2023

The Perceptions of Teachers and Administrators Regarding the Influences Contributing to the High Dropout Rates of English Language Learners

Vimbainashe Chanakira
Walden University

Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Vimbainashe Mhiribidi Chanakira

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. David Weintraub, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty
Dr. Eilene Edejer, Committee Member, Education Faculty
Dr. Cleveland Hayes, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2023

Abstract

The Perceptions of Teachers and Administrators Regarding the Influences Contributing

to the High Dropout Rates of English Language Learners

By

Vimbainashe Mhiribidi Chanakira

MSA, North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC, 2016

M.S., North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC, 2012

B.A., University of Zimbabwe/Gweru Teachers College, 1988

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2023

Abstract

There is a high dropout rate of English language learners (ELLs) compared to non-ELLs at the school under study. Guided by Bass and Burns's transformational leadership conceptual framework, this qualitative study aimed to examine the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding the influences contributing to the high dropout rate of ELLs. Two research questions were employed to investigate the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding the underlying reasons for the elevated dropout rate of ELLs at the study site school as well as examine what administrators and teachers believe causes the high dropout rates of ELLs at the high school and what tools teachers think are needed from administrators to lower the ELLs' dropout rate. Participants were five administrators and five high school teachers who all work with ELLs. Data were collected through participant interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. The results indicated the importance of transformational leadership in supporting teachers to improve the quality of instruction provided to ELLs. The results also showed the importance of adult and child relationships in improving the graduation rate of ELLs. The findings were used to develop professional development (PD) training for high school educators on strategies that can be used to support ELLs and help improve their graduation rate, such as developing partnerships with families of ELLs. It is recommended that school leaders provide meaningful PD that can help improve the quality of instruction ELLs receive to improve their graduation rate. The project contributes to positive social change by providing research-based strategies that teachers can use to improve the graduation rates of ELLs.

The Perceptions of Teachers and Administrators Regarding the Influences Contributing

to the High Dropout Rates of English Language Learners

by

Vimbainashe Mhiribidi Chanakira

MSA, North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC, 2016

M.S., North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC, 2012

B.A., University of Zimbabwe/Gweru Teachers College, 1988

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2023

Dedication

I want to dedicate this work to my late parents, Amos Mhiribidi and Chamada Mhiribidi, for the gift of life and their sacrifices to put me through school in the most challenging circumstances. My sons, Karl Kupara Danai Chanakira, Keith Vusimusi Chanakira, and Kingsley Chenjerai Admire Chanakira, for being my rocks and the ones to cheer me up when I was down and, most importantly, thanking them for their tolerance and resilience during my 'absences' during the program. My siblings continued to be my cheerleaders throughout my academic career. My longtime friends have always been an inspiration, pushing me to pursue this degree and always shoot for the stars. I remember my deceased, beloved grandmother, Lydia Vachivi Mhiribidi, for her unconditional love in my early childhood years. Lastly, I would like to dedicate this study to students I have encountered on this journey who inspired me to find solutions to a problem in my community and make positive changes.

Acknowledgments

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The problem in the qualitative study was the high dropout rate of English language learners (ELLs) at the low-income, urban, high school study site. The dropout rate has decreased at the school of study for non-ELLs, but there is still a relatively higher dropout rate for ELLs than their counterparts. According to Manspile et al. (2021), ELLs may experience a dearth of educational opportunities and support compared to their non-ELL counterparts, which can lead to a decreased graduation rate. Due to language barriers, general education teachers are challenged to provide effective instruction to most ELLs (Willie et al., 2019), and teachers are frustrated with ELLs taking assessments when they are not fluent in English. Understanding ELLs' experiences and cultural backgrounds is vital for teachers to provide adequate academic support. A lack of knowledge on how to help ELL students has led to some of these students dropping out before their high school graduation (Rodriguez et al., 2022). Educators can employ several instructional strategies to address the academic needs of ELLs.

Several factors contribute to the dropout of ELLs, and according to Donnelly (2021), ELLs face challenges that contribute to underperformance and, sometimes, dropping out before graduation. Obinna and Ohanian (2020) suggested that language barriers among ELLs, their parents, and school administrators could contribute to the high dropout rate. Additionally, Shideler et al. (2020) and Banse et al. (2019) emphasized the challenge faced by ELLs in simultaneously acquiring English as the language of assessment and understanding academic content. ELLs are likely to drop out due to poor

academic performance (Rodriguez et al., 2022). These multiple challenges can impede ELLs' academic success, resulting in possible dropping out before graduation. Title 1 schools, such as the study site school, have a higher dropout rate of ELLs because there is a higher population of immigrants who are ELLs (Talleyrand et al., 2018). Most study site students are from a low-income community and lack social and academic resources, possibly contributing to the lower graduation rate.

Identification of ELLs in North Carolina

The North Carolina Department of Instruction (2021) administers a World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment Screener, which is an English language proficiency assessment, to students in Grades 1–12 upon enrollment to assist educators in identifying students who are ELLs. The utilization of a World-Class Instructional Design assessment can serve as a supplementary mechanism for the preliminary recognition and allocation of kindergarten pupils who have been classified as ELLs. The administration of the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment Screener takes place during the initial 30-day period following a student's enrollment, and the resulting scores are subsequently recorded in PowerSchool for all screeners that have been administered. As a result, educators may get professional development (PD) to provide them with the knowledge and resources they need to address the various requirements of ELLs, including how to design effective programs and curricula. The English language proficiency assessment required by North Carolina for ELLs complies to the provisions of Title I of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) legislation (North Carolina Department of Instruction, 2021).

Rationale

The problem in this qualitative study was the high dropout rate of ELL students in the study site, a low-income, urban, high school in the eastern part of the United States. I interviewed study site administrators and teachers to find ways to reduce the high dropout rate of ELL students at the school. According to Public Instruction (2019), 15% of students in this state who enter high school each fall do not graduate within 4 years. However, recent Department of Public Instruction data showed that the student dropout rate has decreased to 2.26% for the 2019–2020 school year from 3.06% for the 2018-2019 school year. Overall, the number of dropouts in the community continues to decline, but there is still great concern with the ELL population, which has a high dropout rate. Over the past 5 years, the graduation rate of ELLs students at the study site has been comparatively lower than that of other population groups.

Current strategies used in the study site school to address the dropout rate contributed to an improvement in the 2019 graduation rate of ELL students at the school. Table 1 illustrates the graduation rates of both ELL and non-ELL students from 2016–2021.

Table 1

Yearly Graduation Rate of ELLs vs Non-ELLs at the Study Site

School Year	Non-ELLs (%)	ELLs (%)
2016	85.8	72.2
2017	85.3	56.7
2018	78.9	57.4

2019	82.1	72.5
2020	83.6	73.2
2021	84.5	72.5

Definition of Terms

Dropout: Any student that has not graduated from high school or completed a state or district-approved educational program without transferring to another secondary school (Department of Public Instruction Center for Safer Schools, 2019).

ELLs: Students in the Grades of prekindergarten through 12 who were not born in the United States, whose native tongue is a language other than English, and who are incapable of performing ordinary classwork in English. This term also describes all students in the Grades of prekindergarten through 12 born in the United States of parents possessing no or limited English-speaking ability and incapable of performing ordinary classwork in English (Education Commission of the States, 2020).

PD: Any ongoing training that leads educators to challenge their reality and abilities so that they may acquire skills and strategies that allow them to develop effective learning in students (Romero-Ariza et al., 2021).

Significance of the Study

ELLs face challenges as they integrate into English-speaking schools that hinder their success in the English proficiency needed for academic success (Abdullah, 2021). According to the ESSA, states should ensure that every student succeeds in school (Public Law 114-95, 2015, Seastrom, 2017). This study is significant in safeguarding

accountability and ensuring that ELLs are successful like every other child and have equitable access to a meaningful education that prepares them to graduate from high school. Administrators and teachers must support the students as they integrate into the schools and communities (Rodriguez et al., 2022). Educators must be equipped with the skills to work with students from different multicultural backgrounds to serve the needs of ELLs. Rodriguez et al. (2022) added that the inadequacy of teachers in delivering suitable instruction to ELLs students is a contributing factor to their inability to adapt to the rigorous academic demands of high school, ultimately leading to a high rate of dropout among this population. Darling-Hammond and Cook-Harvey (2018) stated that through culturally responsive classrooms, where students are treated equally, students can be successful because they have a sense of safety and belonging.

The results of this study are significant because they helped fill a gap in practice and provided contributions for educators through PD on providing the essential support needed for the success of ELL students and keeping them in school. ELLs have challenges adjusting to a new dominant culture, language, and new education system (Akay & Jaffe-Walter, 2021). Furthermore, Ferlazzo (2020) found that ELLs who received support from educators outperformed those without improved academic performance, attendance, and classroom engagement. Zaff and Malone (2020) supported this belief and noted that nurtured youths who receive adult support are more likely to achieve better academically and have life success. Students who drop out before graduation enter the workforce ill-equipped for job advancement or postsecondary education requirements. In most cases, students with a high school diploma make more

money over the course of their lives than those without a high school diploma, and there was a 52% gap in earnings between high school graduates and dropouts (Gordon et al, 2021). In addition, high school diploma holders are more likely to get a job versus those who did not graduate.

ELLs are part of the communities, and the failure to graduate affects both the students and community. Rodriguez et al. (2022) stated that ELLs must graduate high school for both individual and societal benefits. Unless there is an improvement in the partnership between educators and the community to establish a favorable learning environment for ELL students, these students may prematurely exit the academic system and enter the workforce without having fully developed the necessary academic skills. ELLs may also work long hours to support families, which can contribute to dropping out of high school. According to Staff et al. (2020), students who work long hours are more likely to drop out than those who work less or do no work. ELLs are essential and contribute to a more potent labor force (Manspile et al., 2021). Understanding the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding the factors contributing to the high dropout rate of ELL students in the study site school may inform other educators on using more effective multicultural instructional methods to cater to all students' needs.

Research Questions

In this qualitative study, I explored the perceptions of administrators' and teachers' regarding the influences contributing to 'the high dropout rate of ELLs at a low-income, urban high school. Additionally, I sought to determine strategies for administrators and teachers to mitigate the problem.

RQ1: What do administrators and teachers believe causes the high dropout rates

of ELLs at a low-income, urban, high school?

RQ2: What tools do teachers note are needed from administrators to lower the

dropout rate of ELLs?

Review of the Literature

The literature review contains information relevant to ELL students and was

limited to publications from 2018 to the present, with older references used when no

current information was found or if the reference was a seminal work. The information in

this review of the literature were found in peer-reviewed journals, books, and online

research databases accessed through the Walden University Library. Topics discussed

include the high dropout rate of ELLs, barriers to academic success in high school, the

perceptions of administrators and teachers of the low graduation rate of ELLs, inadequate

teacher training on how to support ELLs, lack of educational equity, and social

challenges faced by ELL students.

Literature Review Strategy

I conducted this literature review using databases accessed through the Walden

University Library, including EBSCOhost, ProQuest, Academic Search Complete,

Education Research Complete, and Walden Dissertations. The following key words were

used for the searches: *ELL, English learners, ESL, English as a second language,*

bilingual education, transformational leadership, at-risk graduation, minority graduation

dropout rates, and *graduation rates*. The searches were restricted to peer-reviewed

articles published between 2018 and 2022, with the exception of sources that pertain to

the conceptual framework. The main sources of information were peer-reviewed, scholarly articles; books; and dissertations. In searching through the databases, I found helpful articles that offered supplementary, related information, including the topics of the high dropout rate of ELLs, barriers to the academic success of ELLs in high school, and administrator and teacher perceptions of the low graduation rate of ELLs.

Conceptual Framework

The transformational leadership conceptual framework of Bass (1999) and Burns (1978) guided this qualitative study. In this project study, I investigated the perceptions of high school administrators and teachers on the influences contributing to the high dropout rate of ELLs at the study site. School leaders have a great impact on the equality of education that students receive. Leadership is described as a process that allows leaders to influence followers and develop ethical character (Burns, 1978). I employed the transformational leadership framework to explain the degree to which accountable school leaders and teachers can facilitate improved academic performance among ELLs and mitigate their likelihood of dropping out. The four major concepts of transformational leadership are influence, motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Bass, 1999). Jensen (2018) described a transformational leader as someone who can motivate, create an ethical working and learning environment, exemplify moral standards, and engage in open and clear communication that offers opportunities to coach and mentor others. Teachers are instrumental as transformational leaders that contribute to students' academic success through the inspirational component that helps improve student grades (DeDeyn, 2021). Students that are motivated and

encouraged by their teachers are more likely to be successful. The importance of administrators and teachers in the academic success of ELLs can be a contested topic; however, researchers have demonstrated these stakeholders' significance in supporting ELLs' success. James and Kitcharoen (2021) stated that transformational school leadership has direct effects on transformational classroom leadership in bridging academic gaps and overcoming educational inequities. The transformational leadership framework can be used to guide administrators and teachers in making sound decisions when working with ELLs to lower their dropout rate. In this study, the conceptual framework was also grounded in the knowledge domains in the education field adopted by Burns highlighting the importance of leaders to influence followers. Empowered school leaders influence teachers through what they have learned that contributes to positive academic changes in their schools (Johnson, 2019).

School culture demonstrates and determines transformational leadership characteristics (Kalkan et al., 2020). Transformational leaders help teachers provide instruction that addresses the needs of all student demographics and populations. Teachers must adapt to the needs of the students based on what they observe, while school leaders must cultivate a learning culture that fosters positive relationships with students, teachers, and parents in the school and community, including developing partnerships that promote a positive environment for ELLs. Transformative administrators advocate for their students and help guide ELL families and students to become aware of their education rights (Caffrey, 2021). They also help support students with the necessary resources to be successful. Transformational leaders must provide

ELLs with a diverse education that improves their literacy skills to improve the level of literacy that allows them to be academically successful (Goodman & Intercultural Development Research Association, 2018).

Review of the Broader Problem

An Introductory History of ELL Education

There is an increase in diverse populations across the United States that calls for teachers to incorporate instruction infused with cultural pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching for ELLs (Thomas & Berry, 2019).In addition, culturally responsive teaching may provide prevention and intervention strategies to reduce ELLs' dropout rates. Building positive relationships between administrators, teachers, and students may allow educators to understand ELLs' issues. The sense of belonging among ELLs allows for a smoother integration of the students in a new society where things may differ from their previous homes and school environments (Caffrey, 2021).

No Child Left Behind: 2002

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was created by President George W. Bush in 2001 and affected ELLs in the United States with provisions contained in Title III: Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students (Skinner,2020). The legislation supported spending authority for U.S. government programs to support K–12 schooling and promised accountability by providing standards-based education that tied funding to successful schools based on test scores and penalized failures. The law also eliminated the achievement gap between prosperous and impoverished students by creating common expectations for all and holding schools

accountable for subgroups' performance, such as ELLs, within the larger school population. Reading and math proficiency for all students was expected by 2014, and underperforming students received free tutoring or attended intervention programs.

Title VI and Memorandum

The first federal regulation regarding the rights of ELLs was passed in 1964 as part of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C., 2000). Rice (2004) stated that Section 601 of Title VI of the legislation made it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity that receives financial support from the federal government. The federal government also passed Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1968, which advocated for students' right to learn English and academic content (Cruze et al, 2019). This act also suggested that children with poor English proficiency should be given the option of receiving education in their native language in addition to English (Siegel-Hawley & Frankenberg, 2010). In a May 25, 1970, Memorandum, the Office of Civil Rights stated that "when students were unable to speak and understand English, the district must take steps to rectify the language deficiency to open its instructional program to these students" (California Department of Education, Language Proficiency and Academic Accountability Unit, 2001, para. 3).

U.S. Supreme Court Ruling in *Gómez v. Illinois State Board of Education* in 1987

The U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Gómez v. Illinois State Board of Education* in 1987 established the responsibility of state educational agencies to provide oversight and guidance to local districts in services to ELLs (California Department of Education,

Language Proficiency and Academic Accountability Unit, 2001). To meet the

requirements in *Casteñeda v. Pickard*, the state departments of education were given the

responsibility of monitoring the school districts within their state to ensure that the

requirements were met primarily with the needs of ELLs.

Administrators and Teacher Challenges in Teaching ELLs

Educators struggle with the challenges of teaching ELLs (Horwitz et al., 2009).

Having vocal advocates for the improvement of ELL instruction in schools improves the

quality of instruction for ELLs (Horwitz et al., 2009). Horwitz et al. (2009) observed that

establishing a collaborative partnership between the school and the central office

regarding quality instruction led to a shared sense of accountability for the academic

success of ELLs. Educational administrators and instructors encounter difficulties in

identifying effective approaches to mitigate the obstacles encountered by ELLs, with the

goal of achieving the most significant reduction in student withdrawal rate from school

(Fu & Wang, (2021). Moreover, educators encounter obstacles when instructing ELLs in

the acquisition of language skills that are crucial for achieving academic proficiency

(Austin-Archil, 2019).

ELLs' education experiences and challenges differ from school to school based

on how the school identifies and teaches these students (Bialik et al., 2018). Fullan

(2007) defined school culture as the guiding beliefs and values evident in how a school

operates. Schools must create cultures and climates of a safe learning environment for all

students (Fein et al., 2013). Transformational leaders can motivate staff to work by

creating a supportive environment that improves instruction and learning (Leithwood et

al., 2020). School leaders may face challenges in hiring bilingual paraprofessionals and teachers that can contribute to better instruction of ELLs; however, bilingual students benefit from bilingual professionals committed to their learning (Maldonado, 2019).

The Importance of Improving the Graduation Rate of ELLs

Equity for ELLs (Public Law 114-95)

Several measures have been implemented to ensure equality in education for all students, including ELLs. According to the Rhode Island Legal Services and Aclu Appeal decision, one such measure is The New Rights for English Learners: 1964-1987 in which schools were required to be proactive in providing remediating language skills for non-English speakers instead of ineffective instruction for ELLs. The ESSA also stated that all states should ensure that every student succeeds in school, including ELLs and non-ELLs (Public Law 114-95, 2015). Kelly (2018) stated the civil rights interest, which supports ELLs by stating that most states offer bilingual education to support the education of ELLs.

Earnings Potential

High school graduation enhances students' earning potential, and high school dropout rates negatively affect students' future socioeconomic statuses (Suh, 2021). Dropout rates impact the lifetime earnings of students without a high school diploma. High school graduation is pivotal for students and the community because it lays the groundwork for essential employment skills required in the workplace. High School Graduation Facts (n.d.) noted that students with a high school diploma make $630,000 more over their lifetime than those without a high school diploma. Gordon et al. (2021)

found that there was a 52% gap in earnings between high school graduates and dropouts. Dropping out of high school limits a person's long-term earning potential and reduces potential tax revenues (Lara et al., 2018).

A Potent Labor Force

The U.S. workforce exhibits racial diversity and individuals learning English encounter disparities (Johnson et al., 2020). Ensuring a high graduation rate for ELLs is imperative because a significant proportion of these individuals are active members of the workforce. According to Bergson-Shilcock (2020), it is essential for policymakers to provide support for ELLs because they constitute a significant proportion of the workforce. Manspile et al. (2021) stated that educated ELLs Bare essential and contribute to a more potent labor force. When ELLs graduate from high school, their earnings are likely to increase, and they have better opportunities to get better paying jobs (Bergson-Shilcock, 2020).

Barriers to ELL Academic Success in High School and Dropout Rates

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2018), ELLs represent 23% of all public-school students in the United States. Sugarman (2021) stated that most ELLs are in poor communities where they face various challenges that prevent them from success in school and may contribute to a lower graduation rate for ELLs. ELLs' academic success may be affected by their legal documentation of immigration status, which can be a cause of concern for continuing with education (Rodriguez et al., 2022). Rodriguez et al. (2022) noted that the immigration status of ELLs may also contribute to a low graduation rate

even though North Carolina schools' students are given equal opportunities despite their immigration status.

Lack of Support for ELLs

Cultivating positive teacher and student relationships enhances learning (Whitaker, 2020). Being in a new country with a new culture, unique education system, and no friends can challenge students, especially those who may speak a different language from the host language, and students such as these may drop out because they feel alone and lack support (Brock & Brekken, 2019). Ferlazzo (2020) echoed that ELLs may also drop out of high school because they lack support. ELLs with adult support are more likely to achieve better academically (Zaff & Malone, 2020). ELLs yearn for family-like relationships with educators, especially teachers, like what existed in their countries (Rodriguez et al., 2022). ELLs' transferring and changing schools can contribute to reasons for their dropping out (Rodriguez et al., 2022). Rodriguez et al. (2022) also stated that the feeling of not belonging to the high school may contribute to the dropout of ELLs. The example of Arlington schools failing to provide adequate support for ELLs serves as a compelling illustration of the critical role that supports mechanisms play in facilitating the academic achievement of ELLs (Debbie, 2019). The school district had to resolve the noncompliance issues raised by the United States department of justice regarding the district's legal obligations under the Equal educational opportunities. ELLs feel alienated by non-ELLs who do not accept new students who speak another language (Davis and Tesh, 2022). Umansky et al. (2021) revealed that the quality and availability of resources for ELLs that are necessary for

academic success were negatively impacted by limited financial and human resources during the COVID-19 pandemic. Carlito (2022) stated that the Unidos US and education trust required school districts and states to reserve funding that addresses education inequities of ELLs and provides social, emotional, physical health, and mental health that supports ELLs' learning.

Language Barriers

Several academic factors contribute to ELLs dropping out of high school, including the inability to pass school tests required for graduation; lack of language proficiency, making it difficult for students to understand test questions; and difficulty catching up on content knowledge and learning the language simultaneously (Rodriguez et al., 2022). Lack of English language proficiency hinders ELLs' academic success and can contribute to students dropping out of high school. In 2021, ELLs' graduation rate lags behind the graduation rate of non-ELLs by 12% at the study site. Several factors contributed to this achievement gap, with language barriers being one of the most common factors.

Language barriers also affect teacher effectiveness when teaching ELLs. Lack of teacher training in teaching language acquisition to ELLs contributes to teacher frustrations in teaching ELLs (Austin-Archil, 2019). ELLs lack English language proficiency and literacy, which contributes to their frustrations of not understanding the subject areas that are taught in English (Rodriguez et al., 2022). Students' mastery is affected by this lack of language proficiency and literacy, and they perform poorly on tests that discourage them from continuing their education. Students are more likely to

drop out of high school when they feel hopeless and find no reason to proceed; if they are not making the grades and have lost academic ground, it becomes difficult to catch up with their peers (Cole, 2008; Rouse, 2019). Similarly, Suh's (2021) findings showed that students drop out because they have a low level of achievement.

Adjusting to New Dominant Culture and Education System

According to Akay and Jaffe-Walter (2021), individuals learning English encounter difficulties adapting to a new dominant culture distinct from their country of origin. The authors claimed that ELLs may be helped if teachers met their students' academic demands. The integration of ELLs into U.S. schools poses cultural challenges that require the development of teaching frameworks by educators and stakeholders to support these student groups (Khaiyali et al., 2018). Administrators must assist ELLs in adapting to new educational settings in the schools and back up students so that they feel recognized and supported (Caffrey, 2021). As ELLs adjust to their new communities, students want to be recognized and acknowledged in the classroom like other students. Creating positive relationships gives educators a better understanding of ELLs and allows them to be better prepared to work with the students (Grant et al., 2021). ELLs do well when they feel accepted and supported through their emotional struggles and cultural assimilation (Antunes, 2021).

In contrast, students may feel neglected and isolated when pers and teachers fail to acknowledge their cultural uniqueness labelled as cultural invisibility (Rodriguez et al., 2022). Harmon (2021) stated that additional support services should be provided for ELLs. Administrators must create a safe learning environment for students and teachers

(Fein et al., 2013). In creating and cultivating nurturing support systems, students feel

comfortable and validated when connected to a trusted adult (Anderson et al., 2020).

Students are more willing to participate, take risks, and engage in challenging things

when they feel comfortable and safe and that an adult understands and values their ideas

(Kim & Wynne, 2021). Cultural visibility is paramount in ensuring all students' voices

are heard to facilitate student engagement and learning. ELLs benefit from organizational

structures that provide a culture of acceptance for all students (Renner, 2011). Also,

Rylance and Smith (2018) stated that new students who have migrated from other

counties might find integrating into a new community with a different culture

challenging, hence the need to set up a cultural center that makes all cultures visible in a

school. A true partnership between teachers, students, school staff, and parents may help

contribute to achieving desired outcomes for students. Lesneskie and Block (2017) stated

that constant interactions between parents and teachers improve parents' commitment to

their child's success and develop a greater belief in the school's overall function and their

children's education. When the adults at school and home unite in their value of

education, ELLs value and benefit from it, contributing to their motivation to learn and

grow.

Economic Factors

Many ELLs face immigration challenges and economic challenges that impact

socioeconomic status and require students to work. Students' socioeconomic status can

contribute to dropping out of high school (Suh, 2021). Students who are poor and want to

better themselves through work opt to drop out and make a better living. Suh (2021)

added that students from low-income families are three times more likely to drop out of

school than their wealthier peers. The (High school dropout rates, 2012) supported that

some students drop out of high school due to family responsibilities. In other cases,

students face inequitable educational outcomes and may not have the school resources

needed for academic success, and may work long hours to support families, contributing

to dropping out of high school. Students who work long hours are more likely to drop out

than those who work less or do no work (Staff et al., 2020).

Proven Interventions to Improve the Graduation Rate of ELLs

Several strategies can help curb the dropout rate of English learners, and

enhancing these strategies can help school administrators and teachers improve the

graduation rate of ELLs (Furger, 2008). One effective approach is to improve community

partnerships with parents of ELLs and make home visits to understand the cultural

dynamics of students, which helps educators offer appropriate instructional methods.

Additionally, positive relationships between students and teachers have been found to

contribute to better academic performance. At the school of study, educators use the

Capturing kids heart model, which helps enrich relationships between educators and

students.

In order to prevent dropouts, it is crucial for teachers to identify early symptoms

of ELLs' struggles and warning signs of potential dropout behavior. By recognizing

warning signs such as excessive absenteeism and failure to complete assignments,

educators can provide the necessary support needed to keep students in school. Regular

school attendance of ELLs is particularly important for their academic success, as highlighted by Sugarman (2021).

Moreover, motivating and encouraging students to learn English can greatly assist them in integrating into schools and meeting their academic needs (Hussain et al., 2020). Finally, establishing strong parent and community partnerships with educators creates a robust support system for ELLs who face multiple challenges as they integrate into the schools. By implementing these strategies and fostering a positive and supportive environment, educators can effectively address the dropout rate among English learners and improve their overall educational outcomes.

PD

Teacher training through in-service professionals contributes to teacher readiness and preparedness in teaching ELLs (Okhremtchouk & Sellu, 2019). PD is crucial in preparing teachers to effectively design instructional methods that are needed to support ELLs (O'Hara et al., 2020). Through professional learning communities (PLC.), mentoring beginner teachers by veteran teachers may prepare them to work with ELLs. In addition, PD may support teachers with appropriate teaching strategies that support ELLs (Sugarman, 2021). Grant et al. (2021) study demonstrated how designed coursework and coaching supported preparing educators to work and teach ELLs. Akay and Jaffe-Walter (2021) stated that administrators and teacher training are essential in improving instructional strategies to meet ELLs' needs. PD and staff mentoring can improve the quality of instruction for ELLs (Garcia-Borrego et al., 2020). Educators believe the

integration of English literacy with other subjects can be useful to ELLs as they learn other subjects like mathematics (De La Rosa, 2019)

Administrators' and Teachers' Support for ELLs

Administrators and instructors of students who are still learning English in the United States have a responsibility to help these students succeed academically and socially as they integrate into United States classrooms (Rodriguez et al., 2022). Strengthening core instruction, building strong connections with English language learners, and employing a shared, dual, and Inclusive curriculum are ways teachers may aid their students who are learning the language. To help ELLs, administrators must provide transformational leadership PD strategies and tools to teachers to strengthen and improve instruction for ELLs and provide rigorous learning that can support academic success. In addition, ELLs thrive better with positive relationships between teachers and students. Teachers can tailor-make instruction that supports ELLs' and non-ELLs academic success to support ELLs. Students could be successful in their high school education through cultural and intervention needs provisions (Dunleavy (2018).

Teacher Support and Staff Mentoring

Teachers who understand the academic needs of ELLs and use effective strategies contribute to students' academic success. Mentoring and supporting novice teachers can provide them with instructional methods to support ELLs learning (Garcia-Borrego et al., 2020; O'Hara et al., 2020). Santibañez et al. (2018) stated that mentors could help beginning teachers improve the equality of instruction for ELLs. Mentoring and PD may improve novice teachers' instructional strategies in teaching ELLs. Garver et al. (2018)

acknowledged that teacher efficacy in teaching ELLs might also be affected by the teachers' initial levels of effectiveness and the school's focus on language and cultural development. Additionally, Fu and Wang (2021) advocated for enhancing teacher support by equipping educators with improved instructional strategies for teaching ELLs and bolstering their confidence and effectiveness in instructing ELLs. Heineke (2018) noted that teacher certification and preparation could also contribute to the quality of instruction provided to ELLs. Barrett and Castrellon (2021) also supported the theory that educators must be equipped with tools that provide equitable access to the curriculum for ELLs to help close the achievement gap between ELLs and non-ELLs.

Integration of English Literacy With Other Subjects

Since the NCLB legislation and the accountability movement, schools have continued to improve on how well they can provide for ELLs' needs. Teachers can implement several strategies to better ELLs understanding of the assessment language and other subjects. For example, a PD program called Personal Academic Command for English integrates the language of math with math content to help ELLs better understand math (De La Rosa, 2019). ELLs have difficulty mastering the English language alone yet are expected to learn and understand more complex math. The simplification of using several strategies stated by the author makes it easier for students to learn. The author also suggested partnering ELLs with bilingual students that can help with translation making it easier for ELLs to understand. In addition, using visuals can simplify Math terms for ELLs.

At the school of study, all teachers, despite the subject area, use the first 10 minutes of class to integrate subject areas by having a literacy activity that helps to improve English proficiency for students, especially ELLs. The staff's unanimous decision was reached with the understanding that for students to be successful in understanding subjects' content areas, they must understand the English assessment language. In a similar study, (Casey et al., 2018) found that there was improved comprehension of content material when literacy and another subject were integrated for English learners.

Cultural Pedagogy and Culturally Responsive Teaching for ELLs

Creating a classroom climate for cultural appreciation, respect, and trust provides a welcoming and conducive learning environment for ELLs, especially those new to a school. Due to globalization and migration trends, multicultural education is needed in the classrooms to accommodate students to a new culture and education system. DomNwachukwu (2018) emphasized the importance of teachers using a multicultural education to create equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups. Hoover and Soltero-González (2018) also highlighted the importance of using culturally and linguistically responsive teaching to improve instruction for ELLs. Creating a learning environment that is accepting of every student and making instructional adjustments to meet specific academic needs may benefit ELLs. In a study, teachers who received multicultural education intervention strategies had better multicultural attitudes and efficacy with ELLs (Akcaoglu & Arsal, 2022). In creating positive learning outcomes, teachers should develop relationships with

students. Positive relationships between teachers and students are critical for educators in motivating students to excel. Slavin (2019) stated that motivation is goal-directed and continuous force, essential in guiding students in learning.

Administrators play a crucial role in the type of education students receive. School principals may use culturally responsive practices in influencing initiatives and programs in their schools that address challenges faced by ELLs and provide essential resources (Newcomer & Cowin, 2018). To motivate faculty and students, transformational leaders need to create a caring learning community that shares a common vision and mission (Bass, 1999).

Developing Criteria to PreIdentify Potential ELLs' Dropouts

High school administrators, teachers, and ELL support staff must develop benchmarks that can be used to identify potential dropouts (Rodriguez et al., 2022). Some programs can be used to pre-identify at-risk students from dropping out (Hofflinger & von Hippel, 2020). In Boston, educators use measuring yardsticks to pre identify possible dropouts, including school readiness and grade proficiencies (Boston Foundation & Boston Opportunity Agenda, 2019). Lawmakers must also support school initiatives by providing funding to facilitate the pre identification of potential dropouts so that educators can provide prevention and intervention programs (Carter-Smith,2021). Rumberger (2020) also stated that some programs used to focus on the needs of at-risk students contribute to reducing dropout rates in high schools.

Other Instructional Methods That Support ELLs

The use of dual language in high schools may benefit ELLs and contribute to students' long-term academic achievement (Sun, 2019). This instructional strategy can be used to support ELLs comprehension of the subject matter. ELLs may have anxiety and stress, leading to a lack of interest in learning English when they have difficulty understanding English and the subject matter (Duan & Qiu, 2022). Also, teachers should not lose the focus that English learners must master English fluency, but whenever possible, ELLs may benefit from the use of their native language to reinforce new vocabulary words. Pre teaching key vocabulary and having vocabulary words displayed on a word wall help ELLs remember the meaning of words.

Another strategy teachers can use modifying instruction and assignments to facilitate learning for ELLs and help them to stay on course (Ferlazzo & Sypnieski, 2019). Additionally, ELLs may manage and meet academic goals when students are given extra time to work on assignments. Giving ELLs extra time to work on assignments, especially projects and long tests, may help them to break down the learning material and prevent overwhelming students. ELLs are learning both the assessment language and the different subjects. Severinsen et al. (2018) state that ELLs learn better when teachers provide relevance using culturally relevant materials when applicable. The authors also support collaborative learning when ELLs work with dual language partners. ELLs especially those students in their first year in the country who do not understand the English language and find it hard to communicate with teachers and other students, may benefit from collaboration learning.

Using game-related activities can support ELLs through social well-being and motivation of students to learn the curriculum (Hanghøj et al., 2018). Research shows that Kahoot, a game, can enhance learning, motivate students, and improve classroom interaction, which can be used to facilitate teaching ELLs (Tao & Zou, 2021). Kahoot is a tool to create interactive audiovisual learning games, reviews, and assessments. Using a simple code, students can compete in games against each other in real time from any device. Listening to talk shows, watching TV shows, seeing movies in the English language, and participating in game shows (Hashim et al., 2018) enhance ELLs learning. Games can be useful in teaching ELLs, especially young students (Oktavia et al., 2022). Research also supports the use of language games in teaching ELLs (Yaccob & Yunus, 2019). Additionally, the use of flipped learning helps ELLs with language acquisition at the secondary school level and allows students to access lesson materials at their own time and pace outside the classroom (Carhill et al., 2021).

A lack of resources to offer tutorials or small instruction to students who need to catch up can contribute to dropping out (Rodriguez et al., 2022). Creating and providing intervention programs can help close the achievement gap between ELLs and non-ELL by using strategies that improve English proficiency at the early education stage (Barrett & Castrellon, 2021) through collaboration between teachers and intervention coordinators. Reschly (2020) stated that intervention programs are created to serve at-risk students and find solutions to prevent them from dropping out. Response to Intervention is another intervention program that schools can use to identify and support English learners by offering interventions based on their level of academic understanding (Carter-

Smith, 2021). This program gives students opportunities to have personalized intervention strategies to meet their educational needs. Reading programs that utilize audiobooks as a means of intervention can help ELL students develop reading fluency. Most of the students who struggle with reading and pronunciation of words get discouraged and give up tasks, leading to dropping out of school. Tusmagambet (2020) noted that audiobooks improved reading speed, reading comprehension, and motivation to understand English as a second language.

Reading specialists are experts that can effectively support general education teachers in providing tailor-made reading activities that support ELLs (Shivakumar et al., 2019). Additionally, working with reading specialists and mentors can support English learners with homework assistance at school instead of at home, where parents may not be able to help students because of language barriers. There are positive effects on reading skills when students work cooperatively to complete tasks (Alina & Lavinia, 2017). ELLs may improve their academic performance by having enrichment and intervention programs that support them (Herrera et al., 2020).

Implications

Improving graduation rates for ELL students is an anticipated outcome of this planned qualitative research project. Several themes that might help ELLs and raise their graduation rates should emerge from the study's analysis of the data. The researcher identified intervention strategies as possible solutions that could be used to improve the graduation rate of ELL. A PD was designed to train educators on the best instructional strategies that could help curb the high dropout rate of ELLs at the school of study.

Transformative leadership skills of influence and motivating teachers were used to plan pieces of PD training for teachers to improve instruction methods for ELLs and ultimately improve their graduation rate at the school of study. The project focused on developing and implementing a 2-day PD for teachers who worked with ELLs.

Summary

The literature review was based on the Instructional leadership concepts of Bass and Burns. School leaders and teachers must identify educational inequities faced by ELLs and use strategies to support ELLs with academic success (Mavrogordato et al.,2021). Transformational leadership can guide educators in applying the best instructional strategies that support ELLs. Providing in-service training can change teachers' mindsets and attitudes toward ELLs resulting in improved instructional strategies that support this population of students (Song & Coppersmith, 2020). Additionally, the collaboration between administrators and teachers through PD and staff mentoring can also contribute to improved instructional strategies that benefit ELLs.

The literature suggested that several challenges and barriers are faced by ELLs that contribute to the high dropout rate at the school of study. Inequitable access to educational resources such as digital devices and robust internet may contribute to a lack of instructional resources for ELLs, putting students at a disadvantage with homework completion and remote learning (Sugarman, 2021). Disrupting and dismantling systemic inequities to eliminate the opportunity gap between ELLs and non- ELLs is necessary for improving ELLs' academic and graduation rates. Creating positive relationships between educators and ELLs is vital in motivating and influencing students to feel loved and

valued. Students who are motivated are likely to succeed academically and help reduce the dropout rate. Students that are stimulated have a better chance of succeeding academically. Finally, instructional leadership ensures that instructors have the training they need to serve ELLs in the classroom effectively. The accountability of teachers' access to PD opportunities is something that administrators should keep an eye on.

Section 2: The Methodology

In this section, I present the research design and methodology. The data sampling strategies, data collection methods, and data analysis processes are also discussed in this section. In this study, I collected the interview responses of administrators' and teachers'' regarding their perceptions of factors contributing to the high dropout rate of ELLs at the study site, which allowed me to identify possible intervention programs that could improve the graduation rate of ELLs.

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

In this study, I used a basic qualitative descriptive research design to address the research questions on the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding the high dropout rate of ELLs at the study site. Qualitative research is an inquiry method of determining how people identify, understand, and manage a phenomenon (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). The basic qualitative descriptive research design is appropriate when there is a need for an in-depth exploration of a local problem and a need to focus on the participants' perspectives and experiences (Creswell, 2009; Merriam & Grenier, 2019). I asked open-ended interview questions to obtain in-depth data regarding the perceptions of administrators and teachers on the high dropout rate of ELLs.

Participants

This qualitative study was focused on the perceptions of purposefully selected high school administrators and high school teachers from the study site who observed and worked directly with ELLs. I conducted semistructured interviews with the participants to probe and investigate their perceptions of why there is a high dropout rate of ELLs at the

study site. The purposeful sampling technique was used to get in-depth data and answer

research questions from participants versed in the researched phenomenon. The

purposeful sampling technique was also employed to adequately capture the

heterogeneity in the population by including both novice and veteran teachers so their

perceptions of why there is a high dropout rate for ELLs at the study site could be

compared. To be included in the study, participants had to be certified administrators and

teachers currently working in the high school with at least 2 years of experience.

Participants in this study had varying education levels, from bachelor's to master's

degrees, to allow me to analyze if the teacher's level of education impacts the quality of

ELLs' instruction. I used pseudonyms for participants to maintain their confidentiality.

The participants voluntarily took part in this study and no incentives were provided.

Table 2 illustrates the administrators' demographic information.

Table 2

Administrators' Demographic Information

Name	Location	Grade level	Education
A_1	Study location	9–12	Master in School Administration, Specialist in Education
A_2	Study location	9–12	Master in School Administration
A_3	Study location	9–12	Master in School Administration
A_4	Study location	9–12	Master in School Administration
A_5	Study location	9–12	Master in School Administration

Table 3 indicates the teachers' location, the grade level they teach, and their level

of education.

Table 3

Teachers' Demographic Information

Name	Location	Grade level	Education
T$_1$	Study location	9–12	Bachelor of Arts in Spanish Education
T$_2$	Study location	9–12	Bachelor of Science in Education with a Literacy endorsement
T$_3$	Study location	9–12	Bachelor in Secondary Education with a Math major and ELL endorsement
T$_4$	Study location	9–12	Bachelor in Secondary Education with a Special Education major
T$_5$	Study location	9–12	Master in School Administration Bachelor in Secondary Education with a Family and Consumer Science major.

Data Collection

Data were collected through face-to-face interviews to determine and understand participants' perceptions about why there is a high dropout rate of ELLs at the study site. I obtained written permission from participants before the interviews to make a digital, audio recording of interviews, which I stored on a flash drive and computer file. Denzin and Lincoln (2013) stated that qualitative research allows the observers to use interpretive materials to understand and interpret phenomena. Bittmann (2022) stated that the quality of data collected could be improved when there is a good relationship between the researcher and participants. Additionally, establishing good rapport between the researcher and participants and conducting face-to-face interviews increase the chance of answering all interview questions (Horsfall et al., 2021). It is also essential for the researcher to identify appropriate methods that will help them ask the right questions, systematically gather useful data, and document procedures (Burkholder et al., 2019). Burkholder et al. (2019) also noted that to ensure the data collection's trustworthiness, researchers can use three strategies: listening to observers, employing multiple researchers, and using member checks. I followed the above guidelines to ensure that

data were accurate by sending transcripts to all participants to verify if the data was accurate.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher, I served as an instrument of data collection used to gather the perceptions of administrators and teachers on why there is a high dropout rate of ELLs at the study site. Clark and Vealé (2018) stated that a qualitative researcher works in a natural environment to collect and analyze data. The authors also stressed the importance of a researcher understanding their biases and the fact that these biases might affect the study's outcomes. It is important for the researcher to create a good rapport with the research participants and have effective communication during the interviews and data collection to allow the participants to answer questions freely and honestly (Laureate Education, 2016). To maintain subjectivity in qualitative research, there must be a balance between subjectivity and objectivity (Karagiozis, 2018). Personal and ethical differences between the researcher and participants must be observed during an interview to allow the participants to express themselves freely and stay engaged.

I was responsible for collecting the data and remaining objective to protect the credibility of this study (see Merriam, 2009). I was also a colleague of the research participants and had worked at the study site for 17 years. 'My skills as an observer and interviewer as well as my ability to conduct an appropriate study, data collection, and analysis were essential. During the research, I used a detailed journal to keep notes on the development of the inquiry and a separate journal with potential issues that developed during the study.

Researcher Bias

Ravitch and Carl (2021) defined a study's trustworthiness or rigor refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure a study's quality. Ravitch and Carl (2021) stated that validity and trustworthiness are essential in the qualitative research design process. The authors also stated that the validity of qualitative study findings lies in the quality and rigor of the study. Research bias is defined as any deviation from the truth in data collection, analysis, interpretation, and publication that can cause false conclusions in a study (Florczak, 2022). To maintain research rigor, the methods by which interviews are conducted can promote the validity and reliability of qualitative research (Coleman, 2021).

To avoid biases, I bracketed possible areas of biases and suspended personal assumptions about ELLs and immigrants. Esmene and Kirsop-Taylor (2021) reiterated the importance of bracketing, reflexivity, and transparency when dealing with such influences when they are disruptive to research. To control and track personal biases of being an ELL and immigrant, I recorded my thoughts and ideas that could have presented potential biases. As someone who teaches ELLs, I was motivated to pursue this study to investigate the factors contributing to the high dropout rate among ELLs. Additionally, I aimed to explore strategies that educators could use to improve the graduation rate of this particular population in comparison to non-ELLs. It was necessary to set aside any preconceived notions about the problem to ensure objectivity; therefore, there was a need to approach the issue with an open mind and impartiality. Hochschild (1983) stated that bracketing emotions is an important part of reflexivity since emotions are a source of

data. Since the researcher is the instrument for analysis across all phases of qualitative

research, bracketing is important in phenomenological research (Emiliussen et al., 2021).

To further protect the study from my personal biases, participants' responses were

recorded in full before transcription and analysis of collected data. The population for this

study differed from 'my personal experiences as an ELL. I learned English as a young

student in a distinct educational environment that was influenced by different factors

impacting my experience as an ELL.

Measurement reliability and measurement validity are ways used to appraise the

quality of research (Burkholder et al., 2019). Burkholder et al. (2019) defined

measurement reliability as the consistency of measurement over time. The accuracy of

data collection can be affected by the conditions in which it is collected, so participants in

the current study were provided with a comfortable and professional setting during

interviews with the understanding that the answers participants provided can be affected

by how comfortable they are in providing personal information. The accuracy of facts

impacts the quality and reliability of a study, and using tables to show data is a strategy

that can check the trustworthiness of a study (Cloutier & Ravasi, 2021).

It is important to report data correctly and accurately. Connelly (2016) stated that

the ethical implications of a study may also affect its integrity and valuable contributions

to its trustworthiness. To ensure the validity of the research, I searched for possible

discrepancies or opposing interpretations of data. Discrepancies are described as

systematic and meaningful variations in reported behaviors or simply disagreements

between participants (Al Ghriwati et al., 2018).

I retained evidence of each step in the study to maintain the creditability of the research (see Binhas & Yaknich, 2019). The quality of qualitative research depends on the study's credibility, which includes transparency in establishing a criterion of how the research is carried out to allow qualitative research trustworthiness (Burkholder et al. 2019). I used participant observers to improve the accuracy of the data collected.

Data Analysis

In this qualitative study, I employed open coding, transcription, and thematic analysis to address the research questions and analyze the data. Data analysis for this project was guided by Giorgi's (1985) seven-step approach to data analysis: (a) summarizing the interview, (b) rereading the summary, (c) identifying units of experiences, (d) analyzing the transcriptions to identify codes and themes, (e) reflecting on the themes in participants language, (f) transforming the themes, and (g) synthesizing the themes into the overall understanding of participants' experiences. The collected data were analyzed and synthesized using ATLAS.ti coding software, which was also employed for coding purposes. During the analysis process, I sought similarities in the coded interview transcripts, identified the themes, and checked for alignment with the research questions. I examined the representation of ideas and maps of thematic units within the data by using the ATLAS.ti software. To ensure a correct representation of participants' gathered data, each participant was sent their interview transcript, allowing for member checking. Member checking is a potent tool for ensuring validity, helping to prevent the misinterpretation of information obtained during interviews and enabling the researcher to identify any biases or misunderstandings (Motulsky, 2021).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical challenges, such as maintaining anonymity, confidentiality, and obtaining informed consent, are encountered by researchers; however, qualitative researchers proactively protect the participants" privacy to mitigate these challenges (Sanjari et al., 2014). To address these challenges, first, I obtained permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB); the approval number for this study is 11-28-22-1039263 and it expires on November 27, 2023. I also asked the participants" consent to participate in the study; informed the participants about how the data would be collected, used, and stored; and participants signed consent forms to prevent future issues in case they were still unaware of how their data would be used.

Given that study participants may disclose confidential information, it is imperative that researchers sign a privacy and confidentiality agreement affirming their commitment to protecting the data (Sanjari et al., 2014. An ethical challenge that qualitative researchers may encounter is the management of researcher-participant relationships. Maintaining professionalism and consistently demonstrating respect towards participants are crucial aspects that researchers must adhere to. One additional ethical concern that may arise in qualitative research pertains to the involvement of researchers in soliciting participants to disclose their inner opinions and actions (Babbie, 2017). This aspect raises ethical issues due to the direct contact between researchers and participants; therefore, researchers must represent the participants' experiences accurately. I documented everything thing collected as data, kept everything professional, and made sure none of my participants was under 18 years.

Coding Procedures

According to Saldana (2013), coding methods must be connected to research questions. Using a computerized analytic tool, the researcher can explore possible connections between various aspects of the data. The Walden University Library (n.d) defined a code as a word or short phrase that assigns an attribute or idea to a portion of text or visual data, while a category is a collection of codes representing aspects of a phenomenon. Categories or clusters are sets of constructs or concepts about each other needed to make arguments and develop findings (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Codes, categories, and themes are concepts vital to qualitative research analysis, and I used them for data analysis in the current study.

I conducted a reflexive thematic analysis in ATLAS.ti to overcome inconsistencies in data analysis (see Janis, 2022). Thematic analysis involves analyzing qualitative data through interview transcripts to investigate people's views, ideas, opinions, attitudes, experiences, or values from a set of data (Saldaña, 2013). During the data interpretation stage of analysis, I established connections between the ideas and structure of the collected data to create themes and generate a thematic outline of analysis (see Yin, 2016). The emergent themes from the combination of coding and category process were used to explain the study's findings. In my journal, I created a draft outline to assist in the organization of my thoughts and ideas for interpreting the data and addressing the research questions. The collected interview data were stored, coded, organized, and analyzed using ATLAS.ti (n.d.) online software, and word clouds were generated from transcribed interview data.

Limitations

One limitation, challenge, or barrier that I encountered while conducting this study was the failure of administrators and teachers to give detailed information on how ELLs integrate into U.S. schools. Contradictory beliefs regarding ELLs and the support provided to improve ELLs' dropout rates may exist among administrators and teachers. Furthermore, the responses from administrators and teachers may have exhibited biases either in favor of or against ELLs.

The location of this study could have also posed a limitation because I have worked in the same district for 17 years. Given my extensive familiarity with the study site, there was a possibility of bias if I became cognizant of any dishonesty or lack of transparency among coworker participants. Another potential limitation of this research was the limited sample size obtained from the school district. There was the potential for errors in representation from the limited sample size, so the data analyzed in this study may not be generalizable to other regions within the country. Additionally, the purposeful sample group of high school administrators and teachers might have been a limitation because of their varied experiences working with ELLs. Lastly, administrators and teachers may have failed to give firsthand information on the challenges ELLs face that contribute to the population's high dropout rate.

Data Analysis Results

I reached out to several administrators and high school teachers from the local school district to solicit their participation in the study. However, five administrators and five teachers who met the study's requirements agreed to participate in the study

regarding the perceptions of administrators and teachers on why there is a high dropout

rate of ELLs at the school of study. The requirement was that teachers have worked with

ELLs for at least 2 years. More than 20 emails were sent to high school administrators

and instructors requesting them to participate in the study. This number does not include

the emails sent out as reminders after the first invitations. I attached the consent form to

the invitation emails to ensure that the invited participants understood the study and made

informed decisions regarding their participation. Completing the interviews posed a

challenge as the educators changed the interview meeting times multiple times based on

their availability. However, I interviewed a total of 10 participants. Apart from two

participants who were questioned in their classrooms or offices after school hours, all

interviews took place at a public library. I ensured that the participants understood and

agreed to the interview procedures, including the interview recording, by reviewing the

consent form with them and reading the interview protocol before the interview. After

completing all interviews and transcribing them, I emailed the participants their

transcriptions. They were requested to conduct a member check to verify the accuracy of

the transcripts. The transcripts were accepted as accurate by all 10 participants, who

affirmed that no changes were necessary.

Results for Supporting Research Question 1

Several themes emerged from the administrators' and teachers' interviews on

administrators' and teachers' perceptions of the influences contributing to ELLs' high

dropout rates at a low-income urban high school. Eight themes from the interviews were

uncovered to help answer Research Question 1: (a) language barriers, (b) ineffective

instructional strategies, (c) lack of enough teachers and staff, (d) limited training or PD, (c) limited support from the administrators, (f) difficulty in culturally adjusting, (g) students missing school and going to work, and (h) disconnect between the school community and the parental community at home. Every administrator and teacher is appropriately represented as A_1, A_2, ..., A_n and T_1, T_2, ..., T_n.

Theme 1: Language Barriers

One major challenge is the language barrier, which hinders their ability to understand content and advocate for themselves. T_1 noted, "The language barrier hinders them from showing how big and good of a potential they have because they are very intelligent; very, very intelligent. It's a blockage, I think, for them and the teacher." A3 explained, "It is hard for the students because they will be trying to learn the language and content at the same time." A5 noted, "I think that with ELLs, they have a barrier from home life to school life because they unplug from one language and then plug into the next language." A1 explained. "I think the language barrier is a big obstacle. There are not enough adult speakers of the various languages that students speak and that parents speak at home." A2 explained, "Beyond the cultural and the time in which they get here and the language barrier, it starts even sooner when teachers ask, how do I communicate with this student and family?"

Theme 2: Ineffective Instructional Strategies

Teachers of ELLs face several challenges that can lead to low graduation rates and ineffective teaching. One of these challenges is difficulty in cooperation or collaboration with co teachers. T_1 noted,

It is kind of hard to work alongside some of the co-teachers because they already

have what they want to set, um, to teach in their classroom. This can make it

difficult for teachers to effectively support ELLs in the classroom, as they may

not be aware of the specific instructional strategies being used by their co-

teachers.

Another challenge faced by teachers of ELLs is the use of ineffective instructional

strategies. Insufficient numbers of teachers and staff pose a formidable obstacle for ELLs

teachers. A_4 stated, "I think we need to have more teachers prepared to have more

strategies to support these kids in the classroom."

Theme 3: Lack of Qualified Teachers and Staff

The lack of staff makes it difficult for teachers to teach ELLs effectively. A5

noted:

Just the lack of staff dedicated to that different subpopulation of students. It does

require labor-intensive instructional facilitation because, again, they're also trying

to learn the content as well as the language. There are not enough staffing

coordinators, and there's not enough PD in this area to know what best practices

are to help students, uh, that are ELLs.

T_2 stated,

We must make sure that we're maximizing as much of the school day as possible.

Right now, I have a lot of duties that sometimes take away from effective lesson

planning. Like we have a huge problem with teachers' shortages and teacher

vacancies and not enough subs. And I'm having difficulties, um, maximizing that

or implementing those things because I don't have enough time given that I'm

having to cover a particular class. I would like time to study my data so that I

have to enter data to graph my data, to analyze my data. And I don't have that

time because I am, I am asked and sometimes forced to spend my planning period

covering a class that doesn't have a substitute.

A3 explained,

The brutal honesty is the lack of preparation that not only ELL teachers have

when it comes to acquiring language, but also content area teachers. Content area

teachers are largely responsible for the heavy lifting, right? Of preparing students

for what comes next. And so, it's not the sole job of the ELL teacher, but it is a

partnership.

Theme 4: Limited Training or PD

A challenge that teachers face when working with ELLs is the limited training or

PD available to them. Teachers may lack up-to-date knowledge and strategies for

effectively supporting ELLs in the classroom without regular training. As a result, their

effectiveness in the classroom and the overall success of ELLs can be adversely affected.

Overall, these challenges can significantly impact ELLs' ability to learn effectively and

graduate on time. T_5 explained:

There are not enough staffing coordinators, and there's not enough PD in this area

to know what the best practices are to help students that are ELLs. Specifically for

ELLs? Um, not that I'm aware of. I mean, we have general PDs at the district

level, just about language acquisition and lesson plans and things, but I don't

recall ones for their graduation rate.

To support that limited training can affect ELLs instruction, A_1 explained:

I mean, it could be a multitude of things that prevent them from being successful.

And another thing that could probably prevent being successful is teachers not

having enough training and enough experience with working with ELL students.

T_4 noted, "But I don't believe, to my knowledge, that we have had a PD that focuses on

just improving the ELLs graduation rates." T_3 had a similar response and stated,

I thought about that. Um, what PD sticks with me is that we've done school-wide.

We meet again here and there. We talk about data, talk about what numbers look

like. It's always about some things and not the student, but school-wide, I don't

know that we've done anything professional developing that enhances supporting

English Learners.

A2 noted, "I would like to have combined training of the ELL teachers and general aid

teachers. The whole staff gets direct training from ELL teachers and facilitators once

every so often in a staff meeting."

Theme 5: Limited Support From the Administrators

Limited support from administrators can also be a challenge for ELL teachers.

Teachers, administrators, and district officials must work together to address these

challenges and provide the necessary support for ELLs to succeed. T_3 responded as

follows:

But it doesn't feel like we're being supported necessarily. We talk about data a

lot, but then we don't do anything about data. We talk about what the graduation

cohort looks like, but then we don't do, do anything about it. I think teachers do

all that they can within their classrooms, but then there's no support from the

administration as to helping to support the decisions that are made in the

classroom. I think we're left to ourselves in a nutshell.

T$_4$ added,

I feel like more open conversations with administrators and teachers where the

administrators can listen to what teachers are seeing in their classrooms without

fear that the students are going to be punitively disciplined. You're suspended

now because you've been skipping for so long. That's not the solution to get kids

back in classes. Discipline issues need to be handled in a more restorative manner.

T$_5$ noted,

I don't feel like they're going above and beyond to get some of the big changes

for ELL teachers and students. But they do help, like with, access testing, they do

permit us usually to miss some of our classes, and we get a sub during that time.

Theme 6: Difficulty in Culturally Adjusting and Students Facing Mental Health Issues

The lack of cultural understanding and adjustment poses an additional challenge

for ELLs. T$_2$ emphasized that this obstacle can hinder ELLs from showcasing their full

potential. A1 further highlighted that cultural dynamics sometimes result in ELLs being

withdrawn from school to work instead of pursuing their education. Mental health issues

and facing punitive discipline are also challenges faced by ELLs. A$_4$ also stated, "Some

cultures highlight the cultural prioritization of working jobs for the ELLs rather than prioritizing learning." T$_5$ noted:

> They're not necessarily having individual quiet time on their own. There are a lot of just expectations and responsibilities being put on them. And, also see the stress of the pandemic, and, not uncommon that some of them have lost family members who passed away, who died during covid or other things, and the stress of money and things. It's something that I hear students bring up, and I usually try to check in with them and see how they're doing.

A4 noted:

> They're the only fluent English speakers at home. They could be the ones who have to go to the bank with mom or dad or have to go to the doctor with mom and dad or have to go anywhere that requires somebody to speak English because they're the ones who are communicating for their families. And that can lead to a lot of absenteeism and the students and a lot of missing work. And then, once they start falling behind, it's very hard for them to catch up. And again, school becomes like a secondary thing. Their primary thing is to be the head of the household in the house.

Theme 7: Students Missing School and Going to Work

Challenges such as apathy and a lack of urgency to learn, cultural adjustment difficulties, and the necessity to work jobs are commonly encountered by most ELLs. These challenges create a complex web that hinders ELLs from graduating on time. A$_4$ stated:

They oftentimes pay their way to come to the United States. So sometimes they

owe thousands of dollars to people that brought them over, and they must work to

pay them back. School tends to be secondary to what their primary goal is, excuse

me, which is to work.

A_1 also stated,

Well, I think that a lot of it deals with, uh, stems from a lack of motivation. Either

because they have gotten opportunities or work that does not require a high school

diploma or there's just a lack of motivation because they do not feel that they are

intelligent enough. Or it could be a family dynamic situation where one parent is

not at home or both parents are not at home and, um, they're left to raise their

siblings.

T_2 mentioned, "They're always babysitting or working. There's always traffic". A4

stated,

Another obstacle, you know, is we are living in tough times; there is a lot of

poverty in our school. And when we have high poverty rates that could lead to

students dropping out of school because they must go to work or they don't have

a ride, they stay late working, and they don't wake up on time for school.

A2 specifically noted,

There is a student that I think of fondly from my first year. It was like one of my

first kids that I bonded with. He was pulled out of school and told he was going to

work at 15 years.

Theme 8: Disconnect Between the School Community and the Parental Community at Home

The high dropout rate of ELLs can be attributed, in part, to the absence of collaboration between schools and parents in supporting ELLs. A_2 asserted that:

Because if they learn the English language and they're learning the content, and they're receiving the support at school, but then when they go home there's a disconnect, and there's no, um, bond or kind of collegial relationship between the school and the parents and the home life, then some of the progress can be left lost.

T_3 stated,

Their support frame at home must be strong. It must have these key ingredients. They must have access at night to a quiet space. A lot of the students I am learning with don't even have their sleeping quarters. They don't have beds. They're having to sleep on couches in the living room and dining room. What I'm learning is students don't have any place for reinforcement to occur at home at night once you've taught them for 90 minutes, a 90-minute lesson, and it's time for them to go home and retain and, let's say, apply those concepts to a particular situation or just learn.

Results for Research Question 2

What tools do teachers note are needed from administrators to lower ELLs' dropout rate? Five themes were identified to address Research Question 2: (a) provide training and PD opportunities, (b) administrators must hire qualified teachers, (c) hire

translators, (d) use culturally relevant teaching, and (e) build relationships or rapport with ELL students.

Theme 1: Provide Training and Professional Development Opportunities

Teachers believe they should receive adequate training and PD opportunities to assist ELLs effectively. In general, teachers maintain that the provision of essential tools, support, and resources by administrators can facilitate timely graduation and academic achievement for ELLs. A1 stated:

> A PD that's going on year-round in terms of being able to support those students
> and their instruction in their classrooms, as well as the strategies on how to teach
> ELLs. For example, the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model
> is a very good ELL instruction strategy, and everyone should be trained on that
> strategy.

T_5 also supported PD and training and stated:

> I think a PD about challenges faced by ELLs. I'm more than happy to work with
> individual teachers and explain, but when we have so many teachers at school, it
> is hard to do. I do feel like from what I learned in school, the expectation is some
> of this they should know. I feel like a content teacher should know what ESL
> means and, and that not all students speak Spanish, but yes. Yeah, a PD about
> improving ELL graduation would be excellent.

Professional Developments that train teachers of ELLs are beneficial in improving their instructional strategies. A3 stated,

And so, you know, going to conferences up and going to PD gives teachers a

chance to collaborate with others, share best practices, learn what you know,

share up-and-coming trends and research and tools that they may need to do their

job better.

A1 explained, "There's also just not enough instructional strategies around, meeting

those students' needs. More training is needed." T_5 noted,

Need more time to be able to work with them. That would help immensely. And

then time to be able to make pieces of training and meet with every teacher to

check in, even if it's briefly. I think more ELL teachers, more time for more

pieces of training for teachers so that they know that they have supported. T_1

stated, More pieces of training, more PDs as geared towards ELLs on how to

support them because they need it just as much as our EC students, our ED

students, our typical students. They need that support too. And I think that if we

have more PDs that will be helpful.

A5 noted,

I can't say enough, about having PD practices on how we can best support the

students. How we can get in front of the students the most. How can we speak to

the students the most? How can we get the students to speak back to us the most?

How can it be a collaborative learning environment?

Theme 2: Administrators Must Hire Qualified Teachers

To address the shortage of teachers, some teachers suggest that administrators

should employ more teachers and staff. By hiring more teachers and staff, workloads will

be more manageable, and teachers will have more time to devote to helping ELLs.

Teachers also consider infrastructure and resources to facilitate inclusion settings

important. T$_5$ stated,

> I would say hire more teachers because right now, our caseloads are about 85
>
> each. We have over 200, uh, about 220 ELL students right now, and that is just
>
> that's too much. I'm not able to individually meet and check in with 85 people in
>
> addition to my three classes.

A4 explained,

> We need to hire more than three ELL teachers. I think we need to have at least
>
> four or five, and I think they should be in classrooms more. We need more of
>
> them because they still must work on their ELL goals for these kids. Their needs
>
> are very comprehensive and require a lot of time. So having more hands-on deck
>
> will provide them more support.

T$_3$ stated, "Having adequate staffing and having protected time so that we have time to sit

down with ELL specialists and talk about students."

Theme 3: Hire Translators

Teachers identified several tools, support, and resources administrators should

provide to teach ELLs and improve their graduation rates effectively. An interpreter or

translator stands out as one important component among these tools. T$_4$ stated, "If at all

possible, we could get an interpreter in our building that is here as many hours as they

can find somebody to be here; that's a good step." A$_2$ stated,

The most consistent request from teachers is, I want to talk with [ELLs], but I

can't." By providing access to an interpreter or translator, teachers can better

communicate with ELLs and provide them with the support they need to succeed.

T_3 stated: There is inadequate staff, certified ELLs support staff, and translators

that are visible, visible in the classroom that you can call on when you need them;

I think that would be great. And in 20 years, I haven't seen that. If I needed a

translator, I don't necessarily know where to go or even if you know where to find

one.

Theme 4: Use of Culturally Relevant Teaching and Support Staff

Being culturally responsive is one strategy that entails teachers being mindful and

considerate of their ELL students' cultural backgrounds and experiences. This approach

involves integrating cultural references and experiences into the curriculum and having

an open mindset toward learning about and comprehending the diverse cultures

represented by their students. A_3 stated:

I keep coming back to like this cultural responsiveness and cultural awareness.

So, you must know what, where they're coming from to know where they're

headed, right? So, you know, if you're dealing with, um, a student whose

alphabetic principle is completely different from the English alphabetic principle,

obviously you have to more work to do, you know, and it's a different strategy.

 A_2 also emphasized the importance of explicit instructional strategies, which can

be effective in helping ELLs understand and retain new information. A_1 mentioned,

"Another strategy that can benefit ELLs is providing culturally relevant materials during

instruction." A$_2$ noted, "Well, I think one of the great things about this school is that it has transitioned over the past 20, 30 years to be quite a melting pot of culture." A$_4$ added, "I think the other students enjoy having administrators and teachers of different backgrounds because most of our kids are very curious about certain things." Teachers also believe culturally relevant support staff are essential to helping ELLs graduate on time.

A$_2$ noted,

> We look to hire people that are Spanish speaking so that we can broaden the scope of how many people we have that are available to ELLs and can facilitate that communication. By hiring staff that can speak the same language as ELLs and understand their culture, teachers will be able to better support these students.

A$_1$ stated, "Hire more teachers that are like them. Also, there are, I feel, not enough initiatives and not enough representation for the is there".

Theme 5: Build Relationships or Rapport With ELL Students

Additionally, teachers can cooperate with and support the families of ELLs. As A2 mentioned, "I guess the most important thing for me to do is, is to start building a relationship with kids. Building relationships with both the students and their families and being available to aid and guide them." A5 responded as follows:

> Relationships, academic support for the students and the parents, and the entire learning community. You can get a thousand books, and you can get a million things of technology, but if you don't encapsulate a relationship and you don't motivate students to want to learn, then it will all be for not the most important

part of it is the relationship and to instill into the students that they are valuable

and that you want them to value their education because they deserve a good

education. It is not, people say that being educated is a privilege. I think being

educated is a right. I think everyone has the right to be educated and, in their way,

where they are right where they are, and everyone is somewhere different.

A$_3$ reiterated the importance of building relationships with ELLs:

Investing in them and making sure that there's an adult in the building that they

connect with that can make sure that they're staying on target. My parents were

not the ones that got me to graduate from high school. It was this high school

teacher that invested in me and made sure that I did what I needed to do to finish

high school. I think that it's not only educating the families but also making sure

that high schoolers have someone in the building, investing in them, finding out

what they want to do, and helping them get there.

T$_4$ supported the building of relationships by noting:

I focus on building relationships. That is something that students have

communicated to me year after year when I do give my teacher feedback forms,

that the key to them feeling welcomed in my class was that I build a relationship

with them. That I encourage them to build relationships with the other people in

their class, that I checked on their progress, that I did not, I would give them grace

when it was necessary. If I understood they were going through a hard time. If

they spoke up and said, hey, I've got something going on, I might fall behind on

my work. Okay, I've got you, you do what you need to do, and I'm here when

that thing is over. Or if it's not over, stay in communication with me. And because

I'm so clear in the fact that I'm not going to let you drop the ball, I'm not going to

say, yeah, you're off the hook. Don't worry about any of this work. It's okay. I

don't do that. I say, you know what you must do, but I understand, and I'm here

for you.

The most important tool to facilitate success with ELLs, T_3 noted:

I think one of the most important tools is to build relationships. It is about

building relationships with them and making them feel included. Having authentic

relationships and caring relationships with them is important. Try to make things

predictable, try to make things repetitive. So, all my processes and procedures are

predictable. They're repetitive so that they don't have to second guess what

something means to them. T_2 added: I use rapport. Rapport. I want to build a

rapport with my kids. I try to capture their heart. I try to see what it is they like

about themselves, what it is they hate about themselves, and what it is they like

about their current living arrangements. What is it that they want to change? And

once I have assessed their likes, their dislikes about themselves, and their home

environment, I say, look, why don't you be the catalyst of change, and let's start

here? How can what we do in this classroom impact tomorrow for you? And what

will we do today? How will that encourage you three or five years from now? I

use self-motivation.

The emergent themes for challenges faced by teachers of ELLs, tools required to support ELLs and strategies teachers can use to support ELLs and improve their graduation rate are shown and summarized in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Common Themes
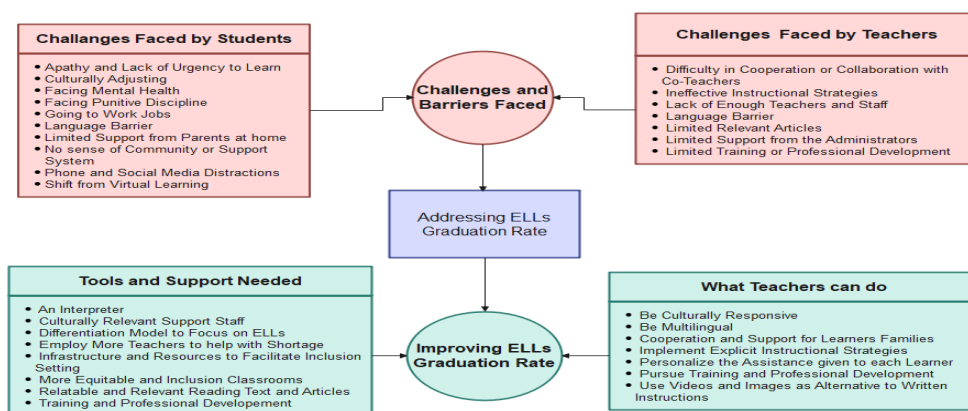
Discrepancies

Searching for discrepancies or opposing interpretations of data was conducted to safeguard the validity of the research. Al Ghriwati et al. (2018) defined discrepancies as systematic and meaningful variations in reported behaviors or simply disagreements between participants. A thorough examination of the transcripts was conducted, and member checking was implemented by disseminating interview transcripts to all participants to validate the accuracy of the gathered data to prevent discrepancies in this qualitative study. To identify possible discrepancies and enhance the reliability and

credibility of the data, transcript reviews and member checking were conducted

(González & Campbell, 2018). No discrepancies were observed during this study.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

In this project study, I explored the perceptions of administrators and teachers

regarding the influences contributing to the high dropout rate of ELLs at the study site.

The study was focused on both the educators' perceptions of the influences that

contribute to the high dropout rate of ELLs and what support systems could be used to

improve the graduation rate of ELLs. Based on the data collected during the interviews, I

chose a 3-day PD/training as the project genre to address the problems administrators and

teachers face in supporting ELLs to graduate on time at the study site. I created the

Supporting ELLs in Graduating High School PD based on the literature review findings

of best practices and strategies that educators have used to improve the graduation rate of

ELLs in other school districts train teachers on using evidence-based strategies that

positively impact ELLs (see Vaughn et al., 2022). This PD offers teachers and

administrators training that supports teachers with instructional strategies that could help

improve the graduation rates of ELLs. Several themes emerged from the data collected in

the current study. The following intervention strategies were identified from the emergent

themes from this study as possible solutions to reducing the graduation gap between

ELLs and non-ELLs: (a) provide training and PD opportunities, (b) administrators must

hire qualified teachers, (c) hire translators, (d) use culturally relevant teaching, and (e)

building relationships or rapport with ELL students.

As revealed in the study findings, the development of professional training

enables the concurrent implementation of various intervention strategies. Through PD,

the following actions can be facilitated: (a) training can be provided, (b) culturally

relevant teaching strategies can be discussed and utilized, and (c) strategies for building

relationships or rapport with ELL students can be shared. Hiring translators and

sufficiently qualified teachers is an administrator's task, and I will make

recommendations to administration during the PD. PD is the best option for addressing

the challenges that lead to a high dropout rate of ELLs. Teachers are more likely to buy in

when a fellow teacher presents PD and may have positive mindset changes, which can

help build shared efficacy and a culture of learning that ensures equitable access to

learning for culturally and linguistically diverse students (Slack, 2019). Kim and Wynne

(2021) stated that teachers could acquire research-based effective instructional strategies

through collaborations among administrators, content teachers, and ELL teachers.

According to Shea et al. (2018), a PD program that prioritizes school-level collaboration

and incorporates language with content areas is more effective in meeting the needs of

ELLs. Providing face-to-face PD is a better option than online PD because participants

who receive more support are likely to complete the PD (Rutherford-Quach et al., 2021).

Rationale

My rationale for choosing PD as the project genre was based on the analysis of

the data obtained from the interviews. The study results revealed that administrators and

teachers could benefit from PD training leading to improved learning strategies that could

be used to support ELLs and improve their graduation rate at the study site. With the

project, I aimed to provide Grade 9–12 administrators and teachers with the education,

tools, and teaching strategies to positively impact ELLs. To contribute to positive social

change and based on data analysis in the current study, there is a need to train teachers on how administrators and teachers can support ELLs to improve their graduation rate at the study site.

Review of the Literature

The qualitative data collected in the current study provided evidence indicating the need for substantial improvements in the instruction and support system for ELLs to enhance their graduation rate. To obtain evidence to support the findings from the participants in the current study, I conducted another search of the Walden University Library for peer-reviewed journal articles in the online databases of Educational Resources Information Center, ProQuest, and Academic Search Complete as well as the North Carolina Department of Instruction website. The keyword search terms used were *PD benefits, professional learning communities, English learners,* and *multicultural teaching*.

PD is needed to provide ongoing opportunities for teachers to work with colleagues to refine teaching practices focused on supporting ELLs (Louie et al., 2019). Sung-ae and Morita-Mullaney (2020) stated that teachers with irregular ELL PD have lower self-efficacy in working with ELLs than those who receive regular training on the topic. The data obtained from the interviews in the current study indicated a clear need for PD that addresses the specific needs of ELLs. PD also offers teachers opportunities to reflect on their practices and may help provide evidence-based instruction and interventions to meet the needs of ELLs (Shelton et al., 2023).

PD and mentoring enhance teachers' abilities to develop academic language and implement strategies that meet the diverse needs of ELLs (O'Hara et al., 2020). It is important to establish realistic goals driven by data in a school through PD, use of PLCs to create intervention plans at the beginning of each semester, and monitor and adjust students' progress for high impact (Sung-ae and Morita-Mullaney, 2020). PD deepens teachers' content knowledge, and administrators can provide teachers with more support to meet the diverse academic and linguistic needs of ELLs (Desjardins, 2020).

PD arises from the recognition that school administrators and teacher training programs frequently fail to offer adequate guidance in addressing the unique requirements of ELLs (Mavrogordato et al., 2021). Through PD, teachers can learn about teaching strategies for self-regulation, individual coping skills, and providing guided practice and support to ELLs that can help ELLs engage in their classrooms and school (Eichhorn et al., 2019). Structured PD can assist educators in how they perceive ELLs, which may help them realize the giftedness ELLs may possess (Szymanski & Lynch, 2020). PD can also help change the mindsets of teachers who hold negative beliefs and attitudes when working with ELLs (Kim, 2021).

A well planned PD can support ELL teachers, and a PD has been seen to prepare teachers for instructional and cooperative learning that improves outcomes for math problem solving for ELLs (Orosco & Reed, 2022). Li and Peters (2020) found that the teachers' second language knowledge and strategies in working with ELLs improved significantly through PD. According to Babinski et al. (2018), there exists evidence that the implementation of high-impact instructional strategies by teachers and the language

and literacy skills of students were improved through the use of PD. According to the
available literature, substantial evidence suggests that PD can tackle the intervention
strategies emphasized for mitigating the high dropout rates among ELLs.

PD can positively impact organizational changes by enhancing teachers' personal
and teaching abilities (Bond & Blevins, 2020). PD allows collaborative opportunities
essential for adopting professional changes to meet the ever-changing student needs
(Richter et al., 2022). PD that promotes high-quality teacher-child interactions and
relationships can support ELLs' social-emotional and cognitive development (Bayly et
al., 2022). Using equitable and differentiated teaching strategies supported ELLs'
academic success (Shemsi, 2019).

Most participants in the current study noted the need for PD for all teachers to
prepare them to serve ELLs. According to Abacioglu et al. (2020), integrating PD and
teacher education can facilitate the exchange of experiences among teachers, providing
benefits for students from diverse backgrounds. There was a consensus among all
interviewed administrators in the current study that PD was a way of building
communities among peers, seeking student success with a better understanding of shifting
school demographics.

Teachers require training and continuous assistance to acquire the skills to support
ELLs effectively. Administrators can benefit from PD opportunities that equip them with
the necessary skills to design and implement effective PD programs that prioritize
learner-centered teaching strategies (Cain, 2020). School leaders lack culturally
responsive PD due to a lack of opportunities (Taub-Chan, 2021). The current study

participants indicated that inadequate teacher preparation courses received during teacher training, particularly for teachers with lateral entry into the teaching profession, are responsible for their limited experience teaching ELL students. Most teachers offer a standardized form of instruction that lacks consideration of individual student needs or allow for differentiation (Bondie et al., 2019).

Bondie et al. (2019) also noted that the NCLB policy recommended a response to intervention that could support interventions based on the student's needs. Participants in the current study also noted the lack of cultural knowledge of teachers of their ELLs, resulting in misrepresentation of ELLs' cultural differences and needs in the classroom. Wyatt-Ross (2018) stated that using varied cultural traditions in a classroom promotes a sense of belonging for all students. Additionally, teachers must encourage learning by embracing diversity in the learning environment (Childs et al., 2020). Childs et al. (2020) noted that these skills could be improved through PD and help teachers present better multicultural instruction for all students. Larios and Zetlin (2023) supported the notion by emphasizing that effective training allows teachers to influence student educational development.

In this study, teachers voiced a lack of support from administrators in supporting and providing essential resources for teachers that could improve the graduation rate of ELLs (Marshall et al., 2020). Teachers also emphasized the lack of planning time to create differentiated lesson plans for ELLs as a major challenge (Daniel & Lemons, 2018). Teachers mentioned that having a more collaborative approach to instruction between ELL and content teachers will benefit teachers because it facilitates the

exchange of strategies (Larios & Zetlin, 2023). PD can help teachers overcome technological barriers, especially for teachers who are reluctant or unable to embrace modern technology that may hinder their progress with improved teaching methodologies that may help support ELLs and improve their graduation rates (see Fütterer et al., 2023).

PD training allows educators to share personal and professional experiences and learning strategies that benefit students (Amaro-Jimenez et al., 2022). PD can help to improve teachers' professional competence and effectiveness in teaching ELLs (Ivanova et al., 2022). According to Ivanova et al. (2022), coached teachers can enhance their competence and positively impact students' academic results or outcomes by engaging in PD. The findings of the current study also showed a need for PD that provides ongoing opportunities for teachers to work with colleagues to refine teaching practices focused on supporting ELLs (see Louie et al., 2019).

PD

According to Gordon and Hart (2022), scholars have observed that school administrators significantly impact student achievement, second only to classroom instructors, and this is due to their ability to establish educational settings that foster receptiveness to novel concepts and encourage collaborative efforts toward goals. Wright (2020) stated that administrators must provide teachers with PD to support ELLs and help these students graduate. School leaders can impact and manage underprivileged students' needs and achievements (Alias et al., 2022). Thomas and Sebastian (2023) noted that teacher preparation programs, PD, teaching experience, and district and school guidelines influence culturally responsive teaching philosophies. Teachers can offer interventions

and support to ELLs through culturally responsive teaching in positive classroom

environments (Ferlazzo, 2020).

Collaboration

Teachers and/or educators are likelier to observe and learn from colleagues they

have collaborated with previously (Noben et al., 2022). Purposeful peer interaction

enables collaboration, allows teacher contribution, and promotes teacher leadership

(Beddoes et al, 2023). Collaboration and connectedness give employees a school-wide

purpose versus an individual purpose (Fullan, 2012). Collaborations can occur through

PD and PLCs. Teachers have demonstrated their ability to incorporate evidence-based,

language learning strategies in their classrooms through collaborative efforts and PD

(Smala et al., 2021). By sharing strategies and collaborating, teachers can find solutions

to problems using research-based knowledge (Miller, 2021). Tallman (2021) highlighted

that collaborative group learning is a potent PD method. Collaborating and using the

human relation approach in solving problems contributes to creating positive

relationships among teams (Rahmi, 2019).

Follow-Up Assignments

PD offers participants an opportunity to implement the learned strategies, and

follow-up PD supports the participants as they continue implementing the strategies

(Fitzpatrick, 1985). With follow-up PD, participants get a chance to get back together and

discuss challenges they may have encountered in implementing the learned strategies.

Through follow-up PD, teachers can identify their strengths and weaknesses and work on

growth areas that can contribute to better instructional methods (Gibbons & Farley,

2019). By engaging in follow-up PD, participants gain a platform to exchange their experiences regarding implemented instructional practices, enabling teacher leaders to share their expertise with fellow educators. As Moore et al. (2022) underscored, this process enhances colleagues' instructional methods. Additionally, follow-up PD sessions will be conducted per department at the study site to discuss possible strategies that could be applied to specific departments.

Project Description

The PD program's goal is to increase educators' awareness of ELLs' challenges and their ability to support ELLs navigation of high school and improve the students' graduation rates. I chose PD as the project genre because PD is as a learning intervention strategy to improve teachers' ability to identify student abilities through research-based instructional strategies and curricula (see Swanson et al., 2022). Based on the interviews, most content teachers are unaware of the unique needs of ELLs that can prevent these students from graduating on time if they are not supported. Most participants in the current study agreed that ELLs could be successful with support, which could improve their graduation rate. I developed the PD program based on the results of a study. The program will be conducted annually in a face-to-face format, followed by biannual, departmental PLC meetings. PLCs allow educators to share ideas, learn new teaching strategies, and evaluate tools that could support ELLs' academically (Kosanovich et al., 2020). PLCs also provide a platform for researchers and participants to leverage internal expertise and tap into subject-area experts who can offer practical strategies for supporting ELLs (Niehoff, 2019). Educators who have had success stories in supporting

ELLs could share their stories, resulting in quality and improved instruction for this

population. Instructional coaches can also meet with different department PLCs and

create tailormade PDs based on the nature of the subject areas. PLCs communities can be

a crucial learning platform for teachers to utilize the research-based strategies by inviting

ELL specialists to support and collaborate with different subject area teachers (Apodaca

et al., 2019).

I conducted the current study to examine the factors contributing to the study

site's low graduation rate of ELLs. I explored research-based strategies to support ELLs

and mitigate the high dropout rate among the population. I also discussed alternative

formative and summative assessment strategies teachers can use to support ELLs

struggling with language barriers. The social and emotional support of ELLs is

paramount for their success, and educators discuss ways to support ELLs during the PD

training.

Existing Supports and Needed Resources

I sought permission from the school's principal to utilize the staff training room

and use technological devices, such as a projector, whiteboard, and Wi-Fi. I requested

permission to present the PD during PLC days for the first presentation with the entire

staff to successfully deliver the PD. I also held meetings with different departments for

the second round to assess how the first PD assisted them and whether additional

assistance is needed in implementing certain strategies mentioned in the initial PD.

Participants were instructed to bring their laptops and writing utensils, while post notes,

large poster papers, markers, pens, pencils, and I provided refreshments to the educators.

Participants had access to my PD resources through shared Google documents. Teachers were asked to bring a lesson plan that could be used during PD.

Potential Barriers and Solutions

Potential barriers to this project study are: (a) group PD may be ineffective for some teachers, (b) conflicting needs for different subject areas, and (c) lack of motivation in participating in multiple PDs.

A potential solution is to conduct follow-up development training in smaller PLC groups to address the issue of ineffective group PD. Smaller PLC PD training based on department PLCs eliminated conflicting needs for different subjects. Working with a professional coach, school principals, and district stakeholders may allow participants to receive continuing education units or Comp-time as incentives for attending multiple PDs.

Roles and Responsibilities of Researcher and Others

The success of the PD training will depend on the collaboration of different stakeholders and fulfilling their roles. The school principal must approve the presenter's conduct of the PD and agree on the proposed dates to avoid conflict with other PDs planned for the school or the district. The instructional coach can arrange a suitable location for PD training with the principal's approval. Once approved, the chosen venue will be equipped with the necessary technological resources to facilitate the training. The presenter will provide the participants with the necessary materials during each session. The presenter will also share resources through Google folders and provide copies of all digital presentations and information during each session. All roles must be fulfilled for

PD to be successful. Additionally, participants should be willing to learn to benefit from this training.

Project Evaluation Plan

At the end of each session, participants will complete formative and summative evaluation forms to assess whether the presented content benefited them. Participants will rate whether (a) the purpose and learning outcomes for each session were clearly explained, (b) the session provided engaging group activities that helped to better understand supporting ELLs, (c) the pace of the session and flow of activities was satisfactory, (d) the session delivered the material they expected to receive, (e) by participating in this session I gained new knowledge applicable to my work, (f) the facilitator acknowledged my input and answered questions asked, and (g) opportunities were provided for reflection on practice and next steps. At the end of the last PD, feedback from participants will be used to evaluate the usefulness of the training. Participants will be able to provide information on whether they learned valuable information on strategies for teaching and supporting ELLs. As a leader, the study researcher will use summative evaluation feedback to improve future PD training and presentations.

Project Implications

The 3-day PD is designed based on the data collected during the interviews. The PD program is intended to assist teachers, acknowledging that the support provided solely by school leaders and teacher training is insufficient to meet the exclusive needs of ELLs (Mavrogordato et al., 2021). Beginning and veteran teachers would benefit from

opportunities to work with colleagues and refine their teaching practices focused on supporting ELLs (Louie et al., 2019). The proposed PD focuses on using research-based strategies that support ELLs and help reduce the high dropout of ELLs. The PD focuses on equipping teachers with strategies to support English Learners through culturally responsive instruction. The PD will also focus on building positive relationships between teachers and ELL students. PD will focus on teachers and other stakeholders: administrators, teacher assistants, and ELL teachers. All stakeholders have a two-part PD that can be used for continuing education units through the professional coach, who will be invited to participate during both sessions. During this PD, beginning and experienced teachers will be able to learn about strategies that can support them when working with ELLs. Teachers with diverse experiences can interact and share information on how to successfully support ELLs, which may help reduce the dropout among them.

Importance of Project to Local Stakeholders

My goal in creating this project is to contribute to social change in the community I serve. According to (Dunfey, 2019), social change is how humans interact and change relationships within the culture and social institutions over time. Morris (2017) stated that social change encompasses the capacity to transform ideas into tangible actions that have significant real-world impacts, thereby enhancing both human and social conditions across various levels, ranging from individuals to governments, and ultimately fostering a more improved society. This project is data-driven based on the collected participants' data. The data highlights opportunities to enhance ELL graduation rates and explores the tools and support teachers require, along with the strategies and approaches they can

employ to improve graduation rates among ELL students. These included: (a) providing

training and PD opportunities, (b) administrators must hire qualified teachers, (c) hiring

translators, (d) using culturally relevant teaching, and (e) building relationships or rapport

with ELL students. Supporting ELLs PD is a bridge in helping teachers who may have

entered programs that did not prepare them for the unique demographics brought by

globalization. It also can serve as a refresher course for veteran teachers unaware of the

new multicultural instruction strategies that can serve ELLs and help improve their

graduation rates. Continuous PD should not be limited to ELL teachers alone; it should

extend to all teachers, including general aid teachers.

Importance of Project in a Larger Context

This PD training can be shared with other schools within the researcher's district

through the PLC. An opportunity can also be requested to present and share professional

training during district PLC meetings.

<div align="center">

Conclusion

</div>

The project can be found in Appendix A, while the literature review supports the

data collected from the interviews. The literature review supports the choice of using a

PD to train teachers, which presents researched-based advantages of implementing such

PD. This section included information on stakeholders that will contribute to the success

of the PD. The findings from this project, Supporting ELLs in Graduating High School

PD, will increase educators' awareness of ELLs challenges and offer collaboration

opportunities through PD for teachers to support ELLs to improve their graduation rates.

Potential barriers to the project were listed, and proposed solutions were given.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

Project Strengths

Based on the participants' responses, teachers highlighted the importance of PD to help support teachers with no experience in teaching ELLs. A strength of this project is that it facilitated collaboration and knowledge sharing among educators regarding effective methods for assisting ELLs, ultimately improving the graduation rate of ELLs. The PD was aimed to allow teachers to refresh and update their teaching strategies by utilizing the research-based strategies suggested in the training. Having specialists (i.e., learning coaches, ELL directors, and teacher leaders) participate in delivering the PD gave the PD authenticity that the teachers can appreciate.

In the PD training, various solutions are offered for how teachers can support ELLs, drawing upon data collected in the study and research-based strategies from the literature review. By involving administrators in the collaborations taking place during the PD, the significance and impact of the shared responsibility framework that supported the researcher who is also a teacher will be confirmed (see Ansley et al., 2019). As a doctoral student in education leadership, this project provided me with an opportunity to witness how effective leadership can foster collaboration among administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders. I will obtain more feedback on the project's strengths after the PD has been offered to other districts that could benefit from the findings.

Project Limitations

One limitation of conducting PD is its dependence on the participation of administrators and teachers. There may be teachers who do not attend the training with seriousness and are reluctant to embrace change. Such teachers may exhibit skepticism towards adopting new practices, such as using technology that could potentially benefit ELLs. Smith and Robinson (2020) stated that teachers' perceptions and commitment to their teaching loads could affect their participation and appreciation of PD. Another limitation is that the feedback provided at the end of each PD session may be skewed, and some educators may not provide accurate informative and summative feedback. Enough time is set aside at the end of each PD session to allow teachers to complete their PD evaluations before the end of each session.

<div align="center">

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

</div>

In this study, I created a 3-day PD to train teachers on the findings of the current study and literature review regarding how they can support ELLs and improve their graduation rate at the study site. Implementing a policy recommendation can prove advantageous as long as teachers have the desire to improve the instruction of ELLs, and it may be more effective when the policy initiative is mandated and enforced as a school district policy. An alternative approach to a 3-day PD would be implementing a new curriculum plan. Implementing a curriculum plan can be challenging and time consuming, but once it is established teachers are more inclined to utilize it, particularly when administrators incorporate the curriculum component for evaluation purposes (Nevenglosky et al, 2019).

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

Scholarship

I have teaching experience spanning over 35 years and demonstrate proficiency and self-assurance in creating and delivering lessons; however, my exposure to developing projects for peers and coworkers was limited. I successfully created a project as part of my master's degree in school administration, which was presented to school principals and professors. Except for a qualitative class undertaken as part of the basic courses for the doctoral degree, I had no prior experience in qualitative data collection and analysis before undertaking this project study. Recruiting participants after obtaining Institutional Review Board approval was straightforward, but ensuring their adherence to appointment times proved challenging. In certain cases, alternative qualified participants had to be sought. I used ATLAS.ti software for transcription, coding, theme creation, and thematic analysis. The initial usage of the software proved overwhelming because it was my first experience with it. My previous training primarily focused on quantitative data analysis software during basic classes. Despite the initial feelings of being overwhelmed, my familiarity with the software increased after repeated viewing of instructional videos on platforms such as YouTube. The software enabled the capture of extensive transcription and data analysis, which facilitated the writing process.

I liaised with the learning coach and ELL teachers at the study site to understand the utilized protocols. According to the interviewed participants, PLCs have a longstanding existence; however, their consistent utilization for the benefit of teachers has been lacking. Participants added that teacher shortages have impeded the success of

PLCs, necessitating teachers to cover classes during their planning periods. According to Honigsfeld and Dove (2019), most participants emphasized the significance of PLCs and collaborative instruction between ELL and content teachers, contributing to sharing strategies and benefits teachers. With 35 years of experience as an educator and a global perspective, I recognize the importance of collaborative efforts among teachers to enhance student achievement.

The creation of the PD program in the current study proved to be a viable and practical alternative to another program. In the initial PD, the presenter opted to deliver the training during a teacher workday, followed by subsequent sessions on early release days with various departments to tailor the strategies discussed in the initial PD. Despite being the master and leader of the PD, I consulted with the study site's teaching and learning coach to coordinate logistical arrangements for the presentations. A Google Form was created to enable teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the training and provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the presenter, facilitating improvements for future presentations. I also sought feedback from administrators.

Project Development

As a teacher leader, I envisioned a study that would foster positive classroom transformations within my community. Having encountered several ELLs who faced challenges in completing their high school education, I was motivated to develop a PD program to enhance educators' instructional approaches and support students in improving ELLs' graduation rates. However, my experience in developing projects for peers and coworkers was limited. I prepared informative and summative evaluation forms

for PD participants to assess the effectiveness of the training and identify areas for improvement in future presentations.

Leadership and Change

Walden University has provided me with the necessary tools and training to become an effective social change activist within their community. According to Dunfey (2019), social change involves the interaction and transformation of relationships within a culture and social institutions over time. Pursuing a doctoral degree in school leadership positioned me to make meaningful contributions towards enhancing the education of ELLs in their community. The knowledge acquired through my research studies has had a profound impact on me and equipped me with the requisite skills and competencies to assume leadership roles in future career pursuits. Through interviews and project planning, it was discovered that transformational leadership plays a crucial role in developing teacher leaders and improving teacher qualities, which ultimately enhances student learning outcomes. Aspiring to become a scholar-practitioner, I aim to work at a community college or 4-year college to prepare early childhood teachers because I firmly believe that a strong foundation in childhood education can positively impact students.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

I conducted this study to develop and deliver a PD program aimed at training and supporting teachers in delivering effective instruction to ELLs. The PD was created by analyzing collected data and reviewing relevant literature to identify research-based strategies that could best support teachers of ELLs. The study results indicated that both novice and experienced teachers could benefit from PD that focused on the following

areas: (a) understanding the challenges faced by ELLs and their teachers, (b) identifying resources that could support teachers in teaching ELLs, and (c) having training and PD that supports the implementation of explicit and multicultural instructional strategies to support ELLs. This work is significant in addressing the high dropout rate among ELLs in my community and other school districts.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

This PD served to address concerns enunciated by the participants interviewed. The PD training was initially done in a large group setting and then delivered in departmental PLCs to personalize the different research-based strategies included in the training sessions. Having a larger group for PD would allow educators to come together as a group, collaborate, and share best practices for working with ELLs and improving their graduation rates. PLCs and sharing teachers' perceptions can contribute to school and student improvement (Tabak & Sahin, 2020). Many et al. (2019) stated that coaching in learning communities could promote higher levels of student learning and effective PLCs that benefit teachers.

More accountability is needed with educators on the quality of instruction used for ELLs (Mavrogordato et al, 2021). It is of paramount importance for schools to produce well-rounded citizens who are prepared with the basic workplace skills needed in communities. The migration of these families will continue to change the demographics of U.S. schools in challenging places where families are persecuted and cannot raise their children in peace. Teachers and administrators must be prepared to learn new things to

improve the quality of instruction all students receive, irrespective of their home language.

Conclusion

In this study, I investigated the perceptions of administrators and teachers regarding the influences contributing to the high dropout rate of ELLs at the study site. Based on the data collected during interviews, a PD program was created to address the knowledge of administrators and teachers regarding multicultural strategies needed to support ELLs. The PD program allows teachers to identify their strengths and weaknesses and, through collaboration with peers, work on areas of growth that can contribute to better instructional methods. Based on the effectiveness of the PD program, ELLs' dropout rate can be reduced, increasing the graduation rate of ELLs. This PD can also benefit other schools within the district that may want to improve the graduation rates of ELLs.

References

Abacioglu, C. S., Volman, M., & Fischer, A. H. (2020). Teachers' multicultural attitudes and perspective taking abilities as factors in culturally responsive teaching. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *90*(3), 736-752.

https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12328

Abdullah, M. Y., Hussin, S., & Ismail, K. (2021). Does flipped classroom model affect EFL learners' anxiety in English speaking performance? *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, *16*(1), 94–108.

https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v16i01.16955

Akay, M., & Jaffe-Walter, R. (2021). Excavating the layers of trauma in homelands and hostlands: Supporting political refugees in U.S. schools. *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*, *24*(4), 47–59.

Akcaoglu, M. Ö., & Arsal, Z. (2022). The effect of multicultural education on preservice teachers' attitude and efficacy: Testing Bank's con10t integration dimension. *Participatory Educational Research*, *9*(2), 343–357.

Al Ghriwati, N., Winter, M. A., Greenlee, J. L., & Thompson, E. L. (2018). Discrepancies between parent and self-reports of adolescent psychosocial symptoms: Associations with family conflict and asthma outcomes. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 32(7), 992–997. https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000459

Alias, B. S., Ishak, M. R., & Nordin, M. N. A. (2022). The relationship between school leaders' ability to manage underprivileged students' needs and the level of achievement of these students. *International Journal of Educational*

Management, *36*(1), 95–109.

Alina, B., & Lavinia, N. (2017). Developing teamwork and reading skills in the ESP

classroom. Case study. *Ovidius University Annals: Economic Sciences Series*,

134-140.

Amaro-Jimenez, C., Martinez-Cosio, M., Patterson, O. K., Clark, K., & Luken-Sutton, J.

(2022). Feel like more than a number in the classroom: Faculty perceptions of

professional development for student success. *Journal of Hispanic Higher

Education*, *21*(3), 247–260. https://doi.org/10.1177/1538192720950863

Anderson M. B. L., Bridges B. K., Harris B. A., & Biddle S. (2020). *Imparting wisdom:

HBCU lessons for K–12 education.* Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute,

UNCF.

Ansley, B. M., Blinder, M., Demere, J., Varjas, K., Benson, G., & Ogletree, S. L. (2019).

School personnel and leadership collaboration model for ideal work

contexts. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, *9*(1), 189-201.

Antunes, M. A. (2021). The impact of loss and alienation in English language

learners. *Radical Teacher*, *120*, 42–49. https://doi.org/10.5195/rt.2021.886

Apodaca, R., Bernstein-Danis, T., & Demartino, S. (2019). In their own words: How

teachers can incorporate students' native language into the classroom. *Learning

Professional*, *40*(2), 37–41.

Atlas.ti. (n.d.). *Qualitative data analysis.* https://atlasti.com/

Austin-Archil, M. L. (2019). *Language teachers' perceptions of barriers to new

language acquisition for English language learners* (Publication No. 9260)

[Doctoral Dissertation, Walden University]. Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies.

Babinski, L. M., Amendum, S. J., Knotek, S. E., Sánchez, M., & Malone, P. (2018). Improving young English learners' language and literacy skills through teacher professional development: A randomized controlled trial. *American Educational Research Journal*, *55*(1), 117–143. https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831217732335

Banse, H. W., Palacios, N. A., & Martin, A. (2019). How do effective upper elementary teachers of English language learners show support? *Teachers College Record*, *121*(7).

Barrett, A., & Castrellon, C. (2021). Why early intervention matters: The keys to preventing and closing the achievement gap for English learners. *Leadership*, 12–15.

Bass, B. M. (1999). Two decades of research and development in transformational leadership. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 8(1), 9–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/135943299398410

Bayly, B. L., Dizon, E., Shrestha, G., Smith, C. L., Tekle, S., & Rhoades Cooper, B. (2022). Leveraging self-determination theory to understand which preschool teachers benefit most from a professional development intervention. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, *43*(2), 194–212.

Beddoes, Z., Prusak, K., Barney, D., & Pennington, T. (2023). Attending to the emotional side of professional learning communities (PLCs) by cultivating positive team dynamics. *JOPERD: The Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, *94*(4), 21–25. https://doi.org/10.1080/07303084.2023.2172114

Bellows, L (2021). The effect of immigration enforcement on school engagement:

Evidence from 287(g) programs in North Carolina. *AERA Open*, *7*. https://doi-org/10.1177/23328584211039467

Bergson-Shilcock, A. (2020). Amplifying impact: How policies that combine investment

in English language skills with digital learning pay off for workers and

businesses. In National Skills Coalition (Ed.), *National Skills Coalition*.

Berkeley-Cummins, L. (2019). *Reading perceptions of Hispanic English language*

learner families in New York City [Doctoral dissertation, Walden

University]. Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies.

Bialik, K., Scheller, A., & Walker, K. (2018). *6 facts about English language learners in*

U.S. public schools. Pew Research.

Binhas, A., & Yaknich, L. (2019). You have to start from scratch and you need someone

by your side: Perspectives of parents and teachers on immigrant students'

adaptation to school. *International Migration*, 57(5), 252-270.

https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.126008

Biraimah, K., Kurtz, B., & Bulgarian Comparative Education Society. (2020). *An*

innovative reform of secondary education for immigrant students in Southeastern

USA. Bulgarian Comparative Education Society.

Bittmann, F. (2022). Improving data quality with sociodemographic matching? About the

effects and implications of age and gender matching in face-to-face

interviews. *Journal of Applied Social Sciences*, *16*(1), 242-

260. https://doi.org/10.1177/1936724421998257

Bond, M.A., & Blevins, S.J. (2020). Using faculty professional development to foster
organizational change: A social learning framework. *TechTrends*, *64*, 229-237.

Bondie, R., & Kumar, R., & Zusho, A. (2018). Weaving cultural relevance and
achievement motivation into inclusive classroom cultures. *Educational
Psychologist*, *53*(2), 78–96. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2018.1432361

Boston Foundation, & Boston Opportunity Agenda. (2019). *The Boston opportunity
agenda: Eighth annual report card*. Boston Foundation.

Brady, S. E., & Stevens, M. C. (2019). Is immigration a culture? A qualitative approach
to exploring immigrant student experiences within the United
States. *Translational Issues in Psychological Science*, *5*(1), 17–28.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/tps0000172

Brock, K., & Brekken, D. (2019). No one cared: A case study of incarcerated women's
educational experiences resulting in their decision to drop out of high
school. *Journal of Correctional Education*, *70*(2), 31–48.

Burkholder, G. J., Cox, K. A., Crawford, L. M., & Hitchcock, J. H. (2019). *Research
design and methods: An applied guide for the scholar-practitioner*. SAGE
Publications.

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership.* Harper & Row.

Caffrey, K. T. (2021). How transformational leadership can help native American
students. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*. *11*(1), 335–344.
https://doi.org/10.5590/JERAP.2021.11.1.24

Cain, C. M. (2020). Understanding the use of learner-centered teaching strategies by

secondary educators. *Walden dissertations and doctoral studies*.

Carhill-Poza, A., Gounari, P., Nellie Mae Education Foundation, & University of
Massachusetts Boston. (2021). Student-centered learning opportunities for
adolescent English learners in flipped classrooms. *Nellie Mae Education
Foundation*.

Carlito, D. (2022). UnidosUS. *College & Research Libraries News*, *83*(11), 529–530.

Carter-Smith, K. (2021). Response to intervention (RTI). *Salem Press Encyclopedia*.

Casey, J. E., Mireles, S. V., Viloria, M. de L., & Garza, E. (2018). Literacy & arts
integration in science: Engaging English language learners in a lesson on mixtures
and solutions. *Texas Journal of Literacy Education*, *6*(1), 51–69.

Childs, K., Jennings, I., & Panozzo-Schagene, M. (2020). READ: Accepting and
interacting with the diverse needs of Texas literacy learners. *Texas Association for
Literacy Education Yearbook*, *7*, 32–36.

Clark, K. R., & Vealé, B. L. (2018). Strategies to enhance data collection and analysis in
qualitative research. *Radiologic Technology*, *89*(5), 482CT–485CT.

Cloutier, C., & Ravasi, D. (2021). Using tables to enhance trustworthiness in qualitative
research. *Strategic Organization, 19*(1) 113–133.
https://doi.org/10.1177/1476127020979329

Cole, D. (2008). Constructive criticism: The role of student-faculty interactions on
African American and Hispanic students' educational gains. *Journal of College
Student Development*, 49(6), 587-605.

Coleman, P. (2021). Validity and reliability within qualitative research in the caring

sciences. *International Journal of Caring Sciences*, *14*(3), 2041–2045.

Connelly, L. M. (2016). Trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Medsurg Nursing, 25*(6), 435-436.

Cook-Harvey, C. M., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2018). *Educating the whole child: Improving school climate to support student success* (research brief). Palo alto, ca: Learning Policy Institute.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.

Cruze, A., Cota, M., & López, F. (2019). A decade after institutionalization: educators' perspectives of structured English immersion. *Language Policy*, *18*(3), 431–453. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-018-9495-1

Daniel, J., & Lemons, C. (2018). Teacher perspectives on intervention sustainability: Implications for school leadership. *School Leadership & Management*, 38(5), 518-538. https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2018.1439465

Davis, T., & Tesh, G. (2022). English language learners' experience with learning management systems. *International Journal of TESOL Studies*, *4*(3), 66–77. https://doi.org/10.46451/ijts.2022.03.06

DeDeyn, R. (2021). Teacher leadership and student outcomes in a US university in10sive English program. *TESL-EJ*, *24*(4).

De La Rosa, S. (2019). LANGUAGE ADDS UP: Embedding English literacy in math instruction gives ELLs a learning boost. *District Administration*, *55*(2), 39–41.

Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (2005). The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative

Research.

Department of Public Instruction Center for Safer Schools. (2019, February). *Dropout data collecting and reporting procedures manual*.

Desjardins, A. (2020). Effective sheltered con10t instruction for English language learners. *BU Journal of Graduate Studies in Education*, *12*(2), 15–18.

DomNwachukwu, C. S. (2018). *The theory and practice of multicultural education: A focus on the K-12 educational setting*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

Donnelly, M. (2021). Minorities and education in America. *Salem Press Encyclopedia*.

Duan, R., & Qiu, P. (2022). English lis10ing prediction strategy and training method with data mining. *Security & Communication Networks*, 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/1311537

Dunfey, T. (2019). *What is social change and why should we care?* Southern New Hampshire.

Education Commission of the States. (2020). How is "English Learner" defined in state policy? 50-state comparison: English learner policies.

Eichhorn, M. S., Lowry, A. E., & Burke, K. (2019). Increasing engagement of English learners through universal design for learning. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*.

Emiliussen, J., Engelsen, S., Christiansen, R., & Klausen, S. H. (2021). We are all in it! Phenomenological qualitative research and embeddedness. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406921995304

Esmene, S., & Kirsop-Taylor, N. (2021). External disruptions to qualitative data

collection: Addressing risks relating to Brexit and researcher-participant

rapport. *Qualitative Report*, *26*(3), 795–807. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-

3715/2021.4434

Fein, R. A., Vossekuil, B., Pollack, W. S., Borum, R., Modzeleski, W, & Reddy, M.

(2013). *Threat assessment in schools: A guide to managing threa10ing situations

and to creating safe school climates.* U.S. Secret Service and United States

Department of Education.

Ferlazzo, L. (2020). Research in action: Ramping up support for long-term

ELLs. *Educational Leadership*, *77*(4), 16–23.

Ferlazzo, L., & Sypnieski, K. H. (2019). Teaching English language learners. *Education

Digest*, *84*(9), 37–45.

Fitzpatrick, K. A. (1985). Group-based mastery learning: A Robin Hood approach to

instruction? *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational

Research*

Association, Chicago, IL

Florczak, K. L. (2022). Best available evidence or truth for the moment: Bias in

research. *Nursing Science Quarterly*, *35*(1), 20–24.

https://doi.org/10.1177/08943184211051350

Fu, Y., & Wang, J. (2021). Assessing mainstream pre-service teachers' self-efficacy to

teach English language learners. *International Journal of Instruction*, *14*(3), 153–

174.

Fullan, M. (2012). The six secrets of change: what the best leaders do to help their

organizations survive and thrive. Jossey-Bass

Furger, R. (2008). How to end the dropout crisis: 10 strategies for student retention. *Administration & Leadership, George Lucas Educational Foundation*. https://www.edutopia.org/student-dropout-retention-strategies

Fütterer, T., Scherer, R., Scheiter, K., Stürmer, K., & Lachner, A. (2023). Will, skills, or conscientiousness: What predicts teachers' intentions to participate in technology-related professional development? *Computers & Education*, *198*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2023.104756

Garcia-Borrego, R., Maxwell, G. M., & McNair, C. L. (2020). South Texas urban administrator perceptions of best practices for ELL Literacy. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies*, *23*.

Garver, R. A., Eslami, Z. R., & Tong, F. (2018). I believe I can: Service-learning to raise preservice teacher's efficacy with English learners. *Reading Matrix: An International Online Journal*, *18*(3), 23–37.

Gibbons, S., & Farley, A. N. (2019). The use of video reflection for teacher education and professional learning. *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*, *31*(2), 263–273.

Giorgi, A. (Ed.). (1985). *Phenomenology and psychological research.* Duquesne University Press.

González, J. D., & Campbell, D. G. (2018). Beyond the Enclave: Success strategies of immigrant entrepreneurs. *International Journal of Applied Management and Technology*.

Goodman, C. L., & Intercultural Development Research Association. (2018). Newsletter.

Volume 45, No. 8. *Intercultural development research association*.

Gordon, G., Jonesz, J. B., Neelakantan, U., & Athreya, K. (2021). Incarceration, earnings, and race. *Working Papers Series (Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond)*, *21*(11), 1–72.

Gordon, M. F., & Hart, H. (2022). How strong principals succeed: Improving student achievement in high-poverty urban schools. *Journal of Educational Administration*, *60*(3), 288–302. https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-03-2021-0063

Grant, L. T., Yoo, M. S., Fetman, L., & Garza, V. (2021). In-service teachers' perceptions of their preparation to work with learners of English. *Educational Research: Theory and Practice*, *32*(1), 62–71.

Hanghøj, T., Lieberoth, A., & Misfeldt, M. (2018). Can cooperative video games encourage social and motivational inclusion of at-risk students? *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *49*(4), 775–799. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.1264

Harmon, A. (2021). Public education. *Salem Press Encyclopedia*

Hashim, H. U., Yunus, M. M., & Hashim, H. (2018). Language learning strategies used by adult learners of teaching English as a second language (TESL). *TESOL International Journal*, *13*(4), 39–48.

Heineke, A. J. (2018). The invisible revolving door: The Issue of teacher attrition in English language development classrooms in Arizona. *Language Policy*, *17*(1), 77–98.

Herrera, S., Murry, K., & Cabral, R. (2020). *Assessment of culturally and linguistically diverse students* (3rd Ed.). Pearson.

Hochschild, A. (1983). *The managed heart: Commercialization of human feeling.* University of California Press.

Hofflinger, A., & von Hippel, P. T. (2020). Does achievement rise fastest with school choice, school resources, or family resources? Chile from 2002 to 2013. Sociology of Education, 93(2), 132-152.

Honigsfeld, A., & Dove, M. G. (2019). Collaboration for English learners: *A foundational guide to integrated practices* (2nd Ed.). Corwin.

Hoover, J. J., & Soltero-González, L. (2018). Educator preparation for developing culturally and linguistically responsive MTSS in rural community elementary schools. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, *41*(3), 188–202.

Horsfall, M., Eikelenboom, M., Draisma, S., & Smit, J. H. (2021). The effect of rapport on data quality in face-to-face interviews: Beneficial or detrimental? *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *18*(20). https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182010858

Horwitz, A. R., Uro, G., Price-Baugh, R., Simon, C., Uzzell, R., Lewis, S. and Casserly, M. 2009. Succeeding with English language learners: *Lessons learned from Great City Schools*. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19313152.2012.665824

Hussain, M. S., Salam, A., & Farid, A. (2020). Students' motivation in English language learning (ELL): An exploratory study of motivation-al factors for EFL and ESL adult learners. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 9(4), 15-28.

Ivanova, I., Kozhuharova, P., & Todorova, R. (2022). Sustainable professional

development through coaching: Benefits for teachers and learners. *Strategies for Policy in Science & Education / Strategii Na Obrazovatelnata i Nauchnata Politika*, *30*(5), 480–499. https://doi.org/10.53656/str2022-5-3-sus

James, D., & Kitcharoen, P. (2021). A causal model of transformational school leadership and transformational classroom leadership on students' learning achievement. *International Journal of Educational Organization & Leadership*, *28*(2), 29–44. https://doi.org/10.18848/2329-1656/CGP/v28i02/29-44

Janis, I. (2022). Strategies for establishing dependability between two qualitative intrinsic case studies: A reflexive thematic analysis. *Field Methods*, *34*(3), 240–255. https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X211069636

Jensen, U. T., & Bro, L. L. (2018). How transformational leadership supports intrinsic motivation and public service motivation: The mediating role of basic need satisfaction. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 48(6), 535–549. https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074017699470

Johnson, M., Bashay, M., Bergson-Shilcock, A., Richardson, M., & DeRenzis, B. (2019). The Roadmap for Racial Equity. *National Skills Coalition*.

Johnson, S. M. Joy in the journey: Navigating leader/learner tensions. Journal of Leadership Studies, *[s. l.]*, v. 13, n. 2, p. 56–59, 2019. DOI 10.1002/jls.21648. Disponível em: https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=shib&db=bth&AN=138810856&site=eds-live&scope=site. Acesso em: 26 jun. 2023.

Kalkan, Ü., Altınay Aksal, F., Altınay Gazi, Z., Atasoy, R., & Dağlı, G. (2020). The

relationship between school administrators' leadership styles, school culture, and

organizational image. *SAGE Open*, 10(1).

https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020902081

Karagiozis, N. (2018). The complexities of the researcher's role in qualitative research:

The power of reflexivity. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Educational

Studies*, *13*(1), 19–31. https://doi.org/10.18848/2327-011X/CGP/v13i01/19-31

Kelly, L. B. (2018). Interest convergence and hegemony in dual language: Bilingual

education, but for whom and why? *Language Policy*, *17*(1), 1–21.

Khaiyali, A.T., Nuseir, N., & Kharruba, R. (2018). Study of cultural challenges faced by

the Arab learners of English in the united states of America. *International Journal

of English Language and Translation Studies*, *06*(02), 36–40.

Kosanovich, M., Phillips, B., & Willis, K. (2020). Professional learning community:

Emergent literacy. Participant guide. Module 3: Vocabulary (Sessions 7-9). REL

2021-045. *Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast*.

Lesneskie, E., & Block, S. (2017). School Violence: The Role of Parental and

Community Involvement. *Journal of School Violence*, 16(4), 426-444.

https://doi.org/10.1080/15388220.2016.1168744

Kim, S. L. (2021). A review of the literature on teachers' beliefs about English language

learners. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, *2*.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2021.100040

Kim, J. Y., & Wynne, M. J. (2021). Providing the best possible learning environment for

k-8 english learners in social studies con10t. *International Journal on Social and*

Education Sciences, *3*(3), 429–438.

Lara, J., Noble, K., Pelika, S., Coons, A., & National Education Association. (2018). *Chronic absenteeism*. NEA Research Brief. NBI No. 57. National Education Association.

Larios, R. J., & Zetlin, A. (2023). Challenges to preparing teachers to instruct all students in inclusive classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *121*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103945

Laureate Education (Producer). (2016). *Doctoral research: Interviewing techniques, part one* [Video].

Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2020). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership revisited. *School Leadership & Management*, 40(1), 5–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2019.1596077

Li, N., & Peters, A. W. (2020). Preparing K-12 teachers for ELLs: Improving teachers' L2 knowledge and strategies through innovative professional development. *Urban Education*, *55*(10), 1489–1506. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916656902

Louie, B. Y., Pughe, B., Kuo, A. C., & Björling, E. A. (2019). Washington principals' perceptions of their professional development needs for the spike of English learners. *Professional Development in Education*, *45*(4), 684–697.

Maldonado, H., Nava, I. L., & Nava, M. A. (2019). Support at every level. *Learning Professional*, *40*(2), 42–46.

Manspile, E., Atwell, M. N., Bridgeland, J. M., & Civic. (2021). Immigrant students and English learners: Challenges faced in high school and postsecondary education.

Marshall, D. T., Shannon, D. M., & Love, S. M. (2020). How teachers experienced the

    COVID-19 transition to remote instruction. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 102(3), 46–50.

    https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721720970702

Mavrogordato, M., Callahan, R., DeMatthews, D., & Izquierdo, E. (2021). Supports for

    students who are English learners. Brief No. 15.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation.

Merriam, S. B., & Grenier, R. S. (2019). Qualitative research in practice: Examples for

    discussion and analysis (2nd ed.).

Miller, D., & Anthony, A. B. (2021). Professional learning plan: A tool to facilitate

    teacher collaboration and improve instructional practice. *Journal of Cases in*

    Educational Leadership, 24(4), 84–102.

    https://doi.org/10.1177/15554589211021139

Moore, H. L., Bakker, A. B., & van Mierlo, H. (2022). Using strengths and thriving at

    work: The role of colleague strengths recognition and organizational

    context. *European Journal of Work & Organizational Psychology*, *31*(2), 260–

    272. https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2021.1952990

Morris, J., (2017). *Education and positive social change.* https://africaeli.org/education-

    and-positive-social-change/

Motulsky, S. L. (2021). Is member checking the gold standard of quality in qualitative

    research? *Qualitative Psychology*, 8(3), 389–406.

    https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000215

Nevenglosky, E., Cale, A., & Aguilar, C. (2019). Barriers to effective curriculum

implementation. *Walden Faculty and Staff Publications*.

Newcomer, S. N., & Cowin, K. M. (2018). Journey of a culturally responsive, socially just leader. *Journal of School Leadership*, 28(4), 488-516.

Niehoff, M. (2019). Professional learning from the inside: Take advantage of the expertise all around us. *District Administration*, *55*(6), 20.

Noben, I., Brouwer, J., Deinum, J. F., & Hofman, W. H. A. (2022). The development of university teachers' collaboration networks during a departmental professional development project. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *110*, 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2021.103579

Obinna, D. N., & Ohanian, M. M. Z. (2020). Uncertain aspirations: Latino students and dropout in the United States. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, *23*(5), 654–672.

O'Hara, S., Bookmyer, J., Pritchard, R., & Martin, R. (2020). Mentoring secondary novice teachers to develop academic language of English language learners. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, *10*(1), 26–40. https://doi.org/10.5590/JERAP.2020.10.1.02

Okhremtchouk, I. S., & Sellu, G. S. (2019). Teacher readiness to work with English language learners: Arizona Context. *Teacher Educator*, *54*(2), 125–144. https://doi.org/10.1080/08878730.2018.1533058

Oktavia, D., Mukminin, A., Fridiyanto, Hadiyanto, Marzulina, L., Harto, K., Erlina, D., & Holandyah, M. (2022). Challenges and strategies used by English teachers in teaching English language skills to young learners. *Theory & Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(2), 382–387. https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1202.22

Orosco, M. J., & Reed, D. K. (2022). The effects of professional development on English

    learners' problem solving. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 222194221099671.

    https://doi.org/10.1177/00222194221099671

Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2021). *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual,*

    theoretical, and methodological (2nd Ed.) Sage Publication.

Renner, J. (2011). Perceptions of teacher's use of English as a second language strategies

    and research-based practices with English language learners in northeast

    10nessee. *International Journal of Diversity in Organisations, Communities &*

    Nations, *11*(1), 261–281. https://doi.org/10.18848/1447-9532/CGP/v11i01/38979

Reschly, A. L. (2020). Dropout prevention and student engagement. *Student Engagement*

    (pp. 31-54). Springer.

Rhode Island Legal Services and Aclu appeal decision undermining the rights of English

    language lAcearners. (2019, April 12). *States News Service*.

Richter, E., Fütterer, T., Meyer, A., Eisenkraft, A., & Fischer, C. (2022). Teacher

    collaboration and professional learning: examining professional development

    during a national education reform. *Zeitschrift Für Pädagogik*, *68*(6), 798–819.

Rodriguez, D., Carrasquillo, A., Garcia, E., & Howitt, D. (2022). Factors that challenge

    English learners and increase their dropout rates: Recommendations from the

    field. *International Journal of Bilingual Education & Bilingualism*, *25*(3), 878–

    894. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2020.1722059

Romero-Ariza, M., Quesada, A., Abril, A.-M., & Cobo, C. (2021). Changing teachers'

    self-efficacy, beliefs, and practices through STEAM teacher professional

development. *Journal for the Study of Education and Development*, *44*(4), 942–

969. https://doi.org/10.1080/02103702.2021.1926164

Rouse, Monica Ruth, "Pull and Push Factors That Influence a Student's Decision to Drop

Out of School" (2019). *Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies*. 7071.

Rumberger, R. W. (2020). The economics of high school dropouts. The economics of

education (pp. 149-158). *Academic Press*.

Rutherford-Quach, S., Thompson, K. D., Rodriguez-Mojica, C., & Román, D. (2021).

Taking away excuses to quit: the role of supports in completion and learning in

online professional development for teachers. *Online Learning*, *25*(2), 140–170.

Rylance, C., & Smith, C. (2018). Project promotes cultural visibility at Sherwood Park

school. *ATA News*, *52*(14), 4–6.

Saldana, J. (2013). The coding manual for qualitative researchers (2nd Ed.). Sage.

Sanjari, M., Bahramnezhad, F., Khoshnava Fomani, F., Shoghi, M., & Ali Cheraghi, M.

(2014). Ethical challenges of researchers in qualitative studies: The necessity to

develop a specific guideline. *Journal of Medical Ethics & History of*

Medicine, *7*(14), 1–6.

Santibañez, L., Snyder, C., & Stanford University, P. A. for C. E. (PACE). (2018).

Teaching English learners in California: How teacher credential requirements in

California address their needs. Technical report. Getting down to facts II.

Seastrom, M. (2017). Best practices for determining subgroup size in accountability

systems while protecting personally identifiable student nformation. Institute of

Education Sciences Congressionally Mandated Report. IES 2017-147. In *Institute*

of Education Sciences. Institute of Education Sciences.

Severinsen, D., Kennedy, L., & Mohamud, S. (2018). Teaching strategies that motivate English language adult literacy learners to invest in their education: A literature review. *Literacy and Numeracy Studies*, *26*(1). https://doi.org/10.5130/lns.v26i1.6260

Shea, L. M., Sandholtz, J. H., & Shanahan, T. B. (2018). We are all talking: A whole-school approach to professional development for teachers of English learners. *Professional Development in Education*, *44*(2), 190–208. https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2016.1274267

Shelton, A., Hogan, E., Chow, J., & Wexler, J. (2023). A synthesis of professional development targeting literacy instruction and intervention for English learners. *Review of Educational Research*, *93*(1), 37–72. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543221087718

Shemsi, M. (2019). Differentiated teaching strategies with children with learning difficulties. *Prizren Social Science Journal*, *3*(3), 32–40. https://doi.org/10.32936/pssj.v3i3.122

Shideler, A., Scaduto, E., & Wivell, G. B. (2020). One district's strategy to curb summer slide among elementary school students. *Journal for Leadership and Instruction*, *19*(2), 19–23.

Shivakumar, A., Shukla, S., Vasoya, M., Kasrani, I. M., & Yong Pei. (2019). Ai-enabled language speaking coaching for dual language learners. *IADIS International Journal onwww/Internet*, *17*(1), 66–78. https://doi.org/10.33965/ijwi_2019171105

Skinner, R. R. (2020). The elementary and secondary education act (ESEA), as amended by every student succeeds act (ESSA): A Primer. CRS Report R45977, Version 4. Updated. In *Congressional Research Service*. Congressional Research Service.

Siegel-Hawley, G. & Frankenberg, E. (2011). Does law influence charter school diversity? An analysis of federal and state legislation. *Michigan Journal of Race & Law*, 16, 321-376.

Slack, A. (2019). The power of professional learning: using plcs to enhance accessibility of instruction for English learners. *International Journal of Teacher Leadership*, *10*(2).

Slavin, R. E. (2019). Educational Psychology: Theory and Practice. Pearson Education.

Smala, S., Gillies, R., McLay, K., & Nguyen, H. (2021). Second language teachers' perceptions of their pedagogical practices, collaborations, and relationships with other teachers through professional development. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, *46*(9), 39–54.

Smith, O. L., & Robinson, R. (2020). Teacher perceptions and implementation of a content-area literacy professional development program. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, 10, 55–69. https://doi.org/10.5590/JERAP.2020.10.1.04

Song, K. H., & Coppersmith, S. A. (2020). Working toward linguistically and culturally responsive math teaching through a year-long urban teacher training program for English learners. *Journal of Urban Mathematics Education*, *13*(2), 60–86.

Staff, J., Yetter, A. M., Cundiff, K., Ramirez, N., Vuolo, M., & Mortimer, J. T. (2020). Is adolescent employment still a risk factor for high school dropout? *Journal of*

Research on Adolescence: The Official Journal of the Society for Research on Adolescence, *30*(2), 406–422. https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12533

Rahmi, S. (2019). Headmaster's leadership in solving problems at Islamic elementary school (SDI) Hikmatul Fadhillah Medan. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 7(2), 267–280. https://doi.org/10.14421/jpi.2018.72.267-280

Sugarman, J. (2021). Equity and English learners post-pandemic. *State Education Standard*, *21*(3), 21–25.

Suh, R. (2021). School dropout issues. *Salem Press Encyclopedia*.

Sun, W. (2019). The High School Journal. *The University of North Carolina Press*, 102(4), 263-266. https://doi.org/10.1353/hsj.2019.0012

Sung-ae Kim, & Morita-Mullaney, T. (2020). When preparation matters: a mixed method study of in-service teacher preparation to serve English learners. *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*, *32*(3), 231–254.

Swanson, J. D., Brock, L., Van Sickle, M., Gutshall, C. A., & Curby, T. W. (2022). Teacher perceptions as an entry point for talent spotting and development. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, *45*(3), 238–270. https://doi.org/10.1177/01623532221105311

Szymanski, A. (Toni), & Lynch, M. (2020). Educator perceptions of English language learners. *Journal of Advanced Academics*, *31*(4), 436–450. https://doi.org/10.1177/1932202X20917141

Tabak, H., & Sahin, F. (2020). Investigating the relationship between school effectiveness, professional learning communities, school culture and teacher

characteristics. *Education Reform Journal*, *5*(2), 45–59.

Tallman, T. O. (2021). How teachers experience collaboration. *Journal of Education*, 201(3), 210–224. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022057420908063

Tao, Y., & Zou, B. (2021). Students' perceptions of the use of Kahoot! in English as a foreign language classroom learning context. Computer Assisted Language Learning, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2021.2011323

Taub-Chan, M. S. (2021). A study of principals' perceptions on professional development reflecting culturally responsive practices in support of LGBTQ Youth. In *ProQuest LLC*.

Thomas, C. A., & Berry, R. Q., III. (2019). A qualitative metasynthesis of culturally relevant pedagogy & culturally responsive teaching: unpacking mathematics teaching practices. *Journal of Mathematics Education at Teachers College*, (1), 21–30. https://doi.org/10.7916/jmetc.v10i1.1668

Thomas, C, A & Sebastian, R (2023). Increasing test scores or fighting injustice: Understanding one district's culturally responsive teaching certification program. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, *4*(100235-). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2023.100235

Many, T. W., Maffoni, M. J., Sparks, S. K., & Ferriby Thomas, T. (2019). *How schools thrive : Building a coaching culture for collaborative Teams in PLCs at Work® (Effective Coaching Strategies for PLCs at Work®)*. Solution Tree Press.

Thompson, S. (2021). Function of education: integration and assimilation. *Salem Press Encyclopedia*.

Debbie, T. (6 C.E., April 2019). Arlington school system signs agreement with
DOJ. *Washington Post, The*.

Tusmagambet, B. (2020). Effects of audiobooks on EFL Learners' reading development:
Focus on fluency and motivation. *English Teaching*, *75*(2), 41–67.

Umansky, I., Porter, L., Pierson, A., Moreno, E. (2021). Alaska Native students as
English learners: Examining patterns in identification, service provision, and
reclassification (REL 2021-088). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of
Education Sciences, National Center for Education.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2018). School enrollment in the United States: October 2017 –
Detailed Tables.

Vaughn, S., Swanson, E., Fall, A.-M., Roberts, G., Capin, P., Stevens, E. A., & Stewart,
A. A. (2022). The efficacy of comprehension and vocabulary focused professional
development on English learners' literacy. *Journal of Educational
Psychology*, *114*(2), 257–272. https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000684

Whitaker, M. C. (2020). Us and them: Using social identity theory to explain and re-
envision teacher-student relationships in urban schools. *Urban Review*, *52*(4),
691–707. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-019-00539-w

Wright Odusoga, O. T. (2020). Instructional leadership practices of K-12 School
principals regarding teachers of English language learners. *Walden Dissertations
and Doctoral Studies*.

Wyatt-Ross, J. (2018). *A classroom where everyone feels welcome*. Edutopia.

Yaccob, N. S., & Yunus, M. M. (2019). Language games in teaching and learning

English grammar: A literature review. *Arab World English Journal*, *10*(1), 209–217.

Yin, R.K. (2016). Qualitative research from start to finish, second edition. New York*: The Guilford Press*. ISBN: 978-1-4625-1797-8. 386 pp. https://doi.org/10.1111/fcsr.12144

Zaff, J. F., & Malone, T. (2020). Moving beyond academics: The role of adult capacity in keeping young people in school. *Youth & Society*, *52*(1), 55–77. https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X17725970

Appendix A: The Project

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Pq2oqPpxasWdDh925CH9EHrap9ZfROfy/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=104789180463420816130&rtpof=true&sd=true

Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School PD PowerPoint and Materials

---

Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School

Vimbainashe Mhiribidi Chanakira

Professional Development

Sign -in

Please sign-in using Sign –in Sheet by the entrance door.

The attendance and evaluation links will be sent out to those who signed in.

3-Days Professional Development/Training

examples teaching STUDENT-CENTERED staff
collaboration strategies Professional training
Development
opportunity growth
learners leaders SKILLS

- This professional development is divided into three sessions
- Session 1:Entire Staff-(Slides1-20)-
- Session 2 :Departmental PLCs-(Slides 20-32)
- Session 3:Entire Staff- (Slides 32-48) This is a Follow-Up PD

Norms

- Honor the agenda and time limits.
- Be on time.
- Be engaged.
- Respect each other's opinions and allow everybody's voice to be heard.
- Keep positive tone during collaborations.
- Sign in for attendance purposes.

First Session 1:Supporting English learners in Graduating High School(Entire Staff)

Agenda
- Sign-in
- Introductions
- Objectives
- Ice Beaker
- Data Analysis
- Why professional development?
- Purpose and goals
- Bathroom break
- Factors that affect English learners
- Identifying at risk ELLs

- Communicating with ELL Families
- Lunch
- Strategies that can be used to support English learners
- Providing Multicultural Classrooms to Support ELLs.
- Bathroom break
- Developing remediation Plans to support English learners
- Conclusion
- Launch
- Shared Resources

Introductions

I would appreciate if we could all introduce ourselves. Just a brief introduction so we can get to know each other as we collaborate

- My name is Vimbainashe Mhiribidi Chanakira, and I am a Walden University doctoral student
- This professional development is based on my findings during research and are not directed at any one person but gives a good representation of what most teachers challenges as they provide instruction to English learners.
- First, we will go over the challenges faced by both ELLs and teachers.
- We are also going to discuss different strategies that can be used in the classrooms to help support English learners and improving their graduation rate.
- Discuss possible tools teachers need from administrators to support ELL instruction

Objectives

- All participants will be able to identify the factors that impact English learners academically, socially, and emotionally.
- All participants will be able to identify middle 'at risk' Ells and discuss remediation plans to support ELLs.
- Educators will demonstrate the ability to utilize the formative and summative data to identify strengths and weaknesses of Ells students
- Discuss research-based strategies that can be used to emotionally support English learners that may be struggling to adjust and assimilate to a new learning environment
- Outline ways to provide multicultural classrooms that showcase different student cultures. To encourage teacher participation administrators may mention that cultural awareness and sensitivity of students are part of observations when they pop into classrooms.

Ice Breaker

- We are going to learn about challenges faced by English learners and teachers
- We are also going to discuss different strategies that can be used in the classrooms to help support English learners.
- I will speak in my native language:

Mangwanani, makadini, ndinofara kuva pano tichidzidzisana kuti tinga batsira sei vana vedu vasingagoni kutaura chirungu. Zvinogozha kuita vana vasingahwi zvaunotaura iwe uchida kwadzidzisa.

Why is professional development important for ELL teachers?

- Teacher training through in-service professional contribute to teacher readiness and preparedness in teaching ELLs (Okhremtchouk & Sellu, 2019).
- Professional development is crucial in preparing teachers to effectively design instructional methods that are needed to support ELLs (O'Hara et al., 2020).
- Through Professional Learning Communities (PLC.) mentoring beginner teachers by veteran teachers may prepare them to work with ELLs. In addition, professional development may support teachers with appropriate teaching strategies that support ELLs (Sugarman, 2021).
- Grant et al., (2021) study demonstrated how designed coursework and coaching supported preparing educators to work and teach English learners.
- Akay & Jaffe-Walter, 2021), stated that administrators and teacher training are essential in improving instructional strategies to meet ELLs' needs.
- Professional development and staff mentoring can improve the quality of instruction for ELLs (Garcia-Borrego et al., (2020).

Data Analysis Overview

The following data was used in creating this professional development to help improve the graduation rate of English learners

Figure 1

Collected Data
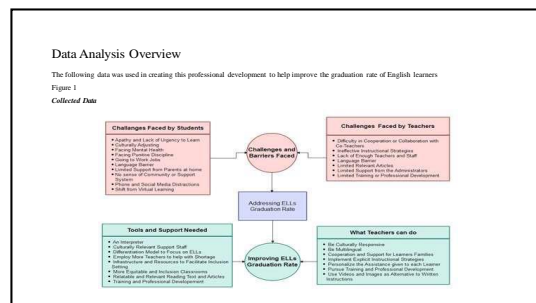
Factors That Impact English Learners

- Language barrier hinders effective learning for the ELLs.
- They find it hard culturally adjusting
- They choose to go to work jobs instead of coming to learn
- Less motivated thus lacks drive to learn.
- They are not academically supported at home by their parents.
- The lack a sense of community or support system.
- Shifting from the virtual learning posed a transitional challenge for the learners
- Some are facing mental illness making it hard to learn.
- They are punitively punished, which at times leads to them dropping out.

Challenges Faced by Teachers

- Difficulty in Cooperation or Collaboration with Co-Teachers
- Ineffective Instructional Strategies
- Lack of Enough Teachers and Staff
- Language Barrier
- Limited Training or Professional Development
- Limited Support from the Administrators
- Limited Relevant Articles

Tools and Support Needed

- Training and Professional Development
- More Equitable and Inclusion Classrooms
- Infrastructure and Resources to Facilitate Inclusion Setting
- Differentiation Model to Focus on ELLs
- Relatable and Relevant Reading Text and Articles
- Culturally Relevant Support Staff
- An Interpreter
- Employ More Teachers to help with Shortage

What Teachers can do to Improve ELLs Graduation Rate

- Pursue Training and Professional Development
- Be Culturally Responsive
- Implement Explicit Instructional Strategies
- Personalize the Assistance given to each Learner
- Be Multilingual
- Cooperation and Support for Learners Families
- Use Videos and Images as Alternative to Written Instructions

Bathroom Break-10 minutes

Identifying 'at Risk' ELLs

- Since this is a high school, students at this stage have already been identified either in elementary or middle school. However there maybe some new arrivals. ESL department within the school will identify these newcomers but teachers must figure out what level of understand in English there are. Teachers can use some strategies to support these students: (a) pairing them up with a bilingual student, (b) providing a dictionary,(c) introducing students to Canvas tools that can translate assignments for them to their language and translate back to English, and (d) perform home language survey that can help you determine who might or might not be an English learner.
- Assessment in the primary language ae acceptable in other states but English our state recognized language for all state tests and summative tests..
- The use of universal screen procedures can allow educators to put some gifted ELLs in appropriate classes using professional development for the teachers of ELLs(Mun et al.,2020). It is not every English learner that struggles with work and students must be given equal opportunities given to non-ELLs.

Communicating with ELL Families

- Be sure to mention Talking Points as a way to communicate with ELL parents, we need to use it more with our classes and the school needs to send more communication using Talking Points(Sending messages through this app allows parents of ELLs who cannot read and understand English receive information in their preferred languages.
- The use of this tool can contribute o better communication and relationships with parents of English learners. I am glad that our school is using this tool but teachers and administrators should use it more often so that the ELL families
- Teachers must encourage students to use apps that help support ELL parents in understanding what goes on within the school building and classroom like Canvas. Parents can convert Information to preferred language with help of their students.

Lunch Break

Strategies That can be Used to Support English Learners

The study data reveled five main themes that could be used to improve the graduation rate of English learners.
- Theme 1: Provide Training and Professional Development Opportunities

- Theme 2: Use of Culturally Relevant Teaching and Support Staff

- Theme 3: Build Relationships or Rapport With ELL Students.

- Theme 4: Administrators Must Hire Qualified Teachers(Administrators)

- Theme 5: Hire Translators(Administrators)

- The first three themes applies to us teachers, what can we do to make sure we are prepared to support our English learners? This is

the reason we are doing this professional development so that we are armed with strategies that can help us support Els.

Providing Multicultural Classrooms to Support ELLs.

Classroom teachers have the greatest impact on how well English learners can adjust and learn. Culturally responsive teaching is vital in understanding the demographic background of students within your classroom (Hensen-Thomas & Chennapragada, 2018). It is important for teachers to: (a) understand your students, b) identify your student strengths and weaknesses, (c) Encourage Them to Share Real-Life Experiences , (d) organize open discussions, pairing students with non-ELLs. The use of culturally responsive teaching strategies in the classroom can support ELLs.
 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMiBLZTkkng
Reflections
What are your take-ways from the video you just watched.

Bathroom Break-10 minutes

Developing Remediation Plans to Support English Learners

Provide a welcoming classroom environment and show your students that you care about their academic success.
- Make sure you know students' names and pronunciation.
- Modify your speech to allow students to understand what you are saying...
- Provide opportunities for one-on-one assistance when possible.
- Support literacy development by providing necessary resources.
- Even though ELLs struggle with learning of language and content, they the most tested students in our educational system," Wayne Wright (2015). This can be frustrating for students. Support them and avoid giving unnecessary tests .
- A primary goal of assessing is to find out what our students know and understand, but it can be difficult to find out what students know and understand if language is a barrier. Effectively grading ELLs work can be a challenge for most teachers, use alternate assessment methods when applicable.
- Using your discretion, teachers can modify assignments or test, when possible, to support English learners. For example, those student at beginner level of English proficiency may have trouble reading a multiple-choice test to show what they know or understand regarding a topic. Teachers can have two answer choices instead of four or may chose the true/false questions.

Conclusion

- *Mangwanani, makadini?*
- Morning and how are you?
- *Ndinofara kuva pano tichidzidzisana kuti tinga batsira sei vana vedu vasingagoni kutaura chirungu.*
- I am so happy to be here and collaborate with each other in learning how we can support English learners.
- *Zvinogozha kuita vana vasingahwi zvaunotaura iwe uchida kuvadzidzisa*
- It is difficult to have students who do not understand instructional language when teachers are keen to teach them.
Questions
- 1. What is the difference would it have made if I had used this conclusion as my icebreaker?
- 2. Did you understand what I said?
- Can you share, ways teachers can help ELLs in understanding what can be difficult because of language barriers?

Launch
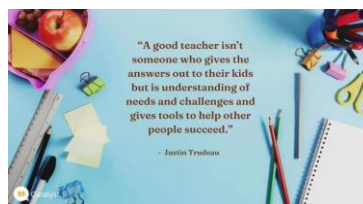
Shared Resources

- PowerPoint slides 1-25
- Attendance form
- Note Taking and Reflection Sheet
- Informative evaluation form

Session 2: Departmental PLCs

- This session will be divided into four sessions using the following departments:
- Languages department PLC (2hrs.)
- Math department PLC (2hrs.)
- CTE department PLC(2 hrs.)
- Arts and Physical department PLC(2 hrs.)

Agenda
- Sign-in
- Welcome
- Ice breaker
- Share session on how well the implementation of suggested strategies in the first session worked
- Participants will work in pairs to create a lesson plan that utilizes some of the research-based strategies discussed in prior session.
- Discuss alternate assessments teachers used in their classrooms with ELLs
- Reflections. What strategies would teachers recommend for peers to try based on their individual success stories
- Launch
- Shared Resources

Sign-In

Please sign-in using Sign –in Sheet by the entrance door.

The attendance and evaluation links will be sent out to those who signed in.

Welcome

Brief welcome and reminding participants that this is an ongoing professional development that allows collaboration between educators in finding solutions to improve graduation rate of English learners. Today 's session is done by departments so that we can try and find commonalities within subject areas and create lessons that can address challenges within our departments as we strive to support our English learners.

Ice Breaker

Let's take a few minutes to listen to this video and then share our thoughts after the video.
What to do first: Creating a welcoming ELL classroom environment

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FegO4Gh3uyk
Questions
- What are your comments after watching this video?
- What strategies in this video do you use in your classroom?
- Remember a great teacher cares about her/his students and the way we welcome students in our classrooms can have a positive or negative impact.

** It takes time to create a welcoming classroom but once you to it at th ebeginning of th eschool year then it becomes easier to maintain and update.

How well did the shared strategies work for you?

- Today's session is a follow-up session to the first one done at the beginning of the year.
- Can I have some teachers who would like to share how well the implementation of suggested strategies in the first session worked. What were some challenges you encountered during the implementation? You can also share if you did any modifications that made the strategies better and more practical to use in your classroom with the understanding that sometimes the case loads are huge and may present challenges in individualizing instruction.

Lesson Plan Activity

- In pairs create a lesson plan that utilizes some of the research-based strategies discussed in prior session. Your lesson will be shared with the rest of your team. I will be moving around the room and assist with questions pertain to the research -based strategies you will be working on.

Alternate Assessments

The use of alternate assessments methods should be guided by school district policies. However, with informative assessments teachers can be flexible in what they can use to give them information on how well their ELLs are mastering the concepts. Teachers should follow the school district mandated summative assessments for English learners.
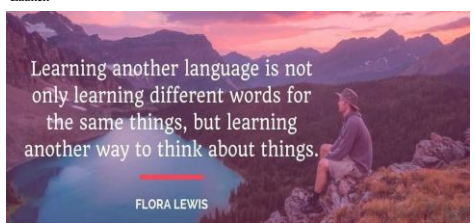
- Discuss alternate assessments teachers used in their classrooms with ELLs

---

Participants Recommended Strategies

Reflections.
- What strategies would teachers recommend for peers based on their individual success stories.

Launch

Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same things, but learning another way to think about things.

FLORA LEWIS

Shared Resources

- Presentation slides 26-35
- Attendance form
- Note Taking and Reflection Sheet
- Informative evaluation form

Session 3:Supporting English learners in Graduating High School (Entire Staff

Agenda
- Sign in
- Welcome
- Icebreaker
- Follow-up on how teachers implemented strategies learned from the first and second PDs
- Bathroom Break
- Teacher leaders will model and share successful research- based strategies they used
- Lunch Break
- Participants work in pairs and reflect on learned information. Switch partners and work with different department colleague
- Bathroom break
- Reflections and principal comments
- Informative and summative evaluations
- Launch
- Shared resources

Sign in

Please sign-in here using Sign –in Sheet by the entrance door.

The attendance and evaluation links will be sent out to those who signed in.

Welcome

Brief welcome and reminding participants that this the last session of the Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School professional development that allows collaboration between educators in finding solutions to improve graduation rate of English learners. It has been my pleasure to present share and learn from peers as we all find solutions to improve graduation rate for our English learners.

Icebreaker

Strategies that you can use in your classrooms when teaching English learners
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-pEPHY6tORY
Choose the best strategies that apply to your individual classroom setting and if you need help in modifying some of the strategies to suit your individual instructional needs, come and I will try to assist you.

Follow-up Discussion

What has worked in your classrooms in terms of the different strategies we discussed about in the first session? Are there any additional pointers or suggestions you have that you can share with the team.

Bathroom Break-10 minutes

Sharing Session-Teacher Leaders

• Allow teacher leaders from different departments (4), to model and share successful strategies they have used when working with English learners.
• Allow participants to ask questions.

Lunch Break

Pair Think and Share

- Participants work in pairs and reflect on learned information. Participants may also discuss on alternate strategies they have used in their own classrooms.
- Switch partners after twenty minutes and work with a peer from a different department and do the self analysis.

Bathroom break-10 minutes

Reflections

- Reflections
- Vote of thanks
- Principal comments

Informative and Summative Evaluations

- Participants will be given time to fill out the informative and summative evaluation to help the researcher assess the success of the professional development.
- The evaluation swill also allow the presenter to use the data to improve on future professional development and trainings.

Launch

Shared resources

- PowerPoint Slides 36-49
- Attendance form
- Note Taking and Reflection Sheet
- Informative and Summative Evaluation Forms.

Thank you

- Vimbainashe Mhiribidi Chanakira
- 919-251-2740
- Vimbainashe.Chanakira@waldenu.edu

Purpose:

The purpose of the project is to provide 9-12 administrators and teachers with the education, tools, and teaching strategies that positively impact English learners. Through professional development and collaboration, participants will learn about various aspects of English learners' pedagogy that can support English learners to improve their graduation rate at the school of study.

Smart Goal:

By December 2023, the number of teachers implementing ELL instructional strategies, utilizing ELL resources, and supporting ELLs by creating multicultural classroom environments would improve and can be measured through peer observations and administrators' observations and walkthroughs.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the third session of the professional development, participants will be able:

- Identify the factors that impact English learners academically, socially, and emotionally.
- Identify middle 'at risk' Ells and develop a remediation plan to support students (Use of Canvas and PowerSchool).
- Demonstrate the ability to utilize formative and summative data to identify strengths and weaknesses of Ells students. The use of alternate assessing methods for ELLs will be discussed.
- Describe strategies to integrate K-12 practices, assessments, and supplemental

tools from elementary to high school.

- Share strategies that can be used to emotionally support English learners that may be struggling to adjust and assimilate to a new learning environment.

- Share how to provide multicultural classrooms that showcase different student cultures.

Target Audience:

High school administrators, high school teachers, instructional assistants, high school, instructional facilitators, and district ELL instructional coaches are invited and welcome to attend.

Duration: 3 teacher workdays within the first half of the school year. The timetable for Supporting English learners in Graduating High School Professional Development/Training would be for the 2023-2024 school year. The three-day sessions will be spread out over 5 months of school from August 2023 to December 2023. Sessions will last the whole day and the presenter will utilize two teacher workdays the first week of opening schools and another teacher workday mid-quarter of the semester.

Components:

This PD will be divided into three main sessions that are aligned with supporting teachers teaching English learners.

Session 1(Entire Staff)

Time: 7 hours

Welcome, introductions, 10 minutes.

Icebreaker, 30 minutes.

For the Icebreaker, I will speak in my native language:

Mangwanani, makadini, ndinofara kuva pano tichidzidzisana kuti tinga batsira sei vana vedu vasingagoni kutaura chirungu. Zvinogozha kuita vana vasingahwi zvaunotaura iwe uchida kuvadzidzisa

Questions

- 1. How did you feel as I spoke to you?

- 2. Did you understand what I said?

- ***The feeling you had as I spoke to you in Shona is how our English learners sometimes feel when they are sitting in our classes.

Why Professional Development/Share what data showed, 30 minutes.

- Challenges Faced by ELL Students.

- Challenges faced by teachers.

- Tools and support needed by teachers.

- What can we do as teachers to improve the graduation rates of ELLs?

Discussion Topic: What strategies have you used in the past? What has worked in the classroom? What has not worked in the classroom?

Activity:

1) Discuss challenges faced by teachers in teaching English learners. Discuss what

challenges are faced by English learners,75 minutes.

2) Lunch at noon for 60 minutes

 3) Discuss strategies that teachers have used in their classrooms to support English learners. Allow participants to share different instructional strategies and tips they have used to support English learners Discussion questions prompt group conversation, 120 minutes.

 4) Participants will have a 10-minute bathroom break.

 5) Review what literature and data collected suggest can support teachers in reducing the dropout rate of ELLs, 30 minutes

 6) Learning coach & ELL Facilitator presentation on what can support teachers and share resources with participants, 15 minutes.

 7)Teachers will complete an informative evaluation that can be used by the presenter to improve the quality of the presentation in future presentations, 10 minutes.

 8) To conclude, use the activity you used as an ice breaker to show participants that with a little help as a presenter, I could have helped my audience to understand what I was saying in my naïve language, 30 minutes.

 Activity

- *Mangwanani, makadini?*

- Morning and how are you?

- *Ndinofara kuva pano tichidzidzisana kuti tinga batsira sei vana vedu vasingagoni kutaura chirungu.*

- I am so happy to be here and collaborate in learning how we can support English

learners.

- *Zvinogozha kuita vana vasingahwi zvaunotaura iwe uchida kuvadzidzisa*

- It is difficult to have students who do not understand the instructional language when teachers are keen to teach them.

Questions

- 1. What difference would it have made if I had used this conclusion as my icebreaker?

- 2. Did you understand what I said?

- Can you share ways teachers can help ELLs in understanding what can be difficult because of language barriers?

Educators may support English learners using Dual language occasionally. How many of us here know that students can convert assignments in Canvas to Spanish and then convert written Spanish to English? This tool can immensely help those students who are struggling with communicating in English.

9) Launch - A good teacher isn't someone who gives the answers out to their kids but is understanding of needs and challenges and gives tools to help other people succeed. — Justin Trudeau

Shared Resources

- PowerPoint slides 1-25

- Attendance form

- Note-Taking and Reflection Sheet

- Informative evaluation form

Agenda Day 1

9.00-9.10	Sign-in
9.10-9.20	Welcome and Introductions
9.20-9.30	PD Norms, Agenda
9.30-9.40	Objectives and learning outcomes
9.40-10.00	Icebreaker
10.00-10.30	Why is professional development important for ELL teachers?
10.30-10.40	Bathroom Break
10.40-12.00	Research Data Analysis Overview
12.00-1.00	Lunch on Your Own
1.00-2.00	Discuss Strategies That can be Used to Support English Learners
2.00-3.00	Providing Multicultural classrooms
3.00-3.40	Developing Remediation Plans to Support English Learners
3.40-400	Review/Closure/ PD Evaluation

Professional Development Sign-in Sheet

"Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School"

Thank you for participating in Day 1 Session 1 Sign-in Sheet. Please sign -in.

Date	Last Name, First Name	Department	Sign-in Time

Professional Development Notes Taking

"Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School" Day 1 Session 1 Note Taking and Reflection Sheet Notes:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

My top three takeaways from today's sessions are:

1. _____

_____

_____

_____

2. _____

_____

_____

_____

3. _____

_____

_____

_____

Professional Development Evaluation

"Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School"

Thank you for participating in Day 1 Session 1 of *Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School*. Please share your feedback so content and delivery can be improved.

Use the following scale rating when choosing your response:

5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree

	5 = Strongly Agree	4 = Agree	3 = Neutral	2 = Disagree	1 = Strongly Disagree
1. Purpose and learning outcomes for Day 1 Session 1 were clearly explained.					
2. The research findings of administrators and teachers' perception on influences on high dropout rate of ELLs. Results also illustrated resources and tools needed by teachers to support ELLs.					
3. The research findings shared strategies that can be used by					

educators to mitigate the high dropout rate of ELLs and improve their graduation rates.					
4. The pace of the session and flow of activities was satisfactory.					
5. The session delivered material I expected to receive					
6. By participating in this session I gained new knowledge applicable to my work.					
7. The facilitator acknowledged my input and answered questions asked.					
8. Opportunities were provided for reflection on practice and next steps					

Please list any suggestions you have on future topics and for improving this or other PD sessions

_____

_____

Session 2 Departmental PLCs

CTE department, Languages department, Math Department, and Arts &Physical

Education departments.

Time: 8 hours (4 Departments each for 2 hours)

Discussion Topic: How did the implementation of research based instructional strategies

discussed in the first school wide session work in your classrooms?

Icebreaker, 10 minutes

Activity:

1) Follow-up review- The participants will share their reflections about what they

have implemented for the students so far this school year, what has worked and

what has not worked. Estimated duration of participant reflections, 20 minutes.

2) Participants will be paired up and work together to create lesson plans that utilizes the

research-based strategies learned in the first session. Participants should be able to create

two lesson plans. Presenter will walk around, and support teachers as needed. Estimated

duration on lesson planning, 40 minutes.

3)Discuss alternate assessment methods used that support English learners, 20 minutes

3) Reflections. Discuss what worked and what didn't, 20 minutes.

4) Share with participants resources that can support them with ELL instruction, 10

minutes.

5) Launch- Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same

things but learning another way to think about things.

Flora Lewis.

Shared Resources

- Presentation slides 26-35

- Attendance form

- Note Taking and Reflection Sheet

- Informative evaluation form

Agenda Day 2 x 4 Department PLCs

9.00-9.30	Sign -in, Welcome and Introductions/Objectives
9.30-9.50	Icebreaker- Creating a welcoming ELL classroom environment
9.50-10.10	Discussion-How well did the shared strategies work for you?
10.10-10.30	Creating Lesson plan Activity
10.30-10.40	Alternate Assessment Strategies
10.40-1.55	Reflections and recommended teaching strategies
10.55-11.00	Review/Closure/ PD Evaluation

Professional Development Sign-in Sheet

"Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School"

Thank you for participating in Day 1 Session 2 Sign-in Sheet. Please sign -in.

Date	Last Name, First Name	Department	Sign-in Time

Professional Development Notes Taking

"Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School" Day 1 Session 2 Note Taking

and Reflection Sheet Notes:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

My top three takeaways from today's sessions are:

1._____

_____

_____

_____

2._____

_____

_____

_____

3._____

_____

_____

_____

Professional Development Evaluation

"Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School"

Thank you for participating in Day 1 Session 2 of *Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School*. Please share your feedback so content and delivery can be improved.

Use the following scale rating when choosing your response:

5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree

	5 = Strongly Agree	4 = Agree	3 = Neutral	2 = Disagree	1 = Strongly Disagree
1. Purpose and learning outcomes for Day 2 Session 2 were clearly explained.					
2. The session provided strategies for supporting teachers of English learners.					
3. The session provided engaging group activities that helped to better understand supporting English learners					
4. The pace of the session and					

flow of activities was satisfactory.					
5. The session delivered material I expected to receive.					
6. By participating in this session I gained new knowledge applicable to my work.					
7. The facilitator acknowledged my input and answered questions asked.					
8. Opportunities were provided for reflection on practice and next steps					

Please list any suggestions you have on future topics and for improving this or other PD sessions

_____

_____

Session 3

Time: Seven Hours

Discussion Topics:

How successful have you been with the implementation of the research based strategies that support ELLs in your classrooms?

How do you grade and/or evaluate ELL students to ensure that they

are learning?

Welcome (Entire Staff)

Icebreaker, 20 minutes

1) Participants watch video on modelling of best practices with English learners and evaluate as a team, 40 minutes

1)Follow up with the entire staff on how teachers implemented the strategies discussed in the first professional development, 60 minutes

2)Bathroom break, 10minutes

3) Allow some teacher leaders to model successful research-based strategies, 60 minutes

4) Lunch break, 60 minutes

5) Participants work in pairs and discuss what worked and what didn't, 20 minutes

6) Switch partners with colleagues from a department and think, pair and share, 20 minutes.

7)Bathroom break, 10 minutes.

8) Share resources with participants, 10 minutes

9) Reflections and principal comments, 30 minutes

10) Participants fill in the summative evaluation that can be used by presenter to improve future professional development trains. Allow participants to ask individual questions with key presenters, 40 minutes.

11) Launch- Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going. Rita Mae Brown

Shared Resources

•   PowerPoint Slides 36-49

•   Attendance form

•   Note Taking and Reflection Sheet

•   Informative and Summative Evaluation Forms.

Day 3 agenda

9.00-9.10	Sign-in
9.10-9.20	Welcome
9.20-9.50	Icebreaker
9.50-10.40	Follow-up Discussion
10.40-12.00	Departmental Teacher Leaders Sharing Effective Strategies
12.00-1.00	Lunch on Your Own
1.00-2.10	Pair Think and Share Activity
2.10-2.50	Reflections/Vote of Thanks
2.50-3.30	Informative and Summative Evaluations
3.30-400	Closure

Professional Development Sign-in Sheet

"Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School"

Thank you for participating in Day 1 Session 3 Sign-in Sheet. Please sign -in.

Date	Last Name, First Name	Department	Sign-in Time

Professional Development Notes Taking

"Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School" Day 1 Session 3 Note Taking
and Reflection Sheet Notes:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

My top three takeaways from today's sessions are:

1. _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

Professional Development Evaluation

"Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School"

Thank you for participating in Day 1 Session 3 of *Supporting English Learners in Graduating High School*. Please share your feedback so content and delivery can be improved.

Use the following scale rating when choosing your response:

5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree

	5 = Strongly Agree	4 = Agree	3 = Neutral	2 = Disagree	1 = Strongly Disagree
1. Purpose and learning outcomes for Day 3 Session 3 were clearly explained					
2. The session provided opportunities for participants to reflect, and review learned strategies in the first and second sessions. Teacher leaders from each department modelled lesson plans.					
3. The session provided					

engaging group activities that supported collaboration among peers in supporting English learners.					
4. The pace of the session and flow of activities was satisfactory					
5. The session delivered material I expected to receive					
6. By participating in this session I gained new knowledge applicable to my work.					
7. The facilitator acknowledged my input and answered questions asked.					
8. Opportunities were provided for reflection on practice and next steps.					

Please list any suggestions you have on future topics and for improving this or other PD sessions

_____

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Table B1

Relationship of Research Questions to Interview Questions (Administrators)

Research Questions	Interview Questions
RQ. 1: What do administrators and teachers believe causes the high dropout rates of ELLs at a low-income urban high school?	1.　　What are some of the challenges you have encountered working with English learners that prevent them from graduating on time? 2.　　What do you perceive as obstacles for English learners when it comes to graduating on time? Probe: Describe what you think can be done to improve the graduation rate of English learners.
RQ. 2: What tools do teachers note are needed from administrators to lower ELLs' dropout rate?	1.　　What tools do teachers note are needed from you as a leader to support lowering the dropout rate of English learners at your school?

The questions in Table 1, show the alignment between the two research questions and interview questions for administrators.

Table B2

Relationship of Research Questions to Interview Questions (Teachers)

Research Questions	Interview Questions
RQ. 1: What do administrators and teachers believe causes the high dropout rates of ELLs at a low-income urban high school?	1. What do you perceive as obstacles for English learners when it comes to graduating on time? **Probe:** What strategies and resources do you use in your classroom to support English learners in graduating on time?
RQ. 2: What tools do teachers note are needed from administrators to lower ELLs' dropout rate?	1. What tools do you need from administrators to support lowering ELLs' dropout rate at your school? **Probe:** What have your administrators done to improve the instruction of ELLs and improve their graduation rate?

The questions in Table 2, show the alignment between the two research questions and interview questions for teachers.

Appendix C: Interview Guide

Welcome and Introductions

My name is Vimbainashe Mhiribidi Chanakira, I am a Walden Doctoral student and would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this research as a participant. To facilitate our interview, I would like to audio record our conversations today. Please sign the consent form. For your information, I am the only person that will have access to the recording, which will be ultimately destroyed after it is transcribed. In addition, please sign a form that was developed to meet our human subject requirements. In essence, this document states that: (a) your participation is voluntary, and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, (b) all information will be held confidential, and (c) I do not intend to cause any harm. I do not expect this interview to last longer than one hour. During this time, I will ask you some questions that I would like you to answer. If I notice that we are getting close to the allotted time, I may need to interject to move forward and finish this interview.

Introduction

You have been selected to participate in this study because you have been identified as an experienced educator who has worked with English learners, and who can share the challenges of working with English learners and share instructional strategies that can contribute to the success of English learners resulting in their improved graduation rate. My research project focuses on administrators' and teachers' perceptions of influences contributing to the high dropout rates of ELLs. I am interested in finding out what educators perceive as influences that contribute to a high dropout rate of ELLs, and what

they perceive can be done to improve the graduation rate of English Learners. I would also like to hear from educators who work with English Learners about potential internal and external difficulties that ELL students face and how they support them. The goal of my study is to identify English Learners' potential barriers to graduation (**Read this to the participants before the interview**).

1.   Tell me about your educational and professional background.

Probe: How long have you been an administrator?

2.   What is your experience in working with students from culturally diverse backgrounds?

Probe: Describe how you cater to English Learners to support their learning.

3.   What do you perceive as obstacles for English learners when it comes to graduating on time?

Probe: Describe what you think can be done to improve the graduation rate of English learners.

4.   What tools do teachers note are needed from you as a leader to support lowering the dropout rate of English learners at your school?

Probe: Describe programs or initiatives that are in place to support teachers in improving the graduation rate of English Learners.

5.   As a transformational leader, what training do you provide to your teachers to improve their instructional methods that support English Learners?

Probe: Have the PDs provided positive outcomes with your teachers regarding ELLs' support and academic performances?

Probe: What are some of the transformational leadership practices you use to support teachers in improving the graduation rate of English learners?

6.   What strategies or methods do you use as a transformational leader to address the cultural, emotional, and social needs of English Learners?

Teachers Interview Guide

Welcome and Introductions

My name is Vimbainashe Mhiribidi Chanakira, I am a Walden Doctoral student and

would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this research as a participant. To

facilitate our interview, I would like to audio record our conversations today. Please sign

the consent form. For your information, I am the only person that will have access to the

recording, which will be ultimately destroyed after it is transcribed. In addition, please

sign a form that was developed to meet our human subject requirements. In essence, this

document states that: (a) your participation is voluntary, and you may stop at any time if

you feel uncomfortable, (b) all information will be held confidential, and (c) I do not

intend to cause any harm. I do not expect this interview to last longer than one hour.

During this time, I will ask you some questions that I would like you to answer. If I

notice that we are getting close to the allotted time, I may need to interject to move

forward and finish this interview.

Introduction

You have been selected to participate in this study because you have been identified as an

experienced educator who has worked with English learners, and who can share the

challenges of working with English learners and share instructional strategies that can

contribute to the success of English learners resulting in their improved graduation rate.

My research project focuses on administrators' and teachers' perceptions of influences

contributing to the high dropout rates of ELLs. I am interested in finding out what

educators perceive as influences that contribute to a high dropout rate of ELLs, and what

they perceive can be done to improve the graduation rate of English Learners. I would also like to hear from educators who work with English Learners about potential internal and external difficulties that ELL students face and how they support them. The goal of my study is to identify English Learners' potential barriers to graduation. (**Read this to the participants before the interview**).

1.   Tell me about your educational and professional background.

Probe: How long have you been a teacher?

2.   What is your experience teaching students from culturally diverse backgrounds?

Probe: Describe how you make your lesson plans culturally relevant for

your ELL students.

3.   What do you perceive as obstacles for English learners when it comes to

graduating on time?

 Probe: What resources do you use in your classroom to support English learners in

overcoming the obstacles?

Probe: As transformational teacher and leader, what strategies do you use to motivate

English learners to be academically successful?

4.   What tools do you need from administrators to support lowering ELLs' dropout

rate at your school?

Probe: What have your administrators done to improve the instruction of ELLs and

improve their graduation rate?

 Probe: What PDs have been offered by your leaders regarding the improving of English

learners' graduation rates.

Probe: What strategies and resources do you use in your classroom to support English

learners in graduating on time?