliteracy. Additionally, students spoke more to their peers than to their teachers.

Though this study is important to learn more about the language environment of ELLs in early childhood education, the observations to each study (only once during the middle of the school year) were not enough to conclude that English is used mainly during all the year. The findings of this study confirm a need for professional

developments for teachers and teacher assistants to implement best practices towards

ELLs.

Babinski et al. (2018), on the other hand, conducted a study to investigate the

effects of a professional development program (Developing Collaboration and

Consultation Skills) designed to support teachers of ELLs (whether ESL or mainstream

classroom) in addressing their students achievement gap. A total of 45 elementary school

teachers participated in the 41 hours professional development program. During these

modules, teachers were observed for quality instruction of ELLs. Findings of this study

included that the teachers who attended the professional development made greater use of

strategies adapting instruction to the needs of their ELLs. Additionally, the ELLs of

participant teachers increased their English and literacy skills.

Implementation of Knowledge

The literature reports the effective implementation of programs following

professional developments through various lenses. Both Palmer et al. (2016) and Dressler

(2018) used ethnography design to explore teachers' perspectives and implementation of

language policy and professional developments.

Palmer et al. (2016) collected information from third-grade teachers who met to

discuss curriculum, instruction, students' progress, and share information and resources.

The issues shared by the teachers included the lack of alignment between the dual

language bilingual program and the accountability processes, and the pressures felt for

students to learn only English despite being in the dual language bilingual program. This

program was followed the biliteracy model and began to be implementation in pre-K, kindergarten, and first grade all at once. Hence students who started in kindergarten or first grade were at a disadvantage from the beginning. Furthermore, policies within this district encouraged bilingualism accountability through being monolingual in English. This contradiction led to programs being cancelled eventually.

Through the teacher participants' interview process Palmer et al. (2016) also found that the information provided to them through professional developments for implementation of dual language bilingual programs was not in alignment between biliteracy expectation and districts' accountability processes. Teachers did not receive training on how to align these or improve the program upon observation. Instead, they felt the district's observations and of the language program were more in tune with an evaluation rather than a consultation. It is essential to align district-wide expectations and the effective implementation of a dual language bilingual program. For even with low self-efficacy for implementation, teachers involved in this study were willing to learn, and in fact, expected more guidance from their district leaders as to how to align the bilingual program with the overall district standardization (Palmer et al., 2016).

Additionally, Dressler (2018) explored teachers' understanding of immersion pedagogy and how it shaped their teaching in a bilingual elementary school in Canada. Through observations, preobservation interviews, and post observation sessions of first and second-grade teachers in a bilingual school in Canada, Dressler was able to examine in depth the teachers' understanding of "immersion pedagogy" and how this affects their

teaching in a bilingual classroom. The findings of this study included that even though the participant teachers understood immersion pedagogy for content and L2 integration despite not being trained, bilingual teachers. Both studies Palmer et al. (2016) and Dressler, go hand in hand with the literature that reflects the need for further training for teachers to implement successful biliteracy programs in their classrooms. Additionally, this study supports the notion of biliteracy instruction not belonging to the already bilingual teachers or ESL teachers but to all teachers serving ELLs in their classrooms.

Teachers' Perspectives of their Knowledge

Very few studies are found in the recent literature exploring teachers' perspectives of their knowledge and readiness for teaching ELLs (Correll, 2016; Franco-Fuenmayor et al., 2015; Hegde et al., 2018). Correll (2016), for example, conducted a qualitative study to explore teachers' perceptions of their readiness to teach ELLs, of the experiences they thought supported their readiness, and of their practices towards ELLs being shaped by their training. Correll collected data through surveys of 79 elementary school teachers, classroom observations, and interviews of four teachers. The data collected were used to conclude that participants of this study did not perceive themselves as ready to serve ELLs. Correll also found that teacher participants' coursework, field, and observational experiences were insufficient to prepare them because they did not include specific strategies to teach ELLs effectively.

On the other hand, Hegde et al. (2018) explored kindergarten teachers' readiness and classroom strategies to teach ELLs through a mixed-methods design. Teachers

completed a survey focused on the availability of professional developments to serve

ELLs from their county better and the types of strategies the teachers used in their

classroom to provide quality instruction to ELLs. Additionally, five teachers interviewed

by phone shared their own education programs, professional development opportunities,

overall readiness, and classroom strategies to teach ELLs. Findings of this study report

that only the minority of kindergarten teachers (31%) did not feel prepared to teach ELLs

before being assigned to their classrooms or attended professional developments to

develop these skills. Hegde et al. also report that a total of 69% of teachers felt prepared

to teach ELLs. Additionally, while 85% of teachers claimed they would attend

professional developments on teaching ELLs, only 59% reported attending these

professional developments. These findings are contradictory because while teachers

report being willing to increase their teaching knowledge, not as many attend these

professional developments.

Franco-Fuenmayor et al. (2015) also studied teachers' knowledge about

instructional strategies for ELLs and their knowledge about bilingual programs and L2

development. Franco-Fuenmayor et al. compared knowledge within these topics between

bilingual teachers and ESL teachers. Furthermore, Franco-Fuenmayor et al. researched

teachers' opinions about the usefulness of professional developments they had attended

and proposed professional development opportunities. Findings of knowledge

comparison between bilingual teachers, ESL teachers, and teachers in one-way programs

showed that bilingual teachers have more knowledge than the other two groups of

teachers. Knowledge of L2 development was also higher among bilingual teachers. Findings also showed that ELL teachers reported few opportunities to learn more about the development of a L2 as well. When addressing the relevancy of professional developments provided for participants, findings showed that these teachers had not received adequate training. Participants of the study recognized the need for further professional development on the second-language acquisition and that knowledge was not equally distributed amongst all grade-teachers working with ELLs.

Teachers' Perspectives of Self-Efficacy in Teaching for Biliteracy

Very few studies directly explore teachers' self-efficacy in teaching biliteracy development (see Garrity & Guerra, 2015; Garrity et al., 2018; López & Santibañez, 2018). Self-efficacy is directly related to knowledge acquired, the search for future knowledge, and personal beliefs (Bandura, 1997). Additionally, research shows that teachers' self-efficacy influences students' academic achievement (see Malo-Juvera et al., 2018; Siwatu et al., 2016). However, there is inconsistency in data collection amongst these studies and the samples used for each study.

Garrity and Guerra (2015) explored how classroom language instruction and practices are influenced by teacher beliefs about the use of language regardless of their background. For this case study, Garrity and Guerra observed two Head Start teachers who had not received extensive training for ELLs from a primarily Latino community and video recorded in their classrooms. Afterward, they interviewed teachers while showing the video to the teacher. According to Garrity and Guerra, using this technique

to collect data allows teachers to explain their actions during the lesson that was video recorded as a self-reflection on the lesson chosen, expected outcomes, implementation including beliefs on language usage, and whether it worked. Findings from this study inform that teachers' experiences guide their beliefs rather than their studies or curriculum. While both participant teachers were bilingual in English and Spanish, one teacher believed in supporting her students' L1 development, the other believed in English development as most important.

In this study, Garrity and Guerra (2015) explained that neither teacher cited their curriculum or any training to support their beliefs on language use in the classroom. Instead, they used their personal experiences with one teacher being bilingual through learning English as an adult, and the other placed in an English only classroom as a child. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is guided by personal beliefs, and findings from this study confirm the influence such beliefs have in the teachers' classroom practices. However, it is essential to differentiate self-efficacy developed through research-based practices rather than personal experiences that do not always go hand in hand with such practices.

Garrity et al. (2018) conducted a study to explore pre-service teachers' beliefs about bilingualism, dual language development, and bilingual education. Participant preservice teachers were raised and schooled at the time Proposition 227 was in effect in California. This proposition stated that all immigrant students were to be taught in English only to learn it as fast as possible. Participants enrolled within a Child

Development program where they had to attend an Infant/Toddler and Preschool bilingual Lab in English and Spanish for a total of 40 hours. Participants completed a survey on their beliefs about bilingualism, dual language development, and bilingual education. Findings from this study included those preservice teachers had favorable beliefs towards bilingualism, dual language development, and bilingual education. However, despite those answers, they still showed that the language used in schools should be English only. Additionally, participants who were bilinguals themselves had more favorable views about bilingualism, dual language development, and bilingual education than those who were monolinguals.

López and Santibañez (2018), on the other hand, explored the quality of teacher preparation, their required knowledge, and how this knowledge was related to teachers' self-efficacy in serving EB in three different states (Arizona, California, and Texas). López and Santibañez's findings suggest that Arizona teacher requirements to serve EBs are limited concerning L2 acquisition with no required knowledge of L1 development. California teacher requirements were aligned with EBs' needs, including knowledge of literacy in L1, L2 acquisition, and cultural diversity. Texas teachers' requirements include bilingual or ESL certifications to serve EBs. Through these certifications, teachers are required to learn about L1 literacy, skills transfer to L2, bicultural identity, and have the skills to promote biliteracy. Findings from this study included a positive correlation between the states with higher certification requirements for teaching EBs and graduation rates of EBs. Texas is the state with the highest requirements and the highest percentage

of graduated EBs. López and Santibañez also found that teachers' self-efficacy for serving EBs was higher for teachers with bilingual training than without such training in all three states.

This study is significant to the present research because of the relationship between teachers' preparation to serve EBs and their self-efficacy levels. Thus, contributing to the notion that when teachers have higher knowledge about biliteracy instruction, their self-efficacy is also higher. Furthermore, there are also few studies exploring teachers' self-efficacy specifically in teaching ELLs (Atiles et al., 2017; Tran, 2015) and culturally diverse populations (Malo-Juvera et al., 2018; Siwatu et al., 2016; Tran, 2015; Wessels et al., 2017). However, all these studies included pre-service teachers or data from when participants were studying to be teachers. These do not include teachers already in the classroom as participants.

Atiles et al. (2017) explored early childhood educators' self-efficacy and multicultural attitudes when working with diverse learners by completing three different demographic surveys, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale and Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey. Atiles et al. found that teachers had larger self-efficacy levels when working with Latino children than with Marshallese children. They also found that the higher the teachers' multicultural attitude scale, the higher their sense of self-efficacy when working with either group of students. Atiles et al. explored teachers' self-efficacy as it relates to teaching children from different backgrounds. The significance of this study to the present one relies on such relationships of self-efficacy and students' various

backgrounds, though it does not explicitly address the teachers' self-efficacy on biliteracy.

Tran (2015) explored teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy and preparation during their pre-service training to work with ELLs. Participants in this study completed a survey, an interview, and a classroom observation. Tran compared findings between the case study participants as only one had bilingual certification, two had ESL certification, and the other two had neither. Tran found greater self-efficacy in teaching ELLs from teachers with ESL or bilingual education certifications than teachers with no certification. Within studies exploring serving culturally diverse populations, Malo-Juvera et al. (2018) conducted a study to explore elementary school teachers' self-efficacy with culturally responsive instructions (CRI). CRI is a method of teaching that involves acknowledging and incorporating students' cultural background and knowledge to make content relatable, relevant to the student, and hence more effective with ELLs academic achievements. In this study, teachers completed the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale and participated in a thirty-minute interview. They completed the survey before participating in a CRI professional development while the interviews were conducted at the beginning of the training. The interviews explored teachers' knowledge and experiences with CRI. Findings from this study included participants' increased understanding of the value of CRI but low self-efficacy with the implementation. Specifically, incorporating ELLs' culture with their curriculum, communication with their parents, and culturally biased tests.

Additionally, Siwatu et al. (2016) explored preservice teachers' self-efficacy with culturally responsive teaching. Eight preservice teachers pursuing an ESL certification completed a Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy survey and an in-person interview based on their lowest scored items. These interviews addressed the research questions to explore further why participants had low self-efficacy in these items. Findings of this study included that all preservice teachers agreed that culturally responsive teaching is effective but had low self-efficacy with the implementation of this teaching.

Findings from these studies expand on the knowledge about teachers' self-efficacy in teaching ELLs. However, the need to study K to third-grade teachers' perspectives of their knowledge of and self-efficacy in biliteracy is still needed because there continues to be a gap in the literature when it comes to this specific population and the concepts presented.

Summary and Conclusions

Exploring the literature in terms of teachers' perspectives of their knowledge and self-efficacy of biliteracy instruction corresponds with exploring the value of biliteracy in early childhood education. The effectiveness and contributions of biliteracy instruction for our students' academic achievement validate exploring teachers' perspectives on how confident they feel and their knowledge in teaching for biliteracy to ELLs independently of them belonging to a bilingual or ESL program.

The literature informs us of biliteracy's effects on our students with all the bilingual education models in our educational settings. Most notable are the studies of transferability of knowledge from L1 to the L2 (Miller, 2017; Nascimento, 2016; Taub et al., 2017). Such studies inform the implementation of effective biliteracy instruction.

Regarding teachers' self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy instruction, the literature informs us of some of these concepts but not all of them. However, there is somewhat of a cycle through which teachers develop beliefs on how to teach ELLs that then help develop their self-efficacy with acquired knowledge on how to instruct for biliteracy, and this, in turn, allows teachers to develop CRI. CRI also informs teachers' beliefs, and their self-efficacy.

Research on professional development in teaching students of diverse backgrounds or ELLs is common (see Atiles et al., 2017; Malo-Juvera et al., 2018; Siwatu et al., 2016; Tran, 2015; Wessels et al., 2017). However, the existent literature does not have information on K–third-grade teachers' perspectives on their self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy instruction. This lack of information is the gap in the literature for which I carried out the present study.

The importance of getting teachers' perspectives of their knowledge and self-efficacy about biliteracy instruction cannot be undermined. The potential increase in ELLs' academic achievement depends greatly on teachers' self-efficacy and knowledge (Bandura, 1997). Likewise, ELLs' ability to acquire ESL also depends significantly on

their teachers' beliefs that then permeate through their teaching, and to their ability to reach their students positive emotional filters (Krashen, 1989).

Hence this study was designed as a basic qualitative study that allowed teachers to answer questions about their self-efficacy but also to express themselves broadly through answering open-ended questions. In the following Chapter 3 I will explain in detail the methodology for this research.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this study was to examine ECE teachers' perspectives of their

self-efficacy in teaching literacy development in two languages (i.e., biliteracy) and their

knowledge of biliteracy instruction. In this basic qualitative study, I used interviews with

open-ended questions (see Appendix B) to collect data. The research design was aligned

with the research question of the study.

In this chapter, I provide a more detailed description of the research design and

rationale for the present study. Additionally, in the methodology section, I explain my

role as a researcher with attention to bias; transparency; and reproducibility, including

participant selection method, instrumentation, and data collection procedures. Lastly, the

data analysis process, trustworthiness issues, and ethical procedures are discussed.

Research Design and Rationale

The research question guiding this study was:

What are early childhood teachers' perspectives of their knowledge and self-

efficacy in biliteracy instruction?

The constructs contributing to the conceptual base for this study were derived from

Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory and Krashen's (1989) second language learning

theory. The literature on students' academic achievement included two paths of inquiry:

One related to teachers' general self-efficacy to student academic achievement, and the

other connected bilingual education to student academic achievement. Bandura's self-

efficacy theory relates to self-confidence and competence, whereas Krashen's second

language learning theory explains the dynamics of effective teaching and learning within the context of biliteracy development with ELLs. These theories helped me analyze whether ECE teachers' perspectives of self-efficacy in biliteracy relate to their knowledge of biliteracy teaching and their experiences with other languages or cultures.

I recruited participants (see Appendices A and B) through a Facebook group of K to third-grade teachers with active participants from the United States. A total of nine teachers of K–third grade were asked to complete the interview. I selected a basic qualitative approach because the use of interviews with open-ended questions permitted collecting information for a broader understanding of K–third-grade teachers' self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy instruction. Additionally, a basic qualitative design supports the approach to inquiry about a phenomenon by understanding participants' perspectives (Patton, 2015).

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher, I kept my professional and personal independence throughout the study. Participants were recruited through Facebook pages geared to K–third-grade teachers with whom I had no previous connection or relationship. Researcher biases were managed by allowing the interviewees to do most of the talking, finding a balance between establishing a rapport with interviewees and not exposing too much of my own experiences as a biliterate and ECE teacher. Additionally, I kept a journal of my reflections after each interview with participants. Such reflective journal entries allowed

me to express my views and emotions related to each teachers' perspectives and not mix them with the actual responses or themes that emerged from their responses.

Methodology

Participant Selection

Participants for this study were K–third-grade teachers in the United States. The inclusion criteria required that participants had ELLs in their classrooms. Interested participants self-reported having ELLs in their classrooms and were willing to share their perspectives on their knowledge and self-efficacy in biliteracy instruction. The input of other stakeholders within the ECE field could not have provided the teachers' perspectives.

Population and Sample

This study included nine K–third-grade teachers. I contacted participants through Facebook groups dedicated exclusively to teachers as members. According to Saldaña and Omasta (2017), data saturation may be reached when participants provide no new information. Based on my findings in the literature review, qualitative studies include a range of one to 26 participants (see Dressler, 2018; Garrity & Guerra, 2015; Hegde et al., 2018; Henderson & Ingram, 2018; Palmer et al., 2016; Spies et al., 2017; Tran, 2015). Even though initially I proposed a total of 12 participants for this study, the rationale for having a sample size of nine in the present study was based on the studies where data saturation was reached with a range of one to 26 participants.

I posted a letter of invitation and a flyer inviting K–third-grade teachers in various Facebook groups, specifying the participation criteria of having at least two ELLs in their classrooms and having taught in brick-and-mortar classrooms in the United States within the last school year. The letter and flyer also specified that the participant could contact me and send me a private message with their email address to send them the consent form. Upon return of the signed consent form from the participant, I sent the demographic questionnaire (see Appendix A) for participants to complete and return to me via email. At the end of the demographic questionnaire, participants provided their phone number and the best day and time to schedule the phone interview.

Nine participants took part in phone interviews:

- one teacher who taught kindergarten, first, second, and third grade

- one teacher who taught first and second grades

- two first-grade teachers, two second-grade teachers, and three third-grade teachers

I interviewed the first teachers who returned their consent form and demographic questionnaire stating their willingness to participate in the phone interview. After participating in the interview, I sent each teacher a thank-you note for their participation. I reached data saturation when teachers' responses were very similar and provided no new information. According to Patton (2015), this strategy is conducive to decrease bias and effectively use time and resources.

Instrumentation

The instruments used for the present study include a demographic questionnaire (see Appendix A) and interview protocol (see Appendix B) for phone interviews. The first source of data collection was the demographic questionnaire. I designed this questionnaire to collect descriptive data from the participants, including years of teaching, subjects, languages spoken, and location among other questions. The second source of data collection was the interview protocol. I developed these questions based on the conceptual framework of the study. The writing of all the questions was guided by Patton's (2015) and Jacob and Furgerson's (2012) guidelines. Additionally, Turner's (2010) and Patton's guidance was used to devise interview questions that aligned with the research question. Such questions served as a prompt for participants to share their experiences with the topic.

I used Krashen's (1989) theory of second language learning and Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory to understand some of the factors contributing to K–third-grade teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy development for their students. One of the concepts used by Krashen was that of affective filters. While developing as biliterate, ELLs' affective filters attach to the content provided to them and the emotions that permeate from the instructors (Krashen, 1989).

In addition, asking open-ended questions in the interviews helped me explore connections teachers have with a L2 learning experience, if any; hence, the interest in exploring the perceived knowledge teachers have on biliteracy instruction, how they

manage language usage with their ELLs, and what they perceive as benefits that

biliteracy brings to students. The interview questions were also geared to explore

teachers' exposure to cultures other than through teaching because even when not having

learned a L2, mere exposure to another culture may also broaden connections with ELLs

(see De Jong et al., 2018). Furthermore, I included questions about teachers' perceptions

of their professional development experiences, confidence, and competence that were

designed to address their perceptions of self-efficacy to contribute to the biliteracy

instruction of ELLs.

I presented the interview guide to an expert qualitative research professor, and

their feedback led to a revised and improved interview guide used for practice with five

different teachers who had ELLs in their classrooms. Responses given through this

practice provided insight into teachers' experiences with SLA and teaching others for

who English is their L2. The interview guide helped me explore the participants' personal

experience and perceived knowledge of biliteracy.

Procedures for Data Collection

I collected participants' email addresses directly from teacher volunteers who

responded to my invitation letter or flyer posted on K–third-grade teacher Facebook

pages. After learning of their interest in participating in the study, I sent them the consent

form via the email address they provided along with the demographic questionnaire for

them to complete and email back to me. At the end of the questionnaire, they were asked

to provide their phone number and the best day and time to contact them to schedule a

phone interview. As I received the completed demographic questionnaires, I contacted

the teachers to interview them according to their stated availability. I continued to contact

teachers until I achieved data saturation, which was recognized through coding similar

statements from the teachers' perspectives.

I held individual interviews over the phone with nine K–third-grade teachers.

Some questions were adapted to reflect the current situation with the COVID-19

pandemic. For example, to explore the sources of knowledge about biliteracy instruction,

I initially asked about any professional development attendance during the past year.

However, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, I changed it to the past 2 years. I audio

recorded each interview with the Voice Recorder application from Microsoft that allowed

me to transcribe answers upon completion of each call. The interviews lasted between 25

minutes and 1 hour.

Data Analysis Plan

The critical elements of data analysis that go hand in hand with my chosen basic

qualitative approach are transcribing interviews, coding data based on the framework

used in the study, and theme analysis (see Smith & Firth, 2011). All these elements

helped me analyze the data in a way that aligned with the research question and the

overall purpose of the study.

Theme analysis is a strategy used to identify patterns from data collected as text

(Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). In this study, I used thematic analysis following the

approach described by Castleberry and Nolen (2018) as deductive, taking into

consideration the conceptual framework of the study. I compiled, disassembled, and reassembled the collected data to analyze it and arrive at my findings. I repeated this process at the end of every phone interview. I used Excel spreadsheets to help me organize and categorize codes into emerging themes. These emerging themes could then be matched with concepts from the framework composed of Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory and Krashen's (1989) second language learning theory.

Issues of Trustworthiness

The development of the interview protocol was reviewed before implementation by an expert in advanced qualitative research instruction to ensure credibility. Additionally, I conducted a practice run of interviews with five teachers (who were not part of the study), and their responses concurred with the conceptual framework used in this study. Using the conceptual framework for analysis and interpretation of data enhances credibility (Patton, 2015). The methodology I followed included specific details about participant criteria and recruitment. For dependability, I conducted the study with specific data collection procedures. Any limitations found along the way are described in Chapter 4. I ensured confirmability through explaining my role as the researcher throughout the study. Additionally, as the researcher, I also included the steps taken to analyze the collected data.

Ethical Procedures

Participants worked in school districts to which I have no connection. Hence, they only knew me as a Ph.D. candidate working on a dissertation. They provided their

consent to be contacted for an interview through the demographics questionnaire. Their answers to my interview in no way affected their performance with their school district and I informed each participant of their rights on the consent form.

In addition, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was pursued before collecting any data for the study. Each participant received the scope of the study, the consent form, and contact information from myself, my dissertation chair, and the IRB number provided which was 11-04-20-0280070. All data were stored electronically in an encrypted file on an external drive and accessed through a secure laptop computer. All emails received were deleted upon the creation of the encrypted file.

All recorded phone calls were loaded into such files as well and deleted from my phone. I transcribed the data from the phone interviews and used codes to identify participants. I deleted all records created during the data entry and analysis phase. Data cannot be accessed by anybody else, and I will keep it in storage for 5 years.

Summary

Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory and Krashen's (1989) second language learning theory inform the conceptual based of the present study. This conceptual framework, in turn, contributed to determine the methodology used in the present study. In following all the established inquiry procedures, identification of participants and their consent forms were the first phase of inquiry. The instruments used to collect the data included a demographics questionnaire and interview protocol to gather information to inform the research question.

I analyzed the data using all security measures possible to protect participants'
identities and responses. All ethical and trustworthiness issues were addressed with each
participant through the written consent form, providing a scope of this study and my
contact information. Additionally, I identified codes and categories within each answer to
the interview protocol to develop themes that could be used to answer the research
question of the present study. In the following Chapter 4 I will explain in detail the
setting, demographics, the steps taken for data collection, the data analysis procedure, and
the results of the study.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to address the gap in the literature related to teachers' perspectives of their knowledge and self-efficacy beliefs in biliteracy instruction. In this chapter, I discuss the setting, demographics, data collection procedures, data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, and results before concluding with a summary.

Setting

Approval for data collection coincided with the development of the COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, I had to change my methodology to reflect the restrictions on social situations. I changed my plans to hold classroom observations and in-person interviews to only conducting phone interviews. During interviews, all participants reported being at their homes while I was in my home office. My home office is in a quiet part of my home where I was not interrupted and nobody else could overhear the interviews. To record each interview, I used the Voice Recorder application from Microsoft. Using this software made it easy for me to transcribe the phone interviews after completing each call. Simultaneously, I used a notepad to take notes of my thoughts during each phone interview.

I completed nine participant interviews. After sending invitations to participate in my study for almost a year, I interviewed four participants over the course of 1 month. The following month nobody replied to my weekly invitations. To increase the number of

interviews, I offered a gift card for participating. After IRB approval, five other participants enlisted, and I interviewed them within 1 month.

Demographics

Participants were all K–third-grade teachers. One participant taught all these grades, one taught first and second grade, two were first-grade teachers, two were second-grade teachers, and three were third-grade teachers. In terms of years of experience, one teacher had between 6–10 years of experience, one had 11–15 years of experience, four teachers had between 16–20 years, and three teachers had over 20 years of experience.

Concerning the subjects taught by the participants, four of the teachers taught all subject areas, and five teachers taught language arts, while two of these teachers also taught social studies. The other three teachers taught math, information literacy, and health. All teachers taught in urban schools, though their locations varied by state. States represented by the participants included Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

Additionally, five of the participants were bilingual in English and Spanish, with one fluent in Portuguese. The other four participants were monolinguals in English. The language programs that five participants were involved in included a dual language program (1), Spanish immersion (1), bilingual program (2), and autistic support (1). The four monolingual teachers had ELLs in their classrooms but did not participate in any

bilingual program; hence, they were considered mainstream teachers. Table 1

summarizes these descriptive data from participants.

Table 1

Participants' Demographics

	Years Teaching	Grades Teaching	Subjects Teaching	Program	Language Spoken	State
P 1	16–20	1st & 2nd	Language arts, math, & social skills	Autistic support	B	PA
P 2	over 20	3rd	All core subjects	Mainstream	M	NC
P 3	16–20	K–3rd	Language arts & information literacy	Mainstream	M	FL
P 4	over 20	2nd	All core subjects	Spanish immersion (80/20)	B	OR
P 5	16–20	3rd	Language arts	Bilingual program	B	NJ
P 6	16–20	3rd	Language arts, social studies, and health	Mainstream	M	MD
P 7	11–15	1st	All core subjects	Dual language program (50/50)	B	MA
P 8	6–10	2nd	All core subjects	Bilingual program	MM	IL
P 9	over 20	1st	All core subjects	Mainstream	M	VA

Note. B= Bilingual in Spanish and English. M = Monolingual in English.
MM =Multilingual in Spanish/English/Portuguese

Data Collection

Within the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic, I solely relied on sending

invitations through social media to enlist participants. I also posted invitations on teacher

Facebook groups to recruit my target population of K–third-grade teachers. However, when I did not get one response within a couple of months, I also listed my study within the Walden University participant pool. Additionally, I extended the invitation to a broader audience with the hope of finding more participants by word-of-mouth and people's kindness with passing along the information. In doing so, I began to get participants who reached out to me as requested by my invitation/post.

The lives of K–third-grade teachers had been changing by the day since the COVID-19 pandemic began. They were subjected to stress through adapting from brick-and-mortar teaching to online teaching or blended teaching and being back in the building or back to online. I realized participating in a dissertation study was not going to be their priority. However, even with these challenges, I managed to enlist the initial four. I began to offer a $30.00 gift card to recruit more participants, leading to five more participants.

All participants responded to my invitation/post by sending me a private message either through Facebook or directly to my email address stating that they were interested in participating. Upon receipt, I sent them a thank-you note for their interest and attached the consent form. The consent form indicated to reply with a consent email message back to me. Once they answered, I sent another thank-you note and attached the demographic questionnaire, including a section for the participant's phone numbers and the best day and time to call them for the phone interview. Using participants' provided availability, I completed the phone interviews with nine participants.

Each phone interview was recorded with the Voice Recorder application from Microsoft on my desktop computer. I played the audio recording of each interview to upload it into a Microsoft Word document via Dictate. I then listened to the recording one more time while reading the transcript. Doing so allowed me to correct any mistakes or add missing information from the recording. I saved each participant's consent form, demographic questionnaire, and phone-interview recording as "Participant 1 consent," "Participant 1 demographic," "Participant 1 interview," etc.

Data Analysis

I transferred all the information provided by participants into a Microsoft Excel document by following the format of cross-participant analysis. I organized this document by pages, where on the first page, I input the demographics. On the second page, I input the three initial questions from the interview protocol that addressed teachers' personal experiences with learning a L2 themselves and any relevant cultural exposure they may have had in their lifetime.

After that, I copied each of the interview questions on a page with the answers provided by all participants. Additionally, I completed the three-cycle coding system in each of those pages, where I conducted deductive theme analysis for each question as described by Castleberry and Nolen (2018). For the first coding cycle, I compiled participants' answers to each interview question and highlighted the expressions that applied to each question. For the second cycle, I identified categories for each question from the first cycle. Lastly, for the third cycle, I identified themes emerging for each

question from the categories recognized in answers from all participants. Some

differences emerged from my analysis between monolingual and multilingual teachers,

and these were noted when they emerged.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Before implementation, the interview protocol I used for the present study was

reviewed by an expert in advanced qualitative research instruction. Additionally, I carried

out a practice run of interviews with five teachers (who did not part in the study), and

their responses concurred with the conceptual framework explored in this study. I also

implemented triangulation of sources because the population in this study included both

bilingual teachers and monolingual teachers. Additionally, all participants were from

different states of the United States. To support transferability, the methodology

employed included specific details about participant criteria and recruitment methods.

Likewise, for dependability, the data collection procedures for this study and a step-by-

step data analysis method were described previously. As the researcher, I transcribed the

data, coded them three times, categorized the responses, and identified themes emerging

from the data. All these actions allowed me to check and recheck the data to conduct a

meticulous analysis. I also included a verifiable study trail and the steps taken to analyze

the collected data.

Results

Four themes emerged from my analysis of the data collected from the interviews

with nine K–third-grade teachers: knowledge of biliteracy, focus on teaching English,

training attended, and resources needed. Additionally, some differences emerged from my analysis between monolingual and multilingual teachers, and these were noted when they emerged.

Knowledge of Biliteracy

The path to becoming biliterate is not linear, and many factors may influence ELLs to become biliterate. The use of ELLs' L1 either by them or their teachers, exposure to the L2 at an early age, and teachers' beliefs and values placed on biliteracy might be a few of those factors (see Bandura, 1997; Krashen, 1989). However, an overall understanding of biliteracy instruction may provide the starting point for more significant guidance for implementation of instruction that does not hinder, but supports, biliteracy development by any teacher who has ELLs in their classroom.

Participants in this study provided definitions of biliteracy instruction that included the main idea of providing instruction in two languages. However, teachers had different ideas about how to implement this type of instruction. For example, Participant 1 said, "In a truly bilingual program, I would say that there will be instruction in both languages, and the content areas would be in a native language." While Participant 4 explained, "you would really have to either do dual immersion program that is real dual immersion or a completely bilingual program and not just hey, I'm doing classes in Spanish." This participant also shared, "but I think you would have to have both in equal amounts to be able to be really bilingual and biliterate."

Participant 5 explained biliteracy instruction even further by sharing,

I really strongly believe that if you are doing a bilingual program especially with

language arts, there should be two language arts classes, one in the kids' native

language and one in the language that they are trying to acquire.

All of this for the goal of "teaching children how to read, write, and think in two

languages" and "to be at the same level in both languages" as explained by Participants 7

and 8, respectively.

The benefits of ELLs using their L1 was one issue where bilingual teachers

agreed, but monolingual teachers did not. Participants who were bilingual teachers

admitted to ELLs benefiting from using their L1 in the classroom. When ELLs use their

L1, participants considered the teachers' understanding of ELLs' L1. For example:

"being able to use their native language is needed to help them bridge their L1 and the L2

of their learning, I think would really be beneficial" (P4). Additionally, "I think it is an

enhancement; I think it is a way for them to express themselves in a safe environment"

(P5).

Three other participants shared different perspectives about biliteracy instruction,

including this statement from Participant 6, "Sometimes it is good, and sometimes it is

not so good." Participant 9 said, "it just means they are not comfortable with the L2, but

they are still acquiring the language." Furthermore, Participant 3 stated, "it depends on if

the student had no formal education in their L1, it is very difficult to transition." These

teachers happen to be monolingual teachers.

When it comes to ELLs' usage of their L1, teachers' narratives did not include that if ELLs do not use their L1, they could forget it over time, which may be detrimental to their development as biliterate. However, when it comes to teachers using ELLs' L1 in the classroom, bilingual teacher participants shared the positive impact it can have on ELLs' academic achievement. For example, "When they hear it in their native language you know there is definitely 100% comprehending," (P1) and "it will go up because they will feel more comfortable" (P8). With such statements, there is an understanding that having a teacher who also speaks the same language as ELLs is of great benefit.

 In contrast, some participants believed that ELLs learning English might be limited if the mainstream teacher uses the ELLs' L1 in their classroom. These were monolingual teachers who stated, "I think that it hinders them from the language that is being used primarily in that country," (P2) and "If only speaking their mother tongue, they are not learning English" (P9). However, there was recognition of the value of bilingualism in the process of learning English, as shared by Participant 9, "It's best that the teachers use both languages. You can have an ESOL teacher that comes in to teach that English learner the academic language and the L2."

Knowledge about biliteracy instruction was not the same amongst all participants. Bilingual teachers had commonalities in their understanding of the impact on ELLs academic achievement while using their L1 in the classroom and exposing them to two languages at an early age. While monolingual teachers had various perspectives, some of which aligned with bilingual teachers' knowledge, and some that did not align.

Bilingual teachers all agreed that there were positive outcomes for ELLs when exposed to two languages early. For example, Participant 1 shared: "I think there is great skill in like the code-switching... and vocabulary development." While Participant 8 said: "it is good for them academically and emotionally", and Participant 4 said, "they can think in like both languages, both cultures, and kind of transition back and forth as needed."

Some opinions regarding ELLs' future development included improved chances, success, and becoming bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural. Overall, participants agreed that exposing ELLs to two languages at an early age was beneficial. For example: "I think what could happen is that the student or the students who learn both languages are completely bilingual and biliterate" (P4) and "it really is an asset" (P7). Furthermore, teachers also acknowledge the impact of being exposed to two languages at an early age on the brain by saying: "They are able to expand their brain" (P5) and "I think what happens is that their brain is like a sponge, and it is absorbing all the information" (P8). These were all bilingual teachers.

However, one of the monolingual teachers shared that "Student establishes language preference based on familiarity" (P2) and another said that "It can be challenging academically for them" (P6). Nevertheless, another monolingual teacher said, "They have a larger academic vocabulary than you would if it was just one language and is only going to improve their chances" (P3).

It is essential to recognize the different perspectives of teachers' understanding of biliteracy instruction, especially when exploring their self-reporting competence to serve ELLs in their classrooms. Reasons for feeling competent fell into different categories: knowledge, communication abilities, research information, and resources. Yet grounds for not feeling competent had these categories: lack of knowledge, not meeting students' needs, too many students in the class, and lack of time. Table 2 summarizes these findings.

Table 2

Teachers' Self-Reported Competence in Serving ELLs

Bilingual teachers	Feels competent	Because of shared knowledge from peers at work	Because of training at univ. And workshops	Other reasons	No reasons provided
P1	Yes	X			
P2	Yes	X			
P3	Yes			X	
P4	Yes				X
P5	Yes			X	
P6	No			X	
P7	Yes		X		
P8	Yes		X		
P9	Yes				X

As illustrated in Table 2, all participants expressed competence to serve ELLs, except for one. Bilingual teachers all reported feeling competent to serve ELLs. Though their reasons for such competency varied, for example: "right now I'm teaching Level 4 students which is pretty much the highest they can kind of go and I feel very confident with that" (P5) and "I feel competent because I feel like I know what it's like to be one" (P8). Additionally, one participant answered feeling competent because of

communicating with parents and having resources to do so (P1), while another expressed

simply getting better while keeping up with research (P7). While monolingual teachers

who also reported feeling competent to serve ELLs shared: "simply because I teach

children with autism and what I already am doing is creating support for those ELLs"

(P2). And: "Yes, I have a lot of tools in my toolbox, a lot of skills that I've learned

through the years" (P3).

In contrast, one monolingual teacher answered not feeling competent to serve

ELLs in their classroom (P6) for various reasons:

"I hate to say it, but not totally, no I don't. I think that often ELLs' needs just are

not being met. I think part of it is the lack of knowledge my part, the other part of

that is the fact that you know a classroom has a bunch of kids, for example, at 27

kids. So, we have a scope and sequence, and so we have to kind of like keep

moving along. Oftentimes there is not that time to stop and step back and clarify

things and reteach and things of that nature. When you put those two things

together, I would have to say no, unfortunately."

Focus on Teaching English

Traditionally, teaching English to ELLs focused on learning English, not

maintaining, or inclusively becoming balanced bilingual with their L1. While exploring

teachers' knowledge of biliteracy, all teacher participants conceptualized what needs to

happen for ELLs to develop their English language skills. However, one teacher

connected ELLs' knowledge from their L1 with their L2 (P8). This participant

emphasized using subjects such as science, social studies, reading, or math to expose ELLs to authentic vocabulary in English and make connections to their L1 with the following:

> "I mean like in science or social studies or reading or math, if you teach in both languages, then they get to connect the information they learn under the L1 with the L2, and then they can bridge like the languages together. Looking at cognates or things like that could help them understand their L2 and connect it with their L1."

Additionally, while all participants shared learning strategies for teaching English to ELLs, the ones most mentioned were word-picture relation and scaffolding. Though it is not clear that the strategies mentioned are the only ones used in their classrooms, bilingual and monolingual teachers seem to have commonalities in using such strategies. Table 3 lists the 11 strategies mentioned by all participants. As the table shows, teachers use strategies aligned with biliteracy instruction. However bilingual teachers use more of those strategies while monolingual teachers use other strategies most used for English-only learning.

Additionally, one monolingual teacher (P9) mentioned strategies but did not provide any examples. Instead, this teacher stressed the importance of teaching English to ELLs. Table 3 summarizes the strategies mentioned by both groups of teachers.

Table 3

Strategies Used to Teach English to ELLs by Participants

Strategy	Bilingual teachers	Monolingual teachers
Word-picture relation	X	X
Scaffolding	X	X
Extra time	X	X
Visuals, concept webs, and anchor charts	X	X
Practice	X	X
Modeling	X	X
Repetition	X	
Vocabulary learning within subjects	X	
Using cognates	X	
Making connections from L1 to L2	X	
Teacher collaboration	X	
Stories w/less words and more pictures		X
Direct instruction		X
Full immersion		X
Checking for understanding		X
Similar to special education		X

Participants also mentioned that ELLs learning English needed family support, more time, positive relationships amongst teachers and students, school appreciation, and representation. All these factors may indicate an understanding of a more cohesive approach to teaching English beyond teaching strategies.

For example, regarding family support, Participant 4 explained:

"I think it's probably not enough to just go to school to learn in English and learn the English language. I think you also have to have support which I think is lacking in a lot of situations. At least in some that I've seen, there's not that family support for whatever the reason, no judgment, you know sometimes parents can't help or parents' work."

Additionally, the importance of more time to teach ELLs was shared by various participants. One said: "I think a lot of teachers just think that's all that ELLs need is 30 minutes, well that needs to be more because at 30 minutes is not going to get them where I need to get" (P4). While Participant 6 shared that "Another thing that might help is extra time to do assignments, sometimes you know they just need additional time to complete an assignment." And Participant 7 believed it is of value to "provide time for the kids to learn the skills that they need to learn" for the long-term goal of becoming bilingual sharing because "it takes about 5 years to really learn a different language, and sometimes we feel rushed, and we rushed the students, and they're not learning all of the basics." Finally, the need for time to practice what students are learning was also shared by Participant 8 who said, "I think they need to have a chance for them to practice a bit with a partner."

Participants also shared the importance of establishing relationships with students and that the requirements to become biliterate are not always the same as those to learn only English. For example, as Participant 4 explained: "just connecting with them and then after connecting, rebuild a relationship I think it's much easier for them to learn and be able to do the things that we want them to do." Participant 7 expressed that "schools need to really appreciate being bilingual or trilingual, or multilingual so that the students see it as an asset." Both of these participants were bilingual teachers.

Additionally, in terms of representation, Participant 4 added:

"Representation is important along with an understanding that your students maybe not come from where you're coming. It would also give them a sense of like 'hey you know my language my culture matters too, I'm here in a foreign country, or I was born here, but you know, my language matters'."

However, based on the responses of most teachers, the needs of ELLs to learn English are not permanently associated with becoming biliterate. Only one teacher referenced the combination of strategies such as scaffolding, using cognates, and making connections from L1 to L2:

"I think there needs to be a lot of showing visuals, scaffolding, helping them with like graphic organizers and having a chance for them to practice a bit with a partner…if you teach in both languages, they connect the information they learn under the L1 with the L2. Then they can bridge like the languages together and then they could eventually like even looking at cognates or things like that could help them understand their L2 and connect it with their L1" (P8).

Training Attended

Most teachers attended only one professional development within the last 2 years, either in-person or online. Based on responses from all teachers, it was clear that professional development opportunities, specifically on biliteracy instruction, were minimal.

The two participants who attended professional development workshops the year before the pandemic (2019) were bilingual and included conferences on bilingual

education in their states. As explained by Participant 8: "Every year I go to a conference that is about biliteracy." This participant also demonstrated the value of going to this conference by sharing that "They have a lot of seminars, and then they show us all the new research because there's so much new stuff and when you think you knew everything, then everything changes."

From all other bilingual participants, one attended a webinar at readworks.org (P1). This webinar focused on differentiation for ELLs. Another bilingual participant has been training on using the i-ready curriculum to incorporate literacy online for ELLs (P5). This program focuses on reading and math skills while translating to Spanish in student's Chromebooks. Additionally, another participant (P7) attended professional development in English about phonemic awareness in English and Spanish and an online workshop by Dr. Jose Medina. He focuses on translanguaging and language validation. Participant 7 shared that "he's really talking about how to teach a child; you really need to accept who they are."

This participant also shared the value this workshop had on her:

"He explained that if they say a word like 'troca' not to say 'no, that's not the way you say it. Instead, say 'oh yeah, look you're so smart you're taking a word in English and turn it into Spanish' and then teaching them: 'alright, you can say 'troca' but you can also say 'truck,' and you can say 'camion.' So, I attended that workshop, and that was really powerful for me."

From the monolingual participants, one attended the same webinar at readworks.org mentioned above (P2). One renewed her teaching certificate (P3), and another participated in professional development on coteaching (P9). Amongst all participants, there was only one who did not attend any professional development about biliteracy instruction (P6). This participant stated, "that would be a zero, none at all, ever in fact."

However, attendance to professional development opportunities was not always related to recognizing the need for more training to serve ELLs in their classrooms better. Every teacher had a specific response as to the type of training they needed:

- Research-based techniques and strategies (P1, P6, & P7).

- Vocabulary instruction (P4)

- Initial literacy (P7)

- Culturally Responsive Training (P4 & P6)

Training on specific programs consisted of:

- www.readwork.org webinars for ELLs (P2). ReadWork focuses on providing materials for students and teachers to tackle reading comprehension in schools. Their webinar material consists of using their site in different modalities, including one for ELLs with differentiation strategies.

- SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) training with differentiation (P5). SIOP is a program within SAVVAS Learning Company (previously Pearson K12 Learning). Their model caters to ELLs because it

includes differentiation in their training. SIOP focuses on promoting academic

language while learning content. It is also used for dual language programs to

deliver comprehensive content in English and for paired language for non-

native speakers.

Additionally, there were a few responses related to biliteracy. These included

learning the language of the majority of the ELLs population in the school. It seemed

essential to this participant to have a foundation in that language to increase

communications with the students (P3):

"Oh my gosh, I really think we need professional development in the language of

whatever the country of origin is your large population of ELLs. You need

professional developments to learn, whatever that language is, for teachers

specifically. Like Spanish for teachers if the ELLs' L1 is Spanish. Or I just think

we all need to have like a foundation to better communicate with our students. "

Furthermore, there were some differences in suggested professional development

topics between monolingual and bilingual teachers. One monolingual participant thought

it was important for all teachers to receive training to serve ELLs in strategies, flexibility,

coteaching, and cross-curriculum integration (P9):

"Clearly, teachers need to know what strategies to use to teach English language

learning, they need to understand that they need to know that one strategy might

work for some but not for all and be flexible and their instruction. It is also

important for teachers to co-teach with any specialist any learning specialist that

services these students, and it's also important for teachers to integrate a lot across

curriculum."

However, while strategies previously mentioned can be applied to all students,

one bilingual participant (P8) recognized the need for professional development

opportunities specifically on biliteracy for all teachers, not only bilingual teachers. This

participant also focused on increased communication with ELLs:

"I think everybody should have access to professional developments for

biliteracy. I think that usually, just the teachers who teach bilingual or ESL

teachers go. Still, it's not everyone. There's so much need because where I teach,

everybody has English learners in their classroom, but some of them still don't

understand them, and they think like something's wrong with them. "

Participant 8 illustrated the need for training on biliteracy for all teachers with this

anecdote: "in my class, the art teacher, didn't know why they are not speaking clearly, so

she referred them to speech therapy, and I was like, 'they don't need speech; they just

don't speak English. "

Resources Needed

Teachers shared the need for resources in their classrooms to better serve ELLs. However, most of them shared training as a resource needed. The training topics needed included: early literacy, teaching ELLs, a faster-scoping sequence with similarities and differences between L1 and L2, the code of language, differentiation, child development, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol, and Readwork (P1, P4, P7, P8, & P9). Table 4 summarizes the training topics all teachers believe are needed to serve ELLs in their classrooms better. It is noticeable that the two topics in which bilingual and monolingual teachers agree are strategies and research-based techniques to help ELLs in their classrooms.

Table 4

Training Topics Needed

Training	Bilingual teachers	Monolingual teachers
Research-based techniques and strategies for English language learners (ELLs)	X	X
Culturally responsive training	X	X
Vocabulary instruction	X	
Initial/early literacy	X	
SIOP training with differentiation	X	
Biliteracy for all teachers	X	
Similarities and differences between L1 and L2	X	
Readwork webinars for ELLs with differentiation strategies		X
Foundation knowledge in ELLs' language		X
Co-teaching and cross-curriculum integration		X
Child development		X

Additional resources mentioned as needed included:

- Having an ELL teacher/instructional/literacy coach (P2 & P3).

- Increased school-home communication: Translation services/tools/information sent out to the community in multiple languages/services to parents (P1, P3, & P5).

- Computer programs / pen E-reader (P1 & P3).

- Leveled Library, word-to-work dictionaries, dual language visuals, books, manipulatives, culturally relevant books, posters, videos/audio (P2, P3, & P4).

Only one monolingual teacher did not know what to respond with, stating: "We need to know what we should be actually doing, then we can kind of understand what resources we need" (P6).

Interestingly, as participants shared their knowledge about teaching ELLs in their classrooms (whether for biliteracy or English-only teaching), their competence and confidence in teaching ELLs were very similar. Despite the need for more training, some teachers' expressed confidence in their teaching of ELLs in their classrooms. For example:

- "I feel confident that I'm doing everything I can to support my ELLs (P2)."

- "I would definitely say yes, mainly because I refused to quit, and I want to learn, and I want to communicate better with them because they deserve the same chances as all of my other students (P3)."

- "I feel confident with the students that I have. I am very proud of how much they have matured and what they're going through nowadays. I am their number one advocate (P5)."

All participants except one expressed positive self-confidence in serving their ELLs. Some shared feeling confident because of training received at their university, while others it was because of professional development opportunities or coworkers sharing their knowledge.

Discrepant Case

Participant 6 was monolingual and had been teaching between 16-20 years. However, this participant stood out for responding completely differently about three topics: training, competence, and confidence. Participant 6 was the only one who did not attend any professional development about biliteracy instruction or otherwise. This participant did not know which kinds of training would be needed to serve ELLs better. About serving ELLs in her classroom, this was the only participant who stated not feeling competent nor confident.

Summary of Findings

The themes that emerged from participants' responses about their knowledge and self-efficacy in biliteracy instruction were Knowledge of Biliteracy, Focus on Teaching English, Training Attended, and Resources Needed. Participants had different ideas about implementing biliteracy instruction but provided a thorough description of this type of instruction. However, while sharing their knowledge about biliteracy, bilingual teachers

and monolingual teachers did not always agree. While participants who were bilingual teachers all agreed on the benefits of ELLs using their L1, monolingual teacher participants did not. Understanding the impact on ELLs' academic achievement while using their L1 in the classroom and exposing them to two languages at an early age was common amongst bilingual teacher participants. Whereas monolingual teacher participants had various beliefs, some of which aligned with bilingual teachers, but not all.

Additionally, all participants except one participant reported their competence and confidence to serve ELLs in their classroom. Concerning teaching English to ELLs, most of the responses were focused on English-only instruction and not on biliteracy instruction. Only one participant, who was bilingual, referred to connecting knowledge from ELLs' L1 with their L2. However, all participants shared learning strategies for teaching English to ELLs. The strategies mentioned the most were word-picture relation and scaffolding. All strategies mentioned by both monolingual and bilingual teachers are used with ELLs. However, bilingual teacher participants talked about other strategies that align with biliteracy instruction.

The variety of answers provided by all participants was also present when sharing the need for more training. Some topics participants shared were common between bilingual and monolingual teachers. Though bilingual teachers mentioned other topics for training aligned with biliteracy instruction, monolingual teachers mentioned topics that are beneficial for ELLs in their classroom but not focused on biliteracy instruction. In

comparison, monolingual teachers shared the use of other strategies that align with English-only instruction.

      In the next chapter I discuss these findings and their implications within the conceptual framework and recent studies. I also include limitations, recommendations, and implications for social change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to address the gap in the literature related to the lack of research on teachers' perspectives of their knowledge and self-efficacy in biliteracy instruction. I employed a basic qualitative design and used a demographic questionnaire and semistructured, phone interviews with K–third-grade bilingual (i.e., English and Spanish) and monolingual teachers. This study was important to gain more information about the knowledge and self-efficacy of ECE teachers in biliteracy instruction that can be used to develop or revise training for preservice teachers and professional development workshops on biliteracy instruction for all teachers, regardless of their participation in bilingual education programs.

There is a difference in the biliteracy instruction knowledge of bilingual teachers and monolingual teachers. Bilingual teachers shared more strategies used with ELLs than monolingual teachers. Additionally, bilingual teacher participants agreed about the benefits for ELLs' L1 use. In contrast, monolingual teachers tended to focus more on English instruction than biliteracy. However, both bilingual and monolingual teachers expressed having competence and confidence in serving ELLs in their classrooms.

Interpretation of Findings

Findings from this study expanded the understanding of ECE teachers' perspectives of their knowledge and self-efficacy in biliteracy instruction. The literature revealed differences in biliteracy instruction knowledge of bilingual teachers when compared to other teachers working in dual-language or ESL programs (Franco-

Fuenmayor et al., 2015). In the present study, I explored the knowledge of bilingual

teachers and monolingual, mainstream teachers who serve ELLs but are not part of a

language program. The findings showed that when compared to monolingual teachers,

bilingual teachers demonstrated more biliteracy instruction knowledge. This was not a

surprise because bilingual teachers have received instruction about biliteracy and have

had the experience of becoming bilingual themselves. However, all participants,

regardless of begin bilingual or monolingual, reported feeling competent and confident in

serving ELLs in their classrooms except for one monolingual participant. Though all

teachers shared strategies to serve ELLs in their classrooms better, bilingual teachers

provided more strategies focused on biliteracy. Most of the strategies shared by bilingual

teachers also aligned with Krashen's (1989) second language learning theory and

hypothesis of affective filters. The variety of strategies mentioned by bilingual teachers

promote comprehensible input where ELLs understand instruction and can associate it

with their L1 and apply it to the L2 and contributes to have a positive experience in their

classroom. The connections with ELLs' L1 allow for learning the L2. In contrast, the

monolingual teachers in this study tended to provide strategies focused on English-only

instruction.

Furthermore, all bilingual teachers in this study shared the understanding of the

positive effect of biliteracy on ELLs' academic achievement. Overall, the bilingual

teachers agreed with the literature regarding the benefits of using ELLs' L1 to transfer

into the L2. Such benefits include that a higher proficiency in the L1 results in a higher

proficiency in the L2, there is improvement of reading and writing in both languages, there is a transfer of knowledge from L1 to L2, and there are positive connections with the L2 (see Butvilofsky et al., 2017; Krashen, 1989; Miller, 2017; Raikes et al., 2019).

Studies on different models of bilingual education can help explain the focus on English-only instruction from some monolingual teachers. Soltero-González et al. (2016) compared the effect biliteracy instruction had in different bilingual programs. They explained that one of the programs was paired literacy, and the other was sequential literacy. A sequential language program aims to begin with instruction using the L1 and eventually transition into English only. Their findings for students participating in the paired literacy program included higher scores for reading and writing in Spanish and English, while students in a sequential language program scored lower).

Most teachers in the current study shared that they felt competent to teach ELLs; however, they also expressed a need for resources in their classrooms to better serve ELLs. Participants shared the need for training as a resource and professional development workshops to better serve ELLs. This finding aligned with Hegde et al. (2018) whose participants also expressed the need for more professional development workshops. Professional development workshops are important, according to Mellom et al. (2018), Spies et al. (2017), and Tong et al. (2017) who claimed that teachers gained knowledge in professional development workshops on how to better serve ELLs in the classroom, which helped increase ELLs' English skills, improve teachers' attitudes and beliefs, and develop teachers' empathy towards ELLs and their families. Additionally,

high self-efficacy and literacy skills are linked to professional development workshop attendance (Babinski et al., 2018; López & Santibañez, 2018).

In terms of teachers' confidence to serve ELLs in their classrooms, all participants except one shared feeling competent and confident without any doubt. Teachers recognized that there is room for improvement, and both groups of teachers in this study acknowledged the need for more information about biliteracy. However, these same teachers expressed the need for more training on topics specific to serving their ELLs. Bilingual and monolingual teachers alike mentioned the need for research-based techniques and strategies for ELLs and culturally responsive training.

Teachers' competence and confidence are related to their self-efficacy, according to Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory. Participants in the present study were aware of ELLs' needs. Their perspectives of their knowledge and beliefs about a specific topic led to their teaching of such a topic. Even though they perceived themselves as having the competence and confidence needed, they recognized that they could continually expand their knowledge. Additionally, the perception of monolingual teachers is important because they demonstrated having less information about biliteracy instruction but also have ELLs in their classrooms. They also showed an interest in gaining more knowledge to serve ELLs in their classrooms better.

Limitations of Study

One limitation of this study was the lack of observation of teachers in their classrooms. Though I focused on teachers' perceptions of their knowledge and self-

efficacy on biliteracy instruction, it would have been of great value to cross-reference their perceptions with their actions in the classroom. Additionally, all participants completed the study through self-selection sampling and their volunteering to answer the invite to participate in this study. Furthermore, participants were limited to K–third-grade teachers who had ELLs in their classrooms. Hence, the transferability of findings to all teachers is limited because their experiences in the K–third-grade classrooms may not be the same as in higher grades.

Recommendations

Considering the limitations of this study, I recommend further studying teachers' perspectives of their self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy including classroom observations. It is important that future studies involve the ELLs' monolingual teachers regardless of being part of a bilingual program. Furthermore, because findings confirmed teachers' need for training, I recommend exploring the professional development needs of ELLs' teachers as well regardless of them being part of a bilingual program. Finally, I also suggest studying these topics with a larger number of participants, both bilingual and monolingual teachers, and teachers of grades other than the K–third-grade span.

Implications

The study findings may have an impact on ELLs and their teachers. As the literature informs us, teachers having higher self-efficacy positively influences students' academic achievement (see Ahmad et al., 2015; Hwang et al., 2016; Shahzad & Naureen, 2017). The primary implication this study's findings may be to contribute to the increase

of ELLs' academic achievements through increasing teachers' knowledge of the biliteracy process in their classroom. Teacher participants acknowledged their competence and confidence to serve ELLs at the same time as acknowledging their need for more training to serve them. Given that these findings come from bilingual and monolingual teachers, school principals might be more inclined to hire monolingual teachers for bilingual programs and provide the necessary training to increase these teachers' knowledge about biliteracy. A greater understanding of ECE teachers' perspectives on biliteracy instruction, regardless of being bilingual or monolingual, might help to inform professional development workshop opportunities for all teachers who serve ELLs, and this, in turn, might contribute to the higher academic achievement of their ELLs. Additionally, the training topics needed by teacher participants may also inform in-service teachers' programs to better prepare them prior to entering the classrooms.

Conclusion

While the number of ELLs in the ECE classrooms keeps increasing, the need to provide them with biliteracy instruction also increases. Teachers are aware of biliteracy instruction benefits to ELLs, though bilingual teachers acquire more implementation knowledge than monolingual teachers. Monolingual teachers participate in bilingual programs with the English component of instruction; however, there are monolingual teachers who also have ELLs in their classrooms and are not part of a bilingual program and their focus on English-only teaching is still prevalent.

ECE teachers are aware of their strengths and weaknesses about biliteracy when teaching ELLs. Their perceptions of knowledge and self-efficacy are positive, while they also acknowledge the need for more training about biliteracy instruction. However, monolingual teachers need to be included in professional development workshops focused on biliteracy instruction. If they had more information about biliteracy development, their teaching of English might not be excluding their ELLs' L1 but rather be using this language as a component for their ELLs to become biliterate. Overall, exploring teachers' perceptions about their knowledge of biliteracy and their self-efficacy was a good starting point to learn how much teachers already know on the topic and to expand that knowledge for the benefit of ELLs.

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Appendix A: Demographic Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed for descriptive information only. The answers provided will be used to describe the participants of the present study.

Please check with an X the answer that best describes you and write answers where is provided.

1. Age □ 18 - 20 years   □ 31 – 40 years   □ 51 – 60 years

　　　□ 21 – 30 years   □ 41 – 50 years   □ over 60 years

2. Years of Teaching Experience   □ less than 5 years   □ 6 – 10 years

　　　□ 11 – 15 years   □ 16 – 20 years □ over 20 years

3. What grade level do you currently teach? Please check all that apply.

□ Kindergarten   □ Grade 1   □ Grade 2   □ Grade 3

4. What subject(s) do you currently instruct? Please check all that apply.

□ Art   □ Science   □ Music   □ Drama

□ Language Arts   □ Mathematics   □ Social Studies

□ Physical Education □ All Core Subjects

□ Other (please specify): _____.

5. Are you monolingual _____   bilingual _____   multilingual _____

6. Which language(s) do you speak?

7. Do you teach within any of the following programs? (Mark all that apply):

　　　a. Bilingual Program ___

　　　b. Dual Language Program (50/50) ____

　　　c. ESL Program (pullout) ____

　　　d. ESL Program (collaborating with mainstream teachers) ____

　　　e. Mainstream classroom (not language-focused) _____

　　　f. Other _____

8. Which state do you teach at? _____

9. Do you teach in an Urban School _____   Rural School _____

10. Please list your telephone number to participate on the audio-recorded phone interview _____ and list the best day and time for me to reach out to you _____.

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Introductory Statement: Thank you for volunteering for this interview. I want to reassure you that your answers will be kept strictly confidential.

This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding on K to third-grade teachers' perspectives of their self-efficacy and biliteracy instruction knowledge as well as the kinds of cultural experiences they have had prior/during their teaching experiences with ELLs. Answers provided will help address the research question stated for the present study: What are early childhood teachers' perspectives on their self-efficacy and knowledge of biliteracy instruction?

Please answer each of the following questions, I will be recording your answers for the purpose of analysis and reporting of my dissertation only. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential, and you will not be identified by name.

Personal Experiences and Biliteracy

1. Can you tell me about experiences you have had with learning a second language? … Can you tell me more about this?

2. What kinds of experiences have you had with being exposed to other cultures? … Can you give me a specific example?

3. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Thank you, no we will turn to the second set of questions that focus more on your perceptions of biliteracy development and instruction. There are no wrong answers to

these questions because the main research questions make emphasis on your perceptions on this topic.

Perceived Self-Efficacy and Knowledge of Biliteracy Instruction

1. How would you describe what happens to ELLs academic learning when they are exposed to two languages at an early age?

2. What do you think is the impact on ELLs' academic achievements when the mainstream teacher uses the ELLs first language in the classroom?

3. What do you think happens to ELLs' academic achievement when they use their first language in the classroom?

4. What do you think happens to ELLs' academic learning when teachers have been exposed to experiences of learning a second language or have been exposed to other cultures?

5. What do you think has to happen for ELLs to develop their English language skills? Can you tell me more about this?

6. Do you feel competent to serve ELLs in your classroom?

7. Among your student population, who do you think benefits the most from biliteracy instruction? Can you tell me more about this?

8. Do you feel confident in your abilities as a teacher to serve ELLs in your classroom?

9. What kinds of Professional Developments have you attended this past year in relation to Biliteracy Instruction?

10. What kinds of trainings do you think are necessary to better serve the population of ELLs in K to third grade?

11. What kind of resources do you think K to third-grade teachers should have to better serve ELLs in their classrooms?

12. How would you explain in your own words what biliteracy instruction is?

13. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Closing Statement: Thank you for your participation with this study. Please know that if you have any questions or want to add anything else to your responses you can always contact me through email or phone number stated on the consent form.