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Challenges Teaching Emergent Bilingual Students in Rural Schools

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Walden University
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Abstract

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MA, Walden University, 2010

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

K-3 teachers face challenges in meeting the learning needs of their emergent bilingual (EB) students in rural southeastern schools in the United States. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore K-3 teacher perspectives on challenges to meet the English language learning needs of their EB students and to identify what K-3 teachers believe they need to meet their students' learning needs. Two research questions addressed teacher perspectives on the challenges they face to meet the learning needs of EB students in rural schools and what teachers believe they needed to successfully address EB students' learning needs. The conceptual framework combined the teachers of English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) framework and the integration of language and content teaching (ILCT) model. Open-ended interviews were conducted with 12 K-3 teachers of EB students in rural schools in the southeastern United States. Data analysis involved transcribing, coding, and establishing themes. Findings suggested that ESOL teachers of EB students address challenges by relying on technology and engaging in peer mentoring and co-teaching practices. ESOL teachers of EB students said they need support for developmentally, linguistically, and culturally relevant curriculum, training in inclusive strategies, and time to collaborate with all teachers of EB students. Positive social change may occur if the findings of this study are used by stakeholders in rural southeastern schools in the United States to value and support teacher practices that foster student bilingualism and provide all teachers with professional development on ESOL strategies with the resources needed to promote EB student success and allow all teachers who teach EB students time to collaborate and mentor each other.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family, my friends, and my colleagues for their encouragement, understanding, and tireless support. First, I am thankful and grateful to my loving Savior, Jesus Christ, who has made all things possible. Without him, I would not be here, nor would I have been able to complete this dissertation. Next, I am thankful and grateful for such a loving, understanding, and faithful group of people that I get to call my family. Without them, I would never have made it to the place where I am now. Because of them, I am stronger and better each day. Yes, Ashton, Coleman, Zane, and Faithlyn (our four beautiful children), this means that mommy will be able to go on vacations with a closed computer and have more fun with you instead of spending endless hours and afternoons "doing schoolwork." Thank you to my parents, Grady and Faith, for supporting me in my endeavor to be a lifelong learner and in the words of my dad, "play in cool and stay in school." Now, for the most heartfelt appreciation, I would like to thank my husband, Ashley, for being with me and completely supportive every step of the way. It has been a long journey and I would never have made it without you. The doctoral journey has been frustrating at times, tiring, and long, but you have never given up on my ability to make it all the way to the end. You have remained a constant rock for me unmoving, positive, always positive and always lovingly guiding me on to my final goal. I am so blessed to have you by my side as a constant companion. Thank you for encouraging me to achieve this huge milestone and for stepping in to help things run smoothly in our family's lives. I love you and want to thank you for being there for me. To my colleagues and fellow educators-thank you! You are making a difference!

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

In this qualitative research study, I explored K-3 teachers' perspectives of challenges they face meeting the English language learning needs of their EB students in rural southeastern schools in the United States and identify what K-3 teachers believe they need to successfully meet the English language learning needs of their EB students. This study was needed because there is a gap in practice related to how teachers successfully meet the English language learning needs of EB students in rural schools in various instructional settings (Gebhard et al., 2019; Ruiz, 2020; Uzzell & Ayscue, 2021; Winlund, 2020). In Chapter 1, I discuss the background of the topic, research problem, purpose of the research, and present the conceptual framework and research questions that guided this study. I provide the nature of the research, define key terms, and research methodology that I followed in the study. In additional sections, I discuss the research assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance.

Background

It is estimated that half of the population in the world is bilingual and more research that informs educators about the topic of bilingualism is needed (Bialystok et al., 2022). Researchers have widely discussed the benefits of bilingualism as providing cognitive, socioemotional, and academic advantages for students (Bailystok et al., 2022; Fox et al., 2019). Researchers have also revealed that teachers can help EB students contextualize and illuminate new knowledge while making the content concrete and rendering the academic subjects intelligible (Winlund, 2020). But a lack of resources present additional challenges for teachers of EB students who are English language

learners (ELs) in rural schools throughout the United States (Ruiz, 2020). Among the challenges that teachers face are how they address cultural differences with students and their families, which influences EB students' academic success. Several researchers have noted that teachers are challenged to meet the needs of students due to insufficient training (Li & Peters, 2020; Ramasivama & Nair, 2019). This study is needed because findings of this basic qualitative study may contribute to positive social change by filling a gap in practice related to teachers' perspectives of challenges they face in teaching EB students and how they address the English language learning needs of K-3 EB students in rural schools in the southeastern United States.

Problem Statement

The research problem that was addressed by this basic qualitative study is that K-3 teachers face challenges to meet the English language learning needs of their EB students in rural schools throughout the United States (Li & Peters, 2020; Okhremtchouk & Sellu, 2019; Ramasivama & Nair, 2019; Ruiz, 2020; Winlund, 2020). This problem is current, relevant, and significant in the field of early childhood education because when teachers do not meet the English language learning needs of EB students, students are unable to progress (Tuckman et al., 2021). Student success is measured by EB students exiting the English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) programs (Tuckman et al., 2021). However, few EB students have exited the (ESOL) program in recent years in one southeastern state in the United States (State Department of Education, 2019, 2020, 2022). The state's department of education (DOE) suggested that EB students' lack of progress is partly due to inadequate instruction, which resulted in fewer students learning

English adequately to pass the state assessments to exit the program. This problem also exists at the local level based on local Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) test data (State Department of Education, 2019-2022).

At the local research site for my study, the superintendent of schools revealed that K-3 teachers face challenges to efficiently address the English language learning needs of K-3 EB students. Evidence of teachers' challenges exist in the local district based on students' low scores and limited gains on the state's ACCESS (n.d.) test for the past 5 years (Superintendent, personal communication, August 2022). The local rural school district in one state in the southeastern United States enrolls approximately 650 elementary students each year, with EB students making up about 30% of the school population (Superintendent, personal communication, August 2022). Of those, 20% or less than 1/5 of students exited the ESOL and migrant programs from 2017-2018 through 2019-2020. However, scores for 2020-2021 reflected that 13% of students left the programs, which was attributed to educational restrictions during the pandemic (School District, Elementary Schools 2020-2021 Demographic Records). District scores for 2021-2022 reflected that 18.2% of students left the programs (School District, Elementary Schools 2021-2022 Demographic Records). State scores for 2021-2022 reflected that 10.53% of students left the program (The Governor's Office of Student Achievement, 2021-2022 Demographic Records). According to the district plan, students in Grades 1-3 who score 4.3 or higher on the ACCESS test will exit the program. Students who score 5.0 or higher in all areas and at least 4.5 on the literacy portion of the test will exit the program. Local K-3 teachers reported to school administrators that their EB students

received inadequate instructional time from 2021-2022 because they were not receiving face-to-face services due to the pandemic, and the lack of support caused a decline in student performance (Superintendent, personal communication, August 2022).

This basic qualitative study addressed both the local need and the regional need of teachers in the rural southeastern United States by gaining early childhood teachers' perspectives on challenges they face when teaching EB students. By conducting this qualitative study with interviews, I gained first-hand insight from early childhood teachers about the challenges they face and what they need to address the English language learning needs of their EB students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore K-3 teachers' perspectives of challenges they face to meet the English language learning needs of their EB students in rural southeastern schools in the United States, and to identify what K-3 teachers believe they need to successfully meet the English language learning needs of their EB students. Researchers have determined that additional research is needed to understand the challenges teachers face in working with EB students to meet their English language learning needs (Al-khresheh & Orak, 2021; Gebhard et al., 2019; Harding et al., 2019). Further research is necessary on how teachers improve the classroom performances of EBs (Gebhard et al., 2019). More research is also needed for different measures that will help teachers more accurately predict individual EB students' English language learning needs in academic content that includes literacy (listening, speaking, reading, writing) instruction with a focus on reading (Harding et al., 2019). I

interviewed 12 K-3 teachers to explore their perspectives on challenges teachers face to meet the English language learning needs of EB students in rural schools in the southeastern United States and what teachers need to successfully meet the English language learning needs of their EB students.

Research Questions

The two questions that guided this qualitative research:

RQ 1: What are K-3 teachers' perspectives on the challenges they face to meet the English language learning needs of EB students in the rural southeastern United States?

RQ 2: What do K-3 teachers believe they need to effectively meet the English language learning needs of EB students in rural schools?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that guided this qualitative study was based on a combination of the teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) framework and Snow et al.'s (1989) integration of language and content teaching (ILCT) framework. The TESOL framework integrates content and language in second and foreign language classrooms. The TESOL framework is identifiable in four different instructional settings: the mainstream classroom, the foreign language immersion classroom, the ESOL classroom, and the foreign language in the elementary school (FLES) class. The following five stages are essential to the TESOL framework: philosophy, principles, theory/choice, practice, and beyond practice/exploration. ILCT includes two learning objectives: (a) learning content-obligatory language and (b) learning content-compatible language. Content-obligatory language is the language that is essential for understanding

the content of subject-matter material. Content-compatible language is a language that can be taught naturally during instruction. Naturally taught language exists within the context of a particular subject matter (e.g., math, science, social studies, reading, language arts). However, teachers need to be aware that many ESOL strategies use natural language and require students to engage in additional practice (Snow et al., 1989). The logical connections between TESOL and ILCT concepts allowed me to address the perceived challenges of educators when teaching EB students in rural schools and explore their perspectives regarding what they need for K-3 EB students in rural schools. I used the TESOL and ILCT frameworks to address the problem, purpose, and research questions by following a qualitative methodology design. The conceptual framework is further explained in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

The basic qualitative research methodology with interviews was followed to answer two research questions. I chose a qualitative approach because it is an inquiry process to gain an understanding of a human social problem (Creswell, 1994). The basic qualitative method was the best way to explore a complex problem by interviewing K-3 teachers to explore their perspectives of challenges teachers face to meet the English language learning needs of their EB students in rural schools in the southeastern United States and to identify what K-3 teachers believed they needed to successfully meet the English language learning needs of their EB students (see Erickson, 2011). Each K-3 teacher was different in that each had their own classroom, in different settings, and with different groups of students. I used the basic qualitative approach because it gave me the

ability to learn K-3 teacher experiences with EB students and the meaning teachers created because of their experiences (Erickson, 2011).

Interview questions and prompts were open ended, which allowed the participants to provide their perspectives regarding the two research questions (see Creswell, 1994). The basic qualitative method with interviews is often used to gather rich data from participants (Burkholder et al., 2020). Structured interview questions were developed based on the review of the research and the conceptual framework to explore each participant's perspective related to the phenomenon (McGrath et al., 2018). Audio-recorded interviews were conducted with 12 K-3 teachers from rural schools throughout the rural southeastern United States. I included three teachers from each grade level (K, 1, 2, 3) who teach EB students, which allowed me to gain multiple perspectives from teachers at different grade levels in diverse instructional settings.

The six steps for the data analysis process included collecting, preparing, organizing, transcribing, coding, and establishing themes were followed (Creswell, 1994). I present data analysis based on teachers' dialogue and perspectives (see Creswell, 1994). From the transcribed data, which was done following each interview, I used open coding to analyze data for each participant and for all interviews. I then used a priori codes from the conceptual framework to look at the data. Next, I used axial coding which was helpful to identify patterns and create categories (Braun & Clark, 2006).

Definition of Terms

Computer based programs: Computer based programs are software programs that students use to learn while working on a computer (Telesman et al., 2019).

Cross cultural experiences: Cross-cultural experiences have the potential to provide exposure to new people, customs, and ideas. For example, when individuals have interactions with other people when they go abroad to foreign countries and experience foreign cultures, they can experience a transformation due to the new perspectives and have opportunities to change as a result of foreign exposure (Pidduck & Zhang, 2021).

Culturally responsive pedagogy: Culturally responsive pedagogy is a term used to describe a student-centered approach. It identifies unique, individual cultural strengths that are nurtured and promote a higher level of student achievement and complete cultural well-being (O'Leary et al., 2020).

Disability critical race theory: DeMatthews et al. (2021) referred to the disability critical race theory as an interdisciplinary, diverse set of theoretical approaches. The task of the critical disability theory is to analyze disability as historical, relative, cultural, political, or social.

Emergent bilingual (EB) students: EB students are students who are continuing to develop their home language but learning a new language at the same time (Ruiz, 2020).

EL students: English-language learners, or ELs, are students who are not able to fluently communicate or effectively learn in the English language. They often come from homes and backgrounds where no English is spoken, and they usually require modified or specialized instruction in the academic subject areas (Winlund, 2020).

English as a second language (ESOL): ESOL was defined by Al-khresheh and Orak (2021) as the study of English by non-native speakers in an English speaking environment.

ESOL classroom: An ESOL classroom was defined by Al-khresheh and Orak (2021) as a classroom in which the dominant language is English and not all the students share a native language.

ESOL students: ESOL students are students whose primary language is a language other than English, and the student requires additional language support to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the English language (Winlund, 2020).

Heterogeneous: Heterogeneous grouping is known as a distribution tactic used within the classroom, whereby diverse students (e.g., students that are language learners, students who are gifted, and students who have learning disabilities) are placed in classrooms more evenly through their cohort so that they can work together to meet educational goals by applying their skills and abilities (Klang et al., 2020).

Immigrant newcomer programs: Students acquire language in a scheduled newcomer program in a classroom comprised of EL immigrants who have recently arrived in the United States. Students in this program engage in instructions based on foundational skills that guide students in learning social and instructional language within the academic languages of content. This class is taught by a certified ESOL teacher (Rodriguez, 2019).

Inclusive education: Inclusive education refers to learning side by side with students who are diverse and different from each other. This includes after-school activities and field trips as well. Students who engage in inclusive education are included regardless of culture or language (O'Leary et al., 2020).

Intercultural experiences: Exposure to intercultural experiences can cultivate entrepreneurial capabilities that may enable an increasingly accessible environment among people that can be leveraged and viewed as a valuable resource for innovative venture development and ideation (Pidduck & Zhang, 2021).

Linguistically diverse: The term linguistically diverse is used to describe a student who has a variety of traits that may include vocabulary, family, and grammar that may be different when compared to other language groups (Larson et al., 2020).

Mainstream classroom: The mainstream classroom was defined by Larson et al. (2020) as the general education classroom in which academic subjects are taught.

Prekindergarten programs: Pre-Kindergarten programs are funded by the lottery in the state that prompted this research. These programs are designed to provide young children with a school-based learning experience at the earliest age possible. Although Pre-kindergarten is not mandatory, many parents send their children to help them get an early start on learning and be more prepared for kindergarten. This is especially helpful for students whose native language is something other than English and the only language they hear at home is their native language (Weiland et al., 2020).

Pull-out program: Bauler and Kang (2020) defined a pull-out program as being a classroom model for English learner instruction in which students are placed in general education classrooms and only pulled out for short amounts of time to work toward English proficiency levels based upon the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) test scores, the ACCESS test, and WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test.

Realia: According to Lee and Latha (2021), realia is used in classroom instruction

to enhance students' real-life experience by incorporating real things, objects, facts, and materials from everyday life.

Response to intervention (RTI): Ruiz (2020) referred to RTI as a response to intervention. RTI aims to identify struggling students and give them the support they need to thrive in school at an early age.

Supplemental reading program: Dussling (2020) referred to a supplemental reading program as a research-based intensive program of instructional strategies that have been designed to support students who need help with developing critical reading skills.

Translanguaging pedagogy: Translanguaging pedagogy refers to a process in which the classroom teacher uses more than one language while teaching a lesson. This way, bilingual students can use their linguistic resources to help them interact with the world around them. This is especially helpful for students who have recently come to the United States as an immigrant (Menken & Sanchez, 2019).

Two-way dual language immersion programs: According to Uzzell and Ayscue (2021), two-way dual language immersion programs are followed to balance native English speakers and speakers of the partner language. For example, the teacher speaks English 50% of the school day and uses students' native language 50% of the school day. Regardless of background or language, two-way immersion (TWI) programs can create classrooms that are integrated into environments that have equal status and are mutually beneficial.

Assumptions

I made four assumptions regarding volunteers agreeing to participate in my basic qualitative study with interviews. First, I assumed that all education professionals would answer honestly and honestly with the knowledge they have obtained while teaching EB students as K-3 teachers. Second, I assumed that all teachers of EB students would respond with the utmost integrity. Third, I assumed that individuals who choose to work with EB students have a genuine ethic of care for the well-being of linguistically diverse students. Further, I assumed that all individuals interviewed would have knowledge of programs that serve EB students and requirements by the state DOE. I used the direct quotes from teachers and notes that I made, which helped me to stay objective and used these reflections to inform my assumptions.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this basic qualitative study with interviews was limited to exploring 12 K-3 teachers' perspectives of challenges they face to meet the English language learning needs of their EB students in rural southeastern schools in the United States and identify what K-3 teachers believe they need to successfully meet the English language learning needs of their EB students. I am not currently employed by any rural district where this study was conducted. This study was delimited to educators who do not currently teach EB students or do not have at least 3 years of teaching experience at the K-3 level or are not employed in rural schools in the southeastern United States. This study's delimitations confined the potential transferability of the results to only participants uniquely identified as K-3 teachers of EB students in a rural location in the

southeastern United States. Transferability refers to the extent of research results that could be generalized beyond the original study (Burkholder et al., 2020). To potentially allow transferability of this study's findings, I wrote rich descriptions related to findings and settings.

Limitations

The limitations of the study were the characteristics of methodology or design that influenced or affected the interpretation of the findings (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The limitations that I addressed are that all rural areas have unique characteristics such as demographics, materials, and professional development opportunities. The findings in this study may not apply to teachers in all rural schools throughout the United States because children may not lack English language development skills in other regions of the United States. In addition, there may be other rural schools with non-English speaking school populations. Further, I had a challenge in recruiting teachers from various instructional settings; however, I recruited teachers using school email addresses that are publicly available on school websites.

Since the time when I became an ESOL coordinator, my views went beyond those of a regular education teacher or a regular ESOL teacher. I reduced my biases by using a reflective journal. After receiving approval to conduct my study from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), I kept a reflective journal that I referred to throughout the period of conducting my research to support my bias in check and ensure that my biases were not used in my study (Slotnick & Janesick, 2011).

Significance

My study is significant because the problem exists at the local level and is also relevant throughout rural schools in the southeastern United States (Okhremtchouk & Sellu, 2019). Teachers of EB students work in a variety of classrooms or program settings, such as in regular education or mainstream classrooms, ESOL classrooms, and language immersion classrooms (Winlund, 2020). Researchers have recommended that further research is needed to learn effective practices/strategies used by teachers to meet the English language learning needs of EB students (Gebhard et al., 2019; Ruiz, 2020; Winlund, 2020). To address challenges that teachers face in their experiences working with EB students, further research is needed to identify the role of interpersonal relations with EB students and how that dimension contributes to student learning (Winlund, 2020). Teachers who used collaboration, flexibility, creativity, positivity, willing to accept new changes, and provided EB students with inclusive practices are able to support EBs in gaining positive identities and building confidence (Bauler & Kang, 2020). Future research examining how educators in rural areas can compensate for the lack of resources and support emergent students' language, academic, and social development skills (Ruiz, 2020). As teachers gain experience working with EBs, their knowledge of the students' languages and effective strategies to use when working with them improve (Li & Peters, 2020). The most significant challenge faced by primary-level teachers occurs when students are removed from traditional mainstream classrooms or natural classroom environments to be placed in ESOL classrooms (Larson et al., 2020). When teachers work to establish an interpersonal relationship between teachers and

students their students are more successful (Winlund, 2020). The findings of this study may benefit teachers of EB students by helping them gain a deeper understanding of other K-3 ESOL teachers' experiences working with EB students in rural schools and learning their perspectives on what they need when teaching EL students in rural schools, thus bringing about social change.

Summary

The focus of this basic qualitative study was to explore K-3 teachers' perspectives of challenges teachers face to meet the English language learning needs of their EB students in rural schools in the southeastern United States and to identify what K-3 teachers believe they need to successfully meet the English language learning needs of their EB students. In Chapter 1, I provided an overview of the study, including key terms and their definitions, the nature of the study, the problem and purpose, and the research questions. In Chapter 1, I also discussed the scope and limitations, the significance of the study, and the related assumptions. In Chapter 2, I present the literature search strategy, conceptual framework, and literature review related to key concepts and variables, and ended with a summary and conclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore K-3 teachers'
perspectives of challenges teachers face to meet the English language learning needs of
their EB students in rural schools in the southeastern United States and to identify what
K-3 teachers believe they need to successfully meet the English language learning needs
of their EB students. This study addressed a gap in practice and a national problem for
teachers in rural schools as well as for teachers in local schools, as was consistent with
the national evidence in the literature on practice (Menken & Sanchez, 2019). Current
researchers have shown that many teachers do not meet the language learning needs of K-
3 EB students in rural schools, and this problem must be addressed with further research
(Menken & Sanchez, 2019). In addition, a generalization of the phenomena to the state or
national level needs to take place to show that English learners lag behind their same-age
peers in academic achievement and academic attainment of goals, which is partially due
to a limited amount of exposure to areas of educational content (Johnson, 2019). In
Chapter 2, I present the literature search strategy, conceptual framework, literature review
related to key concepts and variables, and a summary. The following key concepts are
discussed: types of programs for EBs, teachers of ELs, school principals, interventions
for EL students, TESOL strategies, communicative skills, pedagogy, and community
programs.

Literature Search Strategy

I began my search by utilizing the following databases: EBSCOhost, ERIC, Sage,
Walden Library, Education Source, Academic Search Complete, APA PsycInfo, and

Google Scholar. To effectively search these databases for the appropriate literature, I used the following key terms: *Pull-Out ESOL Programs, Two-way Dual Language Immersion Programs, Immigrant Newcomer Programs, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Programs, Pre-kindergarten Programs, Teachers of Speakers of Other Languages Preparation Programs, Issues faced by teachers of ELs, Academic achievement, Interventions for EL students, RTI, Text Messaging, Computer-Assisted Model-based Problem solving, TESOL Strategies, Cross-Cultural strategies, study skills,* and *communicative skills.* I reviewed and have included studies from peer-reviewed journals in the years from 2019 to 2022.

<div align="center">**Conceptual Framework**</div>

The conceptual framework that guided this study was a combination of the TESOL framework (1989) and the ILCT. In this section, I present both frameworks.

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Framework

The TESOL framework integrates content and language in second and foreign language classrooms. The TESOL framework is identifiable in four different instructional settings, as follows: the mainstream classroom, the foreign language immersion classroom, the ESOL classroom, and the foreign language in the elementary school (FLES) class. The TESOL framework for reflective practice has five levels or stages of reflection (Farrell, 2015). The first stage is philosophy. This explores teachers outside and inside the classroom and refers to their innate philosophy that began its development at the time of that teacher's birth. The second stage is principles, which include reflections on the beliefs, conceptions, and assumptions of learning and teaching. Theory

is the third stage, and it examines the teacher choices that are made regarding the skills they teach or believe they should teach. During the fourth stage, known as the practice stage, teachers reflect during and after their lessons. The last stage is known as beyond practice and explores the social, moral, and political issues that influence teacher practices that take place inside and outside the classroom.

Integration of Language and Content Teaching

The ILCT includes two learning objectives: (a) learning content-obligatory language and (c) learning of content-compatible language (Snow et al., 1989). Content-obligatory language is the language that is essential for comprehending, understanding, and retaining pertinent content within the given content area. Content-compatible language is a language that may be taught in any lesson naturally, this does not necessarily mean that the language in the lessons is required to show content mastery. Naturally taught language exists within the context of a particular subject matter (reading, language arts, social studies, math, science, etc.). However, teachers should be aware that there are a variety of strategies to show the use of natural language that requires students to be engaged in additional practice.

Theories Applied in Previous Research

The TESOL framework was applied by Farrell (2015) to show developments in the field of TESOL. Farrell found that teachers used reflective practice when working with speakers of other languages. Reflective practice was embraced as an important paradigm for education that should be supported in teacher development and education programs (Farrell, 2015). Snow's ILCT model was applied by Mohan (1990) to study

students' knowledge structures relating to subject-area knowledge and thinking skills. Mohan investigated how students used their knowledge of a second language in completing tasks related to reading and writing ability, finding that students use metacognitive strategies to gain an understanding of a second language.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts

In this section, I review literature related to K-3 teachers' perspectives on why K-3 EB students in rural schools located in the southeastern United States are not progressing relative to their peers. I synthesized information from peer-reviewed academic journals within the past 5 years on how teachers addressed the English language learning needs of K-3 EB students. This review begins with communicative language teaching (CLT) as presented in the conceptual framework and is followed by information on the types of programs for EBs. I include a list of six programs that focus on EBs and their learning. Although the primary focus is on how to address the English language learning needs of K-3 EB students, this review also includes issues faced by teachers, interventions for students, effects of COVID-19, teaching strategies, study skills, communicative skills, pedagogy, and community programs.

Benefits of Bilingualism

Researchers have reported there is an upward trend in the 21st century regarding the many benefits of world language learning, bilingualism, and foreign language learning (Bialystok et al., 2022; Fox et al., 2019). Bilingualism is important and is often developed across the whole lifespan (Bialystok et al., 2022). The multiple benefits regarding cognition as it relates to multilingualism start at a young age but mainly portray

themselves in an even more significant manner later in the lives of adults (Fox et al., 2019). Some of the benefits of advanced age are the delay in the onset of the development of dementia, a higher reserve of cognition in the advancement of age, and greater cognitive flexibility. Other benefits of foreign language skills and bilingualism include more employment opportunities, greater achievement in academics such as college courses, along with communicative skills and competence and cross-cultural awareness.

Role of Educators

This section reports current literature findings regarding educators' role in meeting EB students' needs. It includes several strategies and skills teachers use to enhance the learning of EB students. Though research has shown that there was no right model for co-teaching, what seemed to work best was organic structure types that were based on the abilities of co-teachers to implement and share ideas as a team (Bauler & Kang, 2020). Researchers have underestimated school districts' reliance on paraprofessionals, especially those that are bilingual/bicultural for the purposes of learning/instructional support and their potential to building bridges between school and home (Diaz et al., 2022).

Communicative Language Teaching

In this section, I discuss CLT and teacher talk as it relates to primary school teachers' challenges. Activities that require and encourage learners to listen to and speak with other learners are known as communicative activities. Classrooms that use the CLT approach allow the learning to be student led and use allow the students to communicate

while giving indirect feedback or redirecting during the conversation. The classroom that uses the CLT approach engages students in an integration of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The purpose of communicative activities is to speak about themselves, diminish barriers, learn about culture, and find information. Communicative skills should be integrated into all lessons even if they are focused on writing and reading skills. Second language learners should be placed into a dynamic learning environment that engages them in tasks involving communicative skills and provides an enjoyable, safe, and active place for EB students to learn what they want and need to learn. Some examples of communicative skills are conversation grid and line dialogue activity, class dialogue and language experience activities, and an information gap strategy. All of these examples are activities that include strategies that assist with listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The quality of teacher talk affects the ESOL classroom (Ahmad et al., 2020; Ramasivama & Nair, 2019). But teachers often lack the training and knowledge necessary to implement the CLT method (Ramasivama & Nair, 2019). Without training teachers do not enjoy implementing the CLT method because they believe they should use more traditional methods oriented toward the test or the transitional form. Teachers who do not follow CLT pedagogy view language fluency as less importance than language accuracy. Further, observations from an ESOL classroom showed that teacher talk dominates the classroom (Ahmad et al., 2020). But EB students learn best through active engagement in learning and interventions administered by the teacher daily (Casey et al., 2021). The use of floor robots, text messaging, communicative skills, RTI, and

study skills are the major themes that help enhance the learning of EB students (Casey et al., 2021).

To better prepare teachers for teaching EBs, there must be access to resources that will help teachers lead to the best of their ability (Casey et al., 2021). More research is needed to show which strategies and resources are best (Atteberry et al., 2019). For example, teachers have indicated that an contemporary multidisciplinary pedagogical approach seems to help students perform better on listening, speaking, reading, and writing tests (Khan & Mansoor, 2020).

Pull-Out Programs

Students participating in pull-out programs are pulled from their regular classroom into a room with an ESOL-certified teacher to work on language standards. The most significant challenge faced by primary level teachers occurs when students are removed from traditional classrooms or their natural environment and pulled into the ESOL classroom (Bauler & Kang, 2020; Larson et al., 2020). Teachers who pull out students do not have the time to help the students in a pull-out session adequately (Bauler & Kang, 2020). Further, if bilingual students are pulled out from such subject areas, they are not receiving differentiated instruction to challenge them (Larson et al., 2020). Instead, they should receive early language experiences that are robust from professional educators in their natural environment. However, the shift from pulling students out to an inclusion model has been problematic for teachers across the globe as well (Bauler & Kang, 2020). Teachers must be ready to incorporate the English language while allowing the students to explore in their native language. Having another EL teacher push in and

co-teach with the homeroom teacher throughout the day is better but using a combination of both co-teaching and pull-out model is best (Bauler & Kang, 2020; Larson et al., 2020). The teacher will be able to see the need to help the students use their native language while learning the English language to make the most growth in each content area.

Two-Way Dual Language Immersion Programs

Some schools do not allow students of other nationalities to be in the same classrooms as the EBs. This sets EB students back because they have no peers to model the English language for them in conversations. Schools enforce the need to learn English instead of offering a curriculum in students' native languages (Uzzell & Ayscue, 2021). But the two-way dual language immersion programs target students whose native language is a language other than English. The TWI program introduces an environment where students can learn the English language while being able to use their native language also. The teacher teaches their class 50% in English and 50% in the student's native language. Researchers found that students from different backgrounds may have equal status in mutually beneficial environments, become bilingual and bicultural, and experience lifelong benefits (Uzzell & Ayscue, 2021). The diversity of these classrooms is needed for EBs to learn the language and other unique ways to understand the content in each subject area. While doing so, TWI classrooms allow EBs to feel part of a more extensive community, and the sense of segregation is alleviated.

TWI classrooms show higher growth in EL students than students in a strictly bilingual classroom where the students are made to learn the English language without

incorporating their native language (Chaparro, 2019). Students in the TWI classrooms have performed equally to their counterparts, and both native English learners and EB students benefited from using two languages in the school (Chaparro, 2019). Students in a TWI classroom also maintain their heritage throughout their school career (Chaparro, 2019). This is more beneficial to the students when going out in public to obtain employment in the workforce. The emphasis is not so much on the English language that students are forced to suppress their native language but can embrace it and further their knowledge by using both languages to fill in the gaps. TWI classrooms also accelerate the growth of EL students in the English language and their native language (Chaparro, 2019).

Immigrant Newcomer Programs

Immigrant newcomer programs help newly arrived students who have a native language other than English to begin developing English language skills (Menken & Sanchez, 2019). In these programs, teachers deliver appropriate content area instruction to the students and assist them in becoming accustomed to the U.S. school systems. The immigrant newcomers program is designed to strengthen, or build on, the students' skills already acquired in their native language. When teachers use diverse resources and realia, they contribute to students' literacy practices and are a solid foundation in education. Further research is needed to focus on dimensions along with students' engagement with diverse linguistic resources and realia while focusing on the relationship between the student and the teacher (Winlund, 2020).

STEM Programs

STEM programs motivate all learners (O'Leary et al., 2020; Tang et al., 2021). STEM classes provide diverse learners with tools that increase inclusivity for all learners (O'Leary et al., 2020; Tang et al., 2021). Although these challenging classrooms may include disadvantaged groups of students, classroom participants can increase knowledge regarding social identities and break through the language learning barriers in STEM classrooms, which were most noticeable in underrepresented students were enrolled in STEM classrooms (O'Leary et al., 2020). A second notable change is a change in the teacher's attitudes regarding students' science abilities. A shift in mindsets deviates from a fixed perspective that intelligence levels are unalterable and innate. A third change is that teaching approaches can be modified significantly to increase the inclusiveness of culture in each classroom. Though students are motivated to learn through approaches centered around children and based on current problems, the schooling context has measurable deterrents linked directly to an assessment driven system (Tang et al., 2021).

Prekindergarten Programs

Atteberry et al. (2019) conducted a study that was a randomized control study that compared half-day and full-day prekindergarten (Pre-K) attendance. In this study, children who were four years old were assigned randomly to full day and half day school days in Pre-K classrooms. The full days consisted of 5 days per week, and the half days consisted of 4 days per week. The students assigned full day Pre-K had an extra six hundred hours of class time. The students who attended full day Pre-K showed more significant positive effects on students' receptive vocabulary test scores. By the end of

Pre-K, students who received the extra six hundred hours of class time scored 0.275 standard deviations above those who only received the half-day Pre-K learning model. Atteberry et al. (2019) found that policy initiatives that provide greater access to full-day prekindergarten programs may be more beneficial. According to Atteberry et al. (2019), additional research is needed to examine who may benefit exponentially from intense intervention from the ECE programs, through which mechanisms, and which outcomes. The present study provides the most intriguing data that a full day and week of preschool enhance young students' development, as seen by this sample of Latinx children who are primarily low-income (Atteberry et al., 2019).

Differentiation

An important aspect of teaching EBs is to be sure to include instruction that is differentiated. Differentiation is known as a strategy for instruction that focuses on the different needs of students in classrooms (Moosa & Shareefa, 2019). Delivering instruction that is differentiated is a classroom practice that is a research-based model, and it emphasizes that student differences are present. It is used for supporting teachers so that they can enhance learning for every student. Differentiated instruction assists the classroom teacher with adapting the content of the curriculum, product, or process in order to meet the needs of the students more efficiently (Loeser, 2021). In addition, differentiated instruction honors students' rights to being instructed in multiple ways and with instruction that is tiered and tailored to their individual needs (Fisher & Crawford, 2020; Puzio et al., 2020).

Drama

Joseph (2019) and Bellezz (2020) examined drama and its use as a strategy to educate the second language learners regarding their development, identity, and cultural exploration. According to Bellezz (2020), the use of Total Physical Response (TPR) or the performative-humanistic approach (Asher, 1977) as a strategy to educate EB students along with viewing students' second language as similar to their first language brought success to teachers. TPR is the process of acting out phrases and words using the whole body to process the meaning of new words. Bellezza (2020) suggested the use of drama as an approach for enhancing vocabulary usage for fourth-grade students in a language arts setting. Bellezza (2020) suggested two essential issues that should be addressed in any future research exploring drama in the second language learning classroom. From these findings, (Joseph, 2019) and Bellezza (2020), arts education and drama significantly enhance the education process and academic achievement in the classroom in the reading and English language arts content areas for Latinx students.

Assessments

Hujala et al. (2017) reported the views of elementary school teachers regarding the ELs' assessment for program placement and the progress made on 19 assessments. The study's interviews examined the connection between the assessment, the language, the curriculum decisions, and the effectiveness of each. Observations were conducted in multiple classrooms to gain insight into teachers' strategies to promote a better learning environment for EB students. The data provides an overview of the assessment system used for EB students in the state of Florida. Practical teaching strategies and the

assessment's value were discussed in the findings of Hujala et al. (2017). Future research would be beneficial to assess more of a widespread population and geographic location in order to gain more knowledge of the views of teachers regarding strategies used for teaching EB students and the measures used for assessment.

Issues Faced by Teachers of EB Learners

Ee and Gándara (2020) explored the effects that the recent influx of immigration laws including the exportations and detentions of immigrants. These issues are affecting all students and educators. The schools that are being affected the most are the low-income schools in rural areas with a high percentage of Caucasian students. The educators at these schools reported a higher level of exposure to an anti-immigrant and hostile environment. Ee and Gándara (2020) explored the current policy and found that immigration policy enforcement disrupts an education that is equal for every student and creates a critical threat to their

Teachers of multilingual students reported that they feel overworked as they strive to assist their students; they said that the students' families were also being targeted by immigration officials (Ee & Gándara, 2020). Ee and Gándara (2020) found that teachers often tried to protect their students from being detained or comfort students whose parents had been detained. They often feel exhausted after supporting students who may be victims of a raid and referring them to school counselors or social workers. Ee and Gándara (2020) studied teachers who served multilingual students, many of whom were from immigrant populations. They reported that some teachers feel a sense of deterioration in trust among one another because of fear (Ee & Gándara, 2020). Although

most educators in this study expressed a continued commitment to working with their students in the current sociopolitical climate, the experience of secondary trauma and being overworked without support adds risk for burnout (Ee & Gándara, 2020). Once burnout occurs, it is hard to regain teacher interest.

Academic Content

Johnson (2019) studied the reasons that English learning EBs lag behind their peers in academic achievement and attainment, partly due to limited exposure to educational content. Prior studies found significant course access gaps between EBs and non-EBs at the secondary level. Still, they provided little information on the relation between course-taking and time spent as an ELL in earlier grades. Johnson (2019) recommended that in addition to appropriate language support, schools and districts also need to provide EBs with exposure to rich academic content in Grades K to eight. The sample in this study is unique in the demographic composition of its ELL students. The findings for the entire example are unlikely to be generalizable to the national or state population. However, supplemented with additional analyses for Chinese and Spanish users, this study provided valuable information about ELL academic access and highlighted the informative power of comprehensive, longitudinal ELL data (Johnson, 2019).

Johnson (2022) reported growth and academic achievement in three groups of kindergarten through fourth grade EB students. One group of EBs was consistently eligible for services. The second group consisted of EBs that were considered ever-EBs. The third group consisted of dually identified students (SPED and ESOL). All groups had

lower test scores than non-ESOL students in grades K-4. In the subject area of math, EBs showed more growth than non-ESOL students during the academic school year because it does not require as much language use as other academic subjects. However, they lost more over the summer due to being in homes where only Spanish was spoken. In reading, EBs grew less than non-EBs in kindergarten and first grade but grew more in upper grades. However, they still lost more in the summer months, so according to these findings (Johnson, 2022), ELs need summer school to help develop and maintain skills and academic growth.

Translanguaging

The population of EB students in the United States is proliferating, requiring that teachers be prepared to provide adequate education using comprehensible strategies in several languages (Pontier & Tian, 2022). Inadequate preparation of teachers to work with their EB students indicates the need to revise how teacher education programs address this issue (Pontier & Tian, 2022). Drawing on translanguaging theory, Pontier and Tian (2022) used written responses to two key questions at two-time points to investigate preservice teachers' beliefs about and knowledge of bilingualism and bilingual education. Even after experiencing a semester in a teacher education course focused on dynamic bilingualism, Pointier found that future teachers still retained monolingual beliefs about bilingualism and bilingual education and only moderate expansion into a vibrant, strengths-based perspective (Pontier & Tian, 2022). Translanguaging is the act bilinguals perform when they access different features of linguistics or modes of languages that are autonomous to maximize the communicative

aspect. In other words, translanguaging is all about communication, not language alone. The primary purpose of translanguaging is to teach students so that they can make connections in their learning and communicate ideas effectively (Pontier & Tian, 2022).

Interventions for EB Students

In this section, I present a range of interventions designed to teach English language skills to students who are learning English as a second language. These interventions are designed specifically for ELs to enhance language skills and help the students become more successful with language and academics. In the next section, you will find the following interventions: RTI, supplemental reading programs, additional math computer-based programs, and inclusive education. Interventions are some ways that students can be assisted in the ESOL program. Multiple components of reading instructions can also increase students' fluency, comprehension, and accuracy (Hall et al., 2019).

Response To Intervention

Ruiz (2020) conducted a study regarding RTI to guide RTI teams in rural school districts through which factors to consider that may potentially negatively influence EBs' academic performance. EBs struggling with academics require a specific approach to ensure they receive benefits from core instruction and the needed support from tiered interventions. RTI has many purposes, but it is designed to equip educators with tools to rule out language (linguistic and cultural differences) as the root cause of EL students' behavioral and academic struggles while supporting the emergent needs of EBs. However, in rural schools, insufficient training in effectively instructed EBs and limited

experience teaching EBs due to local demographics may lead RTI teams to prescribe inappropriate interventions or avoid entering EBs into the RTI process altogether (Ruiz, 2020). Future research should examine alternative ways in which monolingual, monocultural educators in rural areas can compensate for the lack of such resources and still support the language, academic, and social development of EBs, or EBs, in their classrooms (Ruiz, 2020).

Study Skills

Wilmore (2020) investigated study skills used successfully and taught by current teachers who worked with EB children across various ages and subgroups to determine if students' learning across subgroups increased. This project sought to study successful skills identified by actual field teachers. Wilmore (2020) found that an achievement gap exists between various subpopulations. While there are different reasons this may occur, divergent levels of intelligence are not necessarily a primary cause, which Grade Power Learning earlier recognized in 2018 (Wilmore, 2020). Wilmore found that some students come to school knowing how to study better than others and that lack of study skills is particularly true for children of color, impoverished backgrounds, or with various handicaps. Based on Wilmore's finding that bilingual education teachers traditionally have not formalized a program to teach study skills at the early elementary level, this researcher called for more studies to identify study skill methods and delivery for greater student learning success.

Exposure to content from grade-level courses provides access to the crucial language requirement necessary for EBs to become completely proficient in English

(Johnson & Goldenberg, 2020). Students can better develop the required course content from their respective grade levels when exposed to coursework. When their language catches up, and they move through the grades, they are more likely to master the mandatory coursework for the grade level. Completing coursework from the students' respective grade levels helps to ensure that the students view the material as necessary, worth their time, and fun. Johnson and Goldenberg (2020) focused on elementary school levels; many unique materials were utilized to support learning. Newspaper articles, historical accounts, fictional accounts, and even diaries were used as examples during an ELA intervention to help students understand immigration during different periods. Teachers read books to younger children, and the students watched videos about habitats. These interventions helped to lead students to be reclassified learners after showing English proficiency on the ELP test (Johnson & Goldenberg, 2020).

Supplemental Reading Program

An investigation by Dussling (2020) discovered the effectiveness and usefulness of a supplemental reading program focusing on phonics and phonemic awareness in a small group setting for EB students. Within the small group setting, some at-risk learners were EBs, and others were native speakers of English. Dussling (2020) found that the individuals within the small group benefited from the intervention that was code oriented. EBs and native speakers of the English language learned successfully with the reinforcement of evidence-based instruction and being in an inclusion setting while receiving education in reading when the language status was disaggregated (Dussling, 2020). Including an extended maintenance phase for all supplemental readers, groups

would be an area for future research (Dussling, 2020).

Multiple-Component Reading Instruction

Hall et al. (2019) explored multiple reports of the effects of reading interventions, language interventions, academic language, and reading outcomes for ELs who are exposed the most to learning difficulties. The relationship between phonemic awareness and phonics instruction showed that ELs improved the most when intertwined with reading instruction (Hall et al., 2019). There is still a need for more in-depth research in instructional interventions over a wide population of ELs to enhance areas that are needing additional support for reading comprehension to show growth (Hall et al., 2019).

Cho et al. (2019) found that dynamic assessments added value for identifying Spanish-speaking English learners (EBs) as opposed to traditional assessments and their risk for developing learning disabilities in the area of mathematics. The reason for the risk of EBs developing a learning disability in mathematics is due to the fact that the language of the test (English rather than Spanish) will affect the students' scores and outcomes. Students whose primary language was Spanish scored higher than students whose primary language was English, but not on word problem solving. Regardless of EBs' language dominance was predictive for both outcomes (Cho et al., 2019).

Murphy examined current research on globalization, inclusive education, globalization, linguistic and cultural diversity, social justice, and barriers to learning. Findings from his study (Murphy, 2021) suggested that language acquisition for both first and second languages were influenced by factors that stem from globalization, social justice, learning barriers, and inclusive education.

Mathematical Problem Solving

Kong and Swanson (2019) and O'Leary et al. (2020) explored English learners'

(EBs) experiences with difficulty with mathematical problem solving. Researchers

recognized that because word problems require complex processes beyond basic math

skills, such as linguistic information, identifying relevant information, and constructing

the appropriate problem statement, EBs experience challenges in math. Kong and

Swanson (2019) found that EBs at risk of math disabilities will improve in problem-

solving accuracy when provided interventions that promote EBs' understanding of the

language used in the math problem. Researchers recommended further research to

identify instructional components that sustain performance after removing the intensive

intervention (Kong & Swanson, 2019). However, O'Leary et al. (2020) found that EBs

increased their knowledge of mathematics more efficiently in a STEM classroom. In

contrast, Tang et al. (2021) identified a bridge between language proficiency, classroom

climate, pedagogical approach, interactions with STEM learning outcomes, cultural

diversity, and learning interest.

Computer-Assisted Model-based Problem Solving and Reading

Xin et al. (2020) evaluated the effect of a computer-assisted "Conceptual Model-

based Problem Solving" (COMPS) tutor on the additive word problem solving

performance of EBs with learning difficulties in mathematics. Findings indicate that all

four participants improved their performance on the researcher-developed criterion test

and a generalization test following the intervention (Xin et al., 2020). Swanson et al.

(2020) led an investigation involving at-risk latent classes and their prevalence of

disabilities in math or reading among children whose primary language is Spanish and who are elementary aged. Swanson et al. (2020) indicated latent classes displayed varying levels of achievement in language testing. In addition, Swanson et al. (2020) also showed that approximately 10% of the sample showed a risk of a learning disability. Finally, their findings indicated the best model of predicting latent class odds that indicated differences between average achievers, including tests given in English that assessed naming speed, working memory from its executive standpoint, and short-term memory.

Recommendations were given for further research because there was little discussion regarding the risk classification in a heterogeneous sample and did not specify whether a specific intervention program would influence the classification of at-risk children later. Telesman et al. (2019) explored a computer software program known as RACES and its effects. The program was entitled Reading RACES (Relevant and Culturally Engaging Stories). This program was used with first grader EL students who were at risk for special education and showed a reading deficiency. The program focused on their comprehension and oral reading fluency. Findings showed that after the intervention was put in place, the first-grade students increased in comprehension and oral reading fluency of passages related to their culture compared to AIMSweb which contains passages that were not relevant to their culture. The results of this study showed effectiveness for the usefulness of this program in urban classrooms and can be transferred to rural classrooms (Telesman et al., 2019). Furthermore, this study's data is supportive of previous research (Author, 2017 b), however, more research is needed to

determine the degree of its relevance. A larger sample size is needed and more background diversity. Also, even though every participant improved significantly in fluency in the study, the maintenance of the language gains declined in comprehension (Telesman et al., 2019).

Effects of COVID-19

Hartshorn and McMurry (2020) found that EB students in rural districts experienced a loss in their English language development during the pandemic, with less language development for speaking than for writing. Since the pandemic's beginning, enrollment of EB students in the southeastern United States dropped 3 percent in 2020 compared to enrollment before the pandemic (Tuckman et al., 2021). This means that students were entered into a home school environment or some other type of online school or virtual school environment rather than in the presence of certified teachers. Tuckman et al. (2021) found that elementary schools, generally serving students from K-5, have experienced the most significant enrollment declines. According to Hartshorn and McMurry (2020), EB students and their teachers have experienced high-stress levels due to a lack of face-to-face instruction, schools being closed, and students being quarantined in their homes for extended periods. EBs make up 10% of the K-12 students in the United States, and that number continues to rise yearly (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). Researchers are concerned that young EBs may have fallen behind their peers during the pandemic (Hartshorn & McMurry, 2020; Johnson et al., 2022; Carrillo & Flores, 2020). Hartshorn and McMurry (2020) explored the effects of the pandemic on the increased stress levels of students and teachers across an array of contexts. Researchers found that although the

priority was on teaching and learning during the pandemic, teaching and learning as a priority decreased for both practitioners and their students over the pandemic due to various new stressors (Hartshorn & McMurry, 2020). Hartshorn and McMurry found that the transition to online instruction was more challenging for the students than for the teachers. Findings from this study revealed that during the pandemic, students experienced less language development for speaking than for writing (Hartshorn & McMurry, 2020). Hartshorn and McMurry recommended further research by TESOL practitioners and program administrators who look at students' language development during the pandemic and ways to help optimize teaching and learning in similar contexts in the future. The study by Johnson et al. (2022) identified predictors of how much time teachers devoted to the learning activities prior to the COVID pandemic that caused disruption in the educational field. The predictors showed specific time frames in order to shed light on possible solutions for supporting educators during this widespread disruption of student learning. Teachers who showed a higher commitment to learning prior to the pandemic also spent more time being devoted to remote learning. Teachers who were observed that showed characteristics of a successful teacher having an organized and instructional based classroom also showed these qualities more during remote learning during the pandemics. Teachers who taught students that were older and had more needs were associated with less time spent teaching remotely.

A few studies looked at the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on EBs (Johnson et al., 2022; Carrillo & Flores, 2020). Johnson et al. (2022) contributed to an emerging literature that spotlights potential promising avenues for supporting teachers via

professional development during regular times and in future widespread educational disruptions. Researchers recommended future studies on teaching and activities consequential for child learning and stressors that possibly interfere with time devoted to remote education (Johnson et al., 2022).

Carrillo and Flores (2020) focused on the experiences of EBs and why ELLs in the United States might have had a more difficult time transitioning and participating in remote learning compared to their English-proficient peers. Based on interviews conducted (with elementary English learners, their parents, and their teachers), online blogs (local community organizations and teachers), and other's research on this topic, it was concluded that EBs had a difficult time during remote learning (Johnson et al., 2022; Carrillo & Flores, 2020). The reasons were a lack of devices and an internet connection, family, and home situations not conducive to learning, and culture and language barriers between the families and schools (Johnson et al., 2022; Carrillo & Flores, 2020). Carrill and Flores (2020) identified some positives from remote learning for EBs and their families. These included findings of a better understanding of the academic curriculum from parents' perspectives and increased technological skills and resources for EB students and families.

Enrollment Decline in Elementary Public Schools

In the northwest region of the United States, Tuckman et al. (2021) examined shifts in public school enrollment in a state in the northwest part of the United States that enrolled a high percentage of EL students since the pandemic began in early 2020. In October 2020, data were used from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

in the northwest region of the United States. Tuckman et al. (2021) used a headcount that was statewide. His finding (Tuckman et al., 2021) revealed that in 2020, enrollment dropped by 3 percent statewide compared to enrollment before the pandemic. Elementary grades experienced the most significant enrollment decline (Tuckman et al., 2021).

In the same region of the United States, Hartshorn and McMurry (2020) also examined shifts in the public school setting concerning EBs. Hartshorn and McMurry (2020) found that the US has the largest population of EBs as a nation in the world. The number of ELLs in the US, mixed with fear and anxiety, leaves EB students confused due to the language barrier. Hartshorn and McMurry (2020) describe this time in America as confusing and stressful. This also led teachers to slack off teaching students since they had many added roles and responsibilities during the pandemic. This became a problem, especially for our EL students, who were reliant on ELL teachers to prepare them for the real world while allowing them the opportunity to learn English as a second language in a safe, secure environment. Hartshorn and McMurry (2020) found that ELL students did not know the language proficiently during this time, and their results show that EL students were more proficient in writing than English.

Charter school enrollment jumped 35 percent in the fall of 2020, while public school districts saw losses in enrollment. Enrollment of students with disabilities in charters grew more than 14 percent. EL enrollment fell over 5 percent in districts, while charter schools saw an almost 50 percent increase (Tuckman et al., 2021).

Student Absenteeism

Chronic student absence is causing a proposed learning disability that could be

eliminated. There are many ways to head off this disability by using electronics and text messaging. Heppen et al. (2020) tested four versions of an adaptive text messaging strategy to see which would reduce chronic absence among elementary school students, including a high percentage of students in various programs for EB students. The study compared two approaches to basic messaging and two to intensified messaging to learn how a texting strategy might work best. Heppen et al. suggested that text messaging offers a low-cost approach that can improve attendance for all students, including students in bilingual education where absenteeism is greatest. Smythe-Leistico and Page (2018) found that poor attendance makes for poor education in early elementary school settings. This is especially true in our ELL students, who need the stability of constant reinforcement of the English language. Smythe-Leistico & Page (2018) provided a way to allow parents to receive accurate data on when their child was absent and how many days they were absent up until that point in the school year. Their findings supported a program where accurate data were given to the parents so they can see how many days the student has missed. Smythe-Leistico and Page found that in the experimental year, all absences were significantly lower than in previous years when the school did not have a text messaging system to offer real-time data for student attendance.

Educational Leaders

DeMatthews et al. (2021) utilized tenets found in disability critical race theory (DisCrit) and inclusive school leadership literature to examine the perceptions, practices, and challenges associated with a meaningful change in inclusive schools that had a high percentage of EBs. The purpose of this study was to reveal how six successful and

inclusive school principals from elementary schools located in a low-income Mexican American rural area near the U.S. - Mexico border perceived immigrant students with disabilities in their school. DeMatthews et al. (2021) drew attention to the increasingly important role principals play in creating and maintaining inclusive schools, including the following statuses' effects on principals' efforts to promote inclusion: immigration status, disability, race, language, and family background. Each principal noted and confronted the factors mentioned above. They faced many challenges. However, they differed in approaches and beliefs about how an inclusive school should be created. Of the targeted leadership practices that were addressed, DeMatthews et al. (2021) discovered that some practices were aligned with social justice while resembling a focus on effective and efficient school leadership. A variety of constituents are factored into the findings (DeMatthews et al., 2021) that suggest that elementary school principals must consider when creating inclusive schools and drawing upon an expansive range of practices while simultaneously experiencing challenges and resistance. According to DeMatthews et al. (2021), to make meaningful change in a challenging and resisting school climate, principals must consider and then draw upon and implement many factors and practices that lead to inclusive and successful schools.

Community Programs

The findings of Rodriguez (2019) suggested that a library-based program increases a sense of belonging for EB students who are newcomers. Rodriguez's (2019) article described the community practices of the library and its advocacy for EB newcomers and shared the usefulness of its programs that include helping these students

to gain a deeper understanding of local politics, belonging, and community resources. Findings from this study showed a positive increase in a sense of belonging for these newcomers and described the lessons learned and challenges faced during the program's first year of implementation. This program shows how these asset-based program's partnership with the local school district helps to counteract the hostile climates that some newcomers are being exposed to (Rodriguez, 2019).

Teachers of Speakers of Other Languages Preparation Programs

Li and Peters (2020) and Wissink and Starks (2019) examined teacher preparation programs that prepare both preservice and inservice teachers through research and service combined with traditional professional development. Findings revealed significant improvement in both preservice and inservice teachers' second language (L2) knowledge and strategies for working with EBs (Li & Peters, 2020). Li and Peters found that the growing number of EL students far outweighs the number of qualified teachers to work with EL students proficiently. Teachers must receive adequate training to work with ELL students to meet this growing demand (Li & Peters, 2020). Li and Peters recommended training teachers in professional development, but the teachers were required to do research and service during the training. The training was not traditional. Instead, it was training that involved the teachers being taught and made to work to understand the importance of EBs and their need for high quality education. Li and Peters designed the professional development training workshops to be held at the local university, while the research and service were held at the lowest performing school in the region. The data that Li and Peters (2020) gathered after the professional development days showed a

significant increase in the growth of ELL students. This has led Li and Peters to believe that more professional development or programs must be implemented for teachers to see the need for and importance of providing EL students the services they deserve.

Wissink and Starks (2019) found that the EB population had increased by over eight percent in 10 years. This is causing alarm for some school officials due to the lack of teachers proficient in two languages. The students are disadvantaged since teachers push the English language so firmly, but it erases the students' heritage. Wissink and Starks (2019) found that few programs are being offered to teacher candidates while in college, preparing them for a classroom of EBs. These researchers (Wissink & Starks, 2019) have seen the need for specialized services to be given or made available for all upcoming teachers who will one day be teaching EBs. Wissink and Starks (2019) found that teachers need specialized knowledge to be able to promote learning growth in an effective way for all EL students. This knowledge also holds the understanding of the importance of both languages so that the students can benefit in the education field. Structured English Immersion offers the knowledge needed for upcoming ELL teachers. SEI offers up to 90 hours of instruction to upcoming EL teachers so that they can bring the necessary skills required to promote the best learning environment for EL students when they enter the classroom. Wissink and Starks (2019) found that Florida mandates all teachers who work with EB students to be ESOL certified or ESOL endorsed. Their findings also found that Georgia is a state that requires that all teachers who work with EBs be ESOL-certified or ESOL-endorsed (Wissink & Starks, 2019). This does not mean that all teachers treat all students equally, and this does not mean that all teachers bring

the necessary tools to the classroom, but it does mean that all teachers meet a minimum requirement to teach EB students. Li and Peters (2020) and Wissink and Starks (2019) have seen the need for programs to be implemented and made readily available for teachers to give them the knowledge to encourage bilingualism throughout the education field. Both studies (Li & Peters, 2020). Wissink & Starks (2019) show that there is a shortage of teachers of EB students being proficient in the content area, especially where resources are limited or are not readily available. The only way to fill the gap is to educate more teachers on the importance of all students, no matter their race or language ability (Li & Peters, 2020).

Summary and Conclusions

In Chapter 2, I provided a comprehensive review of the literature regarding types of programs for EBs, issues faced by teachers of ELs, translanguaging, being overworked, sense of deterioration, the role of school principals, academic achievement, interventions for EB students, TESOL strategies, communicative skills, pedagogy, and community programs, and the effects of COVID-19. Researchers cited suggested that when teachers and administrators choose programs that meet the English language learning needs of individual language learners that they make more progress toward academic and language goals (Atteberry et al., 2019; Bauler & Kang, 2020; Larson et al., 2020; Li & Peters, 2020; Menken & Sanchez, 2019; O'Leary et al., 2020; Tang et al., 2021; Uzzell & Ayscue, 2021; Winlund, 2020). According to researchers, the challenges that teachers face can be alleviated through the application of the latest researched strategies (Bauler & Kang, 2020; Bellezza, 2020; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000;

DeMatthews et al., 2021; Ee & Gándara, 2020; Joseph, 2019; Oudghiri, 2022; Pontier & Tian, 2022; Hujala et al., 2017; Wilmore 2020). Although the effects of COVID-19 have slowed the learning process, interventions for EB students can help to redeem the lost time. In Chapter 3, I discuss the methodology for this basic qualitative study with interviews. The basic qualitative research with interviews provided me the opportunity to learn the perspectives of K-3 teachers and address the research questions in this study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore K-3 teachers'

perspectives of challenges teachers face to meet the English language learning needs of

their EB students in rural schools in the southeastern United States and to identify what

K-3 teachers believe they need to successfully meet the English language learning needs

of their EB students. In Chapter 3, I provide information regarding the research method,

research design, rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, procedures for

recruitment, participation, and data collection. Chapter 3 also includes a data analysis

plan and trustworthiness, including credibility, transferability, dependability,

confirmability, and ethical procedures.

Research Design and Rationale

This basic qualitative study with interviews was guided by two research

questions:

- RQ 1: What are K-3 teachers' perspectives on the challenges they face to meet

  the English language learning needs of EB students in the rural southeastern

  United States?

- RQ 2: What do K-3 teachers believe they need to effectively meet the English

  language learning needs of EB students in rural schools?

I selected the basic qualitative approach because it contributed to the fundamental

knowledge of the issue explored (see Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I was interested in exploring

K-3 teachers' perspectives on the challenges they face to meet the English language

learning needs of their EB students in rural schools in the southeastern United States and

identifying what K-3 teachers believe they need to successfully meet the English language learning needs of their EB students. The specific reason why I chose this type of research is that qualitative studies are used to make meaning out of human experiences and understanding, then apply them to their environments (Merriam & Tisdell, 2017).

Interviews are the best form of obtaining precise and accurate information for research. The interviews were conducted in a safe, secure environment to ensure that genuine rapport can be exchanged during the interview process (see Creswell, 2009). The interviews were conducted with K-3 teacher candidates of the ESOL profession with a minimum of 3 years of experience. This allowed the teachers to have adequate experience. There were 12 teacher interviews in one state in the rural southeastern region of the United States. I followed a protocol for the interview that involved narrative techniques (Patten & Newart, 2017).

Other approaches were considered for this study, but a basic qualitative design with interviews was the best choice. The phenomenological design was not chosen because it focuses on descriptions and on participants' reflections (see Lodico et al., 2010). The grounded theory design was also considered but not chosen because I was not constructing new theory of bilingual education for EB students (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Role of the Researcher

The researchers' views, biases, and opinions could alter the research and findings, so the researcher must be just an observer (Creswell & Poth, 2017). As the sole researcher, I purposely recruited teachers outside the district where I was known as a

teacher and ESOL coordinator. As a researcher, I conducted the interviews, recorded, transcribed, and then analyzed the data I received from 12 K-3 ESOL-trained teachers who teach in K-3 classrooms. I have 20 years of early childhood experience as a teacher and ESOL program coordinator. This experience has helped me to learn how to work effectively with other teachers and build rapport among them. I kept a reflective journal to avoid researcher bias (Burkholder et al., 2020), so I could correct them when I became consciously aware of my bias. I also used the journal to help me to reflect on what I could do differently during the interview process. This prevented me from being unaware of or denying the biases and to realize that technology is positive. I did not want any potential biases to affect my research or the findings that appeared in my study. The remaining objective was essential during the interview process (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I did not interview any participants who are familiar with me or work at my school.

Methodology

To address the research questions in this qualitative study, I used a basic qualitative design (see Patton, 2014) with interviews. The type of data I collected is interview data through a self-designed interview protocol, which was reviewed by an expert in TESOL, ESOL, FLES, and English immersion approaches to teaching EB K-3 students in rural schools. I gathered information for my study by conducting interviews with 12 K-3 ESOL-trained teachers from different instructional settings. I included ESOL trained teachers from Grades K, 1, 2, and 3 who teach EBs. I interviewed teachers from each grade level to gain perspectives from teachers at different grade levels in other instructional settings (regular education classroom/mainstreamed classroom, ESOL

classroom, immersion classroom). This methodology was best for my study because it addressed the "why" and "how" through the research questions, which enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of K-3 ESOL in handling the English language learning needs of their students using their experiences and context to explore the phenomena (Patton, 2014). The qualitative methodology allowed me to ask questions that cannot be answered through numbers and quantitative methods but rather through exploring human experiences (Patton, 2014).

The first research question that guided this study was "What are K-3 teachers' perspectives on the challenges they face to meet the English language learning needs of EB students in the rural southeastern United States?" The second research question that guided this study was "What do K-3 teachers believe they need to effectively meet the English language learning needs of EB students in rural schools?" To answer these questions, I conducted structured interviews with a variety of K-3 ESOL-trained teachers of K-3 EB students. I led these interviews with a series of questions that I created based on the conceptual framework to elicit responses that addressed the research questions.

Participant Selection

I recruited and interviewed 12 K-3 ESOL-trained teachers of ELs who teach EB students in rural primary schools in one state in the southeastern United States. The reason for recruiting teachers for my study is for them to give information regarding EBs in the classroom setting. I gathered information regarding the challenges teachers face with students and the resources needed to meet EBs' needs better. Criteria for accepting volunteers into my study included having at least 3 years of experience working in the

education field in schools in the southeastern United States. The recruiting process took

place via email to ensure this criterion is met before the interviews. I chose a sample from

the volunteer pool and ESOL-trained teachers per grade level. I selected individual

participants based on those who met the criteria (Appendix C).

Instrumentation

For this basic qualitative research study, I created 11 interview questions that

were the primary tool for collecting data. Open-ended questions provide the necessary

framework within which the participants in a qualitative interview can express their

perceptions so that they will reveal the experiences that led to their perceptions (Morrison

et al., 2020). Appendix C contains the protocol for the interviews that I used for

collecting data, and this protocol was followed very closely. The template provided by

the IRB department at Walden University was used to develop the protocol instrument

for the interviews. Appendices A and D contain the interview questions that the specialist

has approved at the early childhood district level to ensure the validity of the content.

Specific prompts have been created to elicit clarifying responses. Appendix C shows the

alignment of the interview and research questions with my conceptual framework. The

interview protocol contains questions and prompts that facilitated me in eliciting

sufficient responses to the questions from study participants. A panel of experts in

working with, mentoring, coaching, and training ESOL teachers reviewed the interview

questions and provided their input about the validity of the questions for addressing the

research questions.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

After gaining permission and approval from the IRB department at Walden University, the process for recruitment began. I attempted to recruit 12 participants that meet my criteria above and were located in one state in the rural southeastern region of the United States. Appendix C shows the necessary measures that were necessary for the participants to be eligible for the interview. The criteria were as follows: the interview study seeks kindergarten through third-grade teachers in the southeastern United States with three or more years of teaching experience and who have been ESOL- trained and are interested in addressing EL needs.

Participation

I used purposive sampling to recruit volunteers from grades kindergarten through third grade in one state where all teachers of primary grade students receive ESOL training, because of the student demographics in rural areas of the state. It was a convenience sampling of publicly available emails on social media and school websites. An invitation for each participant was sent. A clear description of my study was listed along with my contact information. Walden University's contact information and my personal contact information was provided for additional information. Communication with volunteers took place through email promptly to maintain a working professional relationship. I sent the informed consent form that explained everything regarding privacy and detailed information about the study and interview process. Participants were offered a copy of all forms. After consent was given via email an interview date and time were established. Email reminders were sent to keep the volunteers informed. I selected

volunteers based on the order in which they responded. As teachers emailed me and gave their grade levels, I took the first three who consented from each grade level for K-3.

After the qualifying 12 ESOL-trained teachers who had received consent forms and given oral consent, I began interviews through Zoom. The interviews were scheduled based on the availability of participants. There was only one interview per person, lasting 40 to 45 minutes each. Some interviews lasted longer than others based on conversation, but none lasted an hour. I shared that information with each participant and thanked them for volunteering their time. I allowed them ample time for questions before beginning, and followed the interview protocol without wavering or veering, as found in Appendix B. After the interview questions were completed and information was shared, I asked the participants if they wanted to clarify their responses. Good researchers ensure data accuracy (Harper & Cole, 2012). So that valuable data can be collected and recorded, each Zoom session was recorded. At the end of each interview, I thanked the participants for volunteering once again and explained how I would share their results before ending the interview. During each interview, data was transcribed using a transcription tool to reflect the experiences of all participants. Member checking was done at the end.

Data Collection

The information gathered from the interviews served as data ready for analysis. The protocols and questions can be found in appendices A and B. I used Airgram, for transcription. I followed the transcription multiple times as I listened to the audio taped interviews. Any differences in the transcription and the audiotape were edited. Following the script for the interview I have created (Appendix B) assisted in excluding personal

biases so that no ethical concerns arose. I asked the questions and gave prompts according to the order I gave the participants before the interview and maintained confidentiality and, which was consistent with all discussions. After obtaining the data, I read the transcribed data to ensure that everything was accurate. Next, I organized the data by grade level participants. Then, I summarized the data and shared it with the corresponding participant for member checking via email. The participants who responded agreed that all information was correct and accurate.

Data Analysis Plan

For this basic qualitative study, I collected data from interviews with 12 K-3 grade ESOL-trained teachers with at least three years of experience. Interview responses were based on the research questions and reflected the teachers' opinions. The information showed how they believe the English language learning needs of K-3 EB students in their schools. Interviews were recorded via Zoom. Interviews were transcribed as the interviews occurred using a transcription tool, known as Airgram. Airgram automatically transcribed speech into text during the interviews for a later reviewing of details.

After collecting the data from the interviews that followed the interview protocol, I listened to the recordings several times to check accuracy of the transcription of each interview. Next, I analyzed the data. Creswell and Poth (2017) provided a process for analyzing data that includes six steps. These six steps include collecting, preparing, organizing, transcribing, coding, and establishing themes. When exploring my data, I developed a set of codes and assigned them to my data. According to Saldaña (2015), a

code attributes meaning that is interpreted to individual data for later detection of patterns, theory building, proposition development, categorization, assertion, or other analytical processes. From the transcribed data, which was done following each interview, I used open coding to analyze data for each participant and for all interviews. I then used a priori codes from the conceptual framework to look at the data. Next, I used axial coding which was helpful to identify patterns and create categories (Braun & Clark, 2006). I kept track of all codes during this process by creating a journal for codes to identify patterns and categories of codes and emerging themes. I used member checking by sending each participant a two-page summary of my analysis with an invitation for them to share their feedback within three days. Then, I organized themes, prepared, and then analyzed the data by codes, patterns, categories, and themes. This was done by connecting each piece of data with the correct interview questions.

The nature of my study calls for a strategy known as the descriptive code and uses superscripts to give a summary of the excerpt's main concept. Thematic analysis was also used to discover categories, codes, patterns, and themes that led to answers to research questions. In the first cycle, I began with a list of codes aligned with the conceptual framework. The aforementioned strategy began in the second cycle (Saldaña, 2015). Last, I created a final report from all data collected and analyzed to address the two research questions of this study.

Trustworthiness

As a researcher, the confidence I possess in the methods and sources used within my study and research is known as trustworthiness. The trustworthiness of qualitative

research, including the transparency of a study's methods, is essential to its usefulness and integrity (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Rigor, another term for trustworthiness, describes the degree of confidence in the data. This includes the interpretation of the data along with methods used in a study to ensure its quality. Trustworthiness can be created between the researcher and participant by establishing a good relationship from the onset of the project (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Since trustworthiness is a vital component of research, I have incorporated strategies to ensure that my research study has trustworthiness. These strategies include adopting well recognized and appropriate research methods such as triangulation and audit trails, line of questioning, prolonged engagement, and examination of previous research. Trustworthiness is a vital component of research, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The confidence that I possess in my methods and sources is known as trustworthiness.

Credibility

Shenton (2004) describes credibility as how closely the research is aligned. The credibility of a research study answers the question, "How correct are my findings?" I took steps to ensure participants shared their honest feedback by using thoughtful interview techniques such as preparing a list of interview questions in advance (Appendix A), carefully reviewing the candidate's credentials, keeping the interview conversational rather than confrontational, and carefully explaining the interview process and next steps. This was done by seeking peer reviewers or peer debriefers to improve data analysis. I used this to reach a consensus and agreeance on the credibility of the research. This

simply means that another expert in the field checks my work. This is necessary to achieve authenticity, reliability, and validity. I asked all of the interview questions in the same order to each participant. After each question is answered, I restated the answer for clarity before moving on to the next question. A chance was given at the end for interviewees to verify that I had accurately determined their conclusions. Each one received an email with the transcript to agree or disagree with the data. They had time to respond to confirm the validity. All comments and feedback were accepted and dealt with accordingly.

Transferability

It is important to consider the transferability that results from research (Kyngäs et al., 2020). Transferability is affected at each stage of research. This includes the research choice as related to the topic and context. Transferability of a study occurs when others believe their situations are like those described in the study and that they can relate to the findings. By providing thick descriptions of the data and context, I can help provide the necessary context (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). To ensure transferability, I provided descriptions of the data that include rich data. I also included the procedures and themes to ensure generalization and transferability for similar situations.

Dependability

Dependability allows for reliable research (Shenton, 2004). Dependability occurs when researchers use appropriate methods and argue why they are appropriate (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), the methods used to collect data can answer the research questions. To ensure the dependability of a study, researchers

must explore and acknowledge how their prejudices and biases map onto their interpretations of the data. To achieve dependability for my study, I explored and acknowledged how my potential prejudices and biases map onto my interpretations of the data to ensure reliable research. The method that I used was triangulation to categorize and check data between all ESOL-trained teachers from Kindergarten, First Grade, Second Grade, and Third Grade.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the concern of objectivity with the qualitative researcher (Shenton, 2004). The results are based on information gathered from the participants and not my interpretations alone. This component and the others listed above helped me validate my study. To achieve confirmability of my study, I ensured that my findings were supported by the data I had collected. I evaluated whether my findings were shaped only by the collected data from the interviewees or by my interests, motivations, or biases. To enhance the confirmability of my study, I supported the connection between the findings and the data (Kyngäs et al., 2020). To establish confirmability, I used a strategy known as an audit trail to establish mindfulness in my results (Saldaña, 2015). I consistently used the interview prompts that have already been established while also following the guidelines for the interview without wavering. The process was documented accordingly.

Ethical Procedures

I have attended CITI training entitled "Protecting Human Research Participants," to prepare me to conduct research by following ethical procedures. I also followed all

instructions provided by the Walden University IRB, after my dissertation and documents were approved. I minimized harm, respected participants' ideas, experiences, and thoughts, and protected the privacy of all individuals involved in offering information for my study.

Various ethical challenges exist for researchers as they move through the process of conducting a study. According to Miller et al. (2012), ethics is known as accountability and moral choices that the researcher makes throughout the research process. To ethically consider the role, I must face ethical challenges such as fair participant selection, ethics approval, the rationale for the study, confidentiality, ethical aspects of the methods, obtaining full consent, use of ethical principles, and respect for the dignity of research participants. An essential portion of ensuring honesty and integrity with participants is ensuring that an informed consent letter has been signed. According to Hammersly and Traianou (2012), the following questions must be addressed: what constitutes free consent, for what consent is being sought, how consent ought to be secured, from whom consent should be obtained, and whether it is necessary or desirable to seek consent.

Ethics is an integral part of qualitative research and must be practiced throughout the process. I followed the code of ethics that lists the standards for protecting participants. I ensured that the identification codes were aligned with the data protection guidelines. I will never identify the participant. I understand that it is my sole responsibility to protect the participants' personal information. I will continuously ensure that the information always remains confidential. I will continue to protect my participants from harm. I planned the study in a valid way because I am trained to

conduct research that is ethical. I monitored and assessed risks that may potentially harm

my participants throughout the process of the research (Kyngäs et al., 2020). This

includes the risk of mentioning subjects that may cause the interviewee to feel vulnerable.

I have had previous dealings with any of the participants and did not allow anyone I

know or have previously worked with as a co-worker to be a volunteer for the study.

Every interview that is scheduled took place outside of working hours for myself and

other ESOL-trained teachers. Informed consent was provided prior to each interview

(Appendix C). They knew and understood that their involvement in the interview process

was strictly on a voluntary basis and could be stopped at any time with no consequences.

At the beginning of every interview, I described the process very clearly. I clarified

responses throughout the session and shared the results after the interview had been

transcribed. To ensure consistency, I followed all protocols and had no responses that

may seem negative (Appendix B). Since I was the sole collector of any data from the

interviews, the data were stored on a computer that is protected by a password. Any data

that is on paper is being kept under lock and key.

Summary

Through this basic qualitative study with interviews explored K-3 teachers'

perspectives of challenges they face to meet the English language learning needs of their

EB students in rural southeastern schools in the United States and identify what K-3

teachers believe they need to successfully meet the English language learning needs of

their EB students. In Chapter 3, I shared information regarding the research method,

research design, rationale, role of the researcher, methodology, procedures for

recruitment, participation, and data collection. Chapter 3 also includes a data analysis

plan, trustworthiness, including credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability,

and ethical procedures. All sections align with the problem, purpose, and research

questions that are the foundation of the study. In Chapter 4, I discuss results, setting, data

collection, data analysis, and evidence of trustworthiness. In Chapter 5, I discuss the

interpretation of the findings, study limitations, recommendations, and implications.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to explore K-3 teachers' perspectives of challenges they face to meet the English language learning needs of their EB students in rural southeastern schools in the United States and to identify what K-3 teachers believe they need to successfully meet the English language learning needs of their EB students. There were two research questions for this study that directly addressed this purpose. Chapter 4 provides the setting for the study in detail, the process for data collection, and data analysis, evidence of trustworthiness, and the results.

Setting

Participants were recruited through publicly available emails in one state in the southeastern United States and interviews were conducted via Zoom. This study was affected by changes in personnel, budget cuts, and other COVID related disadvantages. COVID-19 protocols were still being followed in some districts, so Zoom was used. The video conferencing also made it possible to reach further locations more quickly and efficiently without having to travel or add extra expense. The characteristics that were required for this study are as follows: (a) currently teach kindergarten through third grade students, (b) ESOL trained, (c) have at least 3 years of experience as a K-3 classroom teacher, (d) are willing to be interviewed online, and (e) teach in the rural southeastern United States. The 12 interviews took place at the location of choice for the participants and were encouraged to ensure that the location was away from the presence of others so that it would be confidential.

Demographics

Each participant was assigned an alphanumeric code for confidentiality purposes. For example, K1 is the alphanumeric code that represents the kindergarten teacher who interviewed first. All participants were K-3 teachers. The participants were an experienced group of educators. Twenty-five percent of participants work with more than one grade level at a time. All participants are currently teaching in an elementary school setting with experience ranging from 3 to 26 years of teaching. They range in degree levels from bachelor to specialist degree. Collectively, they have taught grades Pre-K through 3rd grade. Demographic information can be viewed in Table 1.

Table 1

Research Participants

Participant identifier	Grades Taught	Number of years in the field	Degree Level	ESOL Certified
K1	K, 3	4	Bachelor's	Y
K2	K-2	17	Master's	Y
K3	K-1	6	Bachelor's	Y
F1	1-3	26	Master's	Y
F2	Pre-K-3	26	Master's	Y
F3	K-3	10	Master's	Y
S1	2	12	Master's	Y
S2	Pre-K, 1-3	25	Master's	Y
S3	K-3	14	Specialist	Y
T1	3	17	Specialist	Y
T2	3	3	Bachelor's	Y
T3	K-3	15	Specialist	Y

Data Collection

After obtaining IRB approval (approval no. 01-31-23-0139771), I began sending emails to teachers from various elementary schools in one state in the southeastern United States to teachers who had received ESOL training whose email addresses were

publicly available. There were 20 eligible participants who responded to my flyer. Using purposeful sampling, I chose the first 12 participants following three teachers for each of the four grade levels (K-3), who met the criteria of this study (Palinkas et al., 2016). Before scheduling interviews, consent documents were required in which participants gave consent by using the exact words "I consent." All 12 participants selected a date and time for the interview that would fit into their schedule and the interviews were recorded using Zoom video conferencing. I sent each participant an email with the Zoom link. One of the participants was a no-show and removed from the study. I chose the next qualifying participant in line as a replacement. Recordings were saved on a password-protected computer that was kept in a locked room.

Location, Frequency, and Duration

Interviews were conducted during the month of February 2023 all outside of participants' working hours. Each interview lasted a maximum of 45 minutes and was audio recorded with permission from each participant. I used two methods of recording to ensure accuracy of data collected, as follows: the Zoom recording feature on the computer and a voice recording application on my computer that provided audio to text transcription within the Zoom meeting room. After consent was obtained, the interview began and was followed verbatim using the interview protocol. Each of the 11 questions were asked in the same order during all 12 interviews.

A reflective journal was kept to reduce biases and ensure that equal opportunity was given to all participants (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). My reflective journal helped me to realize that I was showing a little bias toward technology. Notes were also taken during

the interviews for additional pertinent information along with keywords (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). There were no deviations from the data collection plan presented in Chapter 3.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using six steps in my data analysis plan (see Creswell, 1994). The following six steps were followed for data analysis:

1. Collecting: 12 interviews were conducted.

2. Preparing: The data were stored, and notes were recorded.

3. Organizing: Data were organized by grade level participants.

4. Transcribing: Data were transcribed verbatim using a transcription tool that was inside the recorded Zoom meeting and then transferred to tables.

5. Coding: When I began the coding process, I used Saldaña's (2015) guiding principles. Step 1 was identifying codes within the data. I used a code book created from tables created by Microsoft Word, and Step 2 was creating patterns and categories from the codes (Braun & Clark, 2006).

6. Establishing themes: I reviewed the categories and then synthesized them to generate themes (Saldaña, 2015). I developed a visual representation in conjunction with the tables that highlights the derived patterns and categories that led to the themes (Appendix G). The. I applied themes to the study's research questions.

Raw data were entered into a Microsoft Word document. I used alphanumeric coding to assign each of my participants a code to protect their privacy. Kindergarten teachers were assigned the alpha codes K1, K2, and K3. First grade teachers were

assigned the codes F1, F2, and F3. Second grade teachers were assigned the codes S1, S2, and S3. Third grade teachers were assigned the codes T1, T2, and T3. Each transcript was checked by listening to the audio recordings several times. I began highlighting quotes and bolding codes. In my first cycle of coding, I developed the following codes: *communicative language activities, content-obligatory language, learning content compatible language, philosophy, principles, theory/choice, practice,* and *beyond practice/exploration*. I identified the following codes in my second cycle of coding: *reading, writing, listening, speaking, paraprofessional assistance, communication, positive interaction, culture, authentic project based learning, hands on learning, peer mentoring, teaching tasks, conversations with students, reassuring students, building relationships, computer, Clear Touch TV screen, small groups, Elkonin boxes, pull out, push in, single classroom, learning programs, charts, pictures,* and *centers/small group*.

After identifying the codes, I began to compile information from the raw data into categories. I developed the following categories: teacher talk, positive reinforcement, technology, strategies, programs, visual representation, grouping, differentiation, support, challenges, culture, positive social change, teacher requisitions, and access to resources. This deeper analysis resulted in five theme statements: (a) early childhood teachers of EB students address challenges by relying on technology to address students' English language learning needs; (b) early childhood teachers of EB students address challenges by engaging in peer mentoring and co-teaching practices; (c) early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need support for incorporating developmentally appropriate practices, and linguistically and culturally relevant content into the curriculum; (d) early

childhood teachers of EB students believe they need more training using resources that are effective in inclusive and heterogeneously grouped classrooms; and (e) early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need time for collaborating with all teachers who work with EB students. After the themes were developed, I began to apply the themes to the research questions from my study.

Results

The findings from this basic qualitative study were identified and developed from the themes that emerged during the data analysis process. In this current section, I present results for my two research questions: RQ1: What are K-3 teachers' perspectives on the challenges they face to meet the English language learning needs of EB students in the rural southeastern United States? RQ 2: What do K-3 teachers believe they need to effectively meet the English language learning needs of EB students in rural schools? While analyzing the data, five themes developed that answer the two research questions:

- Early childhood teachers of EB students address challenges by relying on technology to address students' English language learning needs.

- Early childhood teachers of EB students address challenges by engaging in peer mentoring and co-teaching practices.

- Early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need support for incorporating developmentally appropriate practices and linguistically and culturally relevant content into the curriculum.

- Early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need more training using resources that are effective in inclusive and heterogeneously grouped

classrooms.

- Early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need time to collaborate with all teachers who work with EB students.

The following sections will include my discussion of each theme including summaries, analysis, and quotes from participants in response to my interview questions.

Theme 1: Relying on Technology to Address Students' English Language Learning Needs

All 12 participants expressed the challenges they faced related to resources in their schools. Teachers found some technology provided by the school were not sufficient to teach EB learners. Some teachers agreed that the current programs and resources that are being used are not geared toward the needs of their ELs. The 12 participants stated that they had to supplement the current program in different modalities and aspects to be able to effectively support their EB learners. K2 mentioned having such software programs as Heggerty, MySci Learn, and Sadlier Phonics. K1 and F1 shared that their students use Reading Eggs. F1 said that her students use Fast Phonics and Happy Numbers. F3 and S1 print decodable readers off the Teachers Pay Teachers website along with other printable resources. F3 uses the program entitled From Phonics to Reading. F1 stated,

Students are doing something computer based where they're on Google Classroom and I will have their story of the week where they can listen to it. They're also working on, or they're listening to stories or songs related to our phonics skill of the week.

These supplemental materials ranged from visual aids such as anchor charts and pictorial representations to realia so that students could see real objects to connect with vocabulary words. Because of minimal materials and a curriculum that is not appropriate, teachers felt unprepared to teach appropriately in classrooms where EB students are present. Participants shared their alternatives for providing adequate instruction and meeting the needs of their students. F2 said, "We use a lot of visual aids, and we also have anchor charts that we created for ELA, phonics, social study, science, and math that has pictures as well as vocabulary content for each subject." S3 said, "We have picture cards. We do a lot of practice, not just learning the letter, but also, we practice the picture."

Theme 1 focused on the need for technology to enhance the learning of their EB students. S1 said,

> We listen to our weekly basil story for the week and I have it playing on the Clear Touch so they can see the pictures in the book and they can follow along in their book as well. With our new phonics program, we have blended lines. If you tap it ono the clear though, it'll say the word.

Theme 2: Engaging in Peer Mentoring and Co-Teaching Practices

Peer Mentoring

All 12 participants mentioned successful strategies for accommodating challenges faced by teachers of EB students. K3 said, "I feel like the kids are able to pick up a little bit quicker from their peers than just being taught in front of a classroom." F1 stated,

> We can use peer tutors within the classroom. A peer tutor can help if they're having trouble understanding. If there's another student that speaks Spanish that's

assignments. So, I use peer tutoring for instructional purposes.

T1 uses peer mentoring in her classroom a lot. T1 assigned her students a project in which they were instructed to design a zoo where the animal enclosures have a specific parameter and area.

Co-teaching Practices with Paraprofessionals

Nine of 12 participants agreed that co-teaching with paraprofessional assistance was a successful practicel for accommodating challenges that they face when teaching EB students. F1 and F2 shared that their paraprofessional helps students during center time with writing sentences, spelling, working on phonics skills, and reading with fluency and accuracy. K1 stated that during whole group reading lessons when she is teaching the Journeys curriculum, her paraprofessional takes a group of struggling EB learners and collaborates with them individually to help them understand better while breaking down the reading lesson into smaller, more manageable parts. F3 has a paraprofessional but would like to have a paraprofessional that would come into her classroom who would speak the students' same language, translate for them, and communicate with them in their native language.

Paraprofessionals can assist with lowering the number of daily challenges for teachers of EB students. F1 said, "I have a parapro first thing in the morning and either myself or my parapro will read with the students if they need a little extra support." F2 stated, "They rotate through center groups, and they have to work on writing with my paraprofessional. She works with them on phonics skills. They do fluency sentences as

well as making sure they're reading the words correctly."

The majority (N=9) agreed that the assistance from paraprofessionals lightens their load due to the one-on-one help that is offered when these teacher aides pull small groups and work with the students individually in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. For example, F1 has two paraprofessionals that come into her classroom daily. The first one comes in the morning for fifty minutes and the second one who was made possible through COVID funding, comes in during center time to work in small groups with writing and spelling words.

Paraprofessionals can assist teachers with ensuring that learners receive instruction in four areas. Content obligatory language and content compatible language as mentioned in my conceptual framework is language that can be taught in the four areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. K1 has independent reading time in which students have a baggy of books at their level to read and can read to the paraprofessional. F1 lets each table take turns going to the library and getting new library books while she and her paraprofessional monitors to make sure everyone is reading. During writing, F1 and her paraprofessional teach all the students to write from different genres. They have three genres (persuasive, informational, and narrative). S1 does writing centers for about 45 minutes and the co-teachers are in there also, and she is pulling groups for writing. For listening skills, F3 uses Google classroom that her paraprofessional helps to set up and has her students listen to and watch high frequency word videos so that they are listening to the words and can later use them while reading, writing, and speaking. F2 utilizes the Language Master for listening. The Language Master is a machine that has the teacher's

or paraprofessional's voice and shows pictures so that students can make connections between the teacher's or paraprofessional's voice, the pictures, and the words to enhance listening skills while also learning words. She uses this same strategy for teaching letters, numbers, shapes, and colors. The students listen to the card over and over until they learn the vocabulary being taught. S2 and her paraprofessional makes sure to remind her students to speak in complete sentences while T2 has a lot of discourse in the classroom because she believes that is it necessary for her students to be able to practice their language and their language skills.

Co-Teaching Practices with Certified Teachers

I found that 50% of the participants were in a classroom environment that engaged in the co-teaching model with certified teachers. T1 stated,

Whenever my co-teacher comes back in, that's the time where we have our practice based upon the lesson we taught for that 20 minutes and the math skills that were covered. When we have our practice, they go into small groups. Each group is doing a different thing. My students that are left with me are having to design a zoo where the animal enclosures have a specific parameter and area. That's where I'm able to see the learning with my ESOL students.

T1 mentioned that the co-teaching environment is working well for her EB students and enhancing their learning. F3 utilized intervention time to pull small groups to work on what students need. T3 utilized the strategy of direct vocabulary teaching because vocabulary is something that is very important, especially academic vocabulary. T1 used

a lot of hands-on learning with the students with the use of manipulatives because the students are able to see what's happening more than hearing an explanation.

The co-teaching model helps teachers to work with groups of students and individual students more efficiently. K2 mentioned having a co-teacher coming into her room and during this time, they establish groups. She stated, "I do what I refer to as ICU, like the intensive care unit at the hospital. It is for severely struggling students. I pull them and work with whoever needs help." T2 and her co-teachers uses a lot of discourse in the classroom because she believes that is really necessary for them to be able to practice their language and their language skills. During the time a co-teacher is in her room, K1 brings over her ELL learners and she talks to them and asks them to make sure they understand what the mountains and the woods are. Then, they talk about what they would rather do.

Theme 3: Support for Incorporating Developmentally Appropriate Practices and Linguistically and Culturally Relevant Content into the Curriculum

K3, T2, T3 are bilingual educators and stressed the importance of culture inclusion within the classroom. T2 said, "I try to include a lot of their culture into the classroom to help them feel a little bit at home in here and make them feel a little bit more comfortable." According to T3, "Whether it's Chinese, Japanese, or another language, the first languages to me are the first important language, because then they got something to pull from." T2 shared that she creates classroom projects and activities that are centered around culture and diversity in her classroom. F3 stated, "Having a person who's bilingual come in and work with them and teach them the vocabulary while

connecting it to their native language would be awesome." F1 stated:

> Oh, my goodness, that is such a struggle. In that case, I would almost recommend that you would have a transit. It would be great to have a transition type class where those students could be taught more explicit language instruction because they need so much if they're emerging students.

K3 explained how student's culture should be encouraged daily through reading books with integrated culture, through conversations, or classroom activities. F1 shared that she allows her students to check out books that are in English and Spanish to encourage cultural awareness. F2 spoke about a need for more books in the library at school that includes the words in Spanish as well as English to bring more appreciation for culture within her classroom and school as a whole. She feels that it is essential to have these types of books in the school library. All 12 participants stated the importance of parental involvement as a supplement to their daily classroom instruction as well.

T2 said, "One of the things that I do with my kids is Tier three vocabulary. A lot of tier three vocabulary is very difficult for them because they don't have a basis of understanding in Spanish or English. So, one of the things that I do is I do interpret the word in English, and I also write it in Spanish and I explain what it means in both languages." She also shared that she shows a picture of what that is. T2 said, "If we're in groups and they're not understanding the content, I always reinforce it with Spanish, because most of the time, if they don't understand it in English, they'll understand it in Spanish." She also mentioned that she repeated in English after that so the learners can

understand what the connection is between English and Spanish, because sometimes that's what they are missing. They are missing that connection between both languages.

S3 stated: "Honestly, I wish there was more personnel." She shared that in her district the majority of their students Spanish. They come from Spanish homes and are Hispanic. Their population of ESOL students that are receiving services is very high. Previously, before the numbers were so high, the ESOL teachers could push into the classrooms and really help with groups and help with bridging the gap in the classroom and give them extra support. Then, as their population has grown and as different demands in the system and the state have come with ESOL students, the district moved away from that model and move more towards the teacher being the ESOL certified person, and then our teachers that are hired as the ESOL endorsed teacher and the coordinators are doing more of the paperwork that's involved with ESOL and monitoring. But, as a teacher that had the ESOL teachers that pushed in and helped, it was so amazing. You know, it is always great when you have a good teacher that can help. S3 shared:

> So, I wish we could get back to that model, which in turn, we would need more personnel because we would still need someone to help monitor and help do the paperwork side as well. But it's just so much on these teachers.

Theme 4: Training Using Resources that are Effective in Inclusive and Heterogeneously Grouped Classrooms

All 12 participants said that they were given certain resources to help them teach their EB students, but do not feel that they have received adequate training for utilizing

these resources. T3 stated:

> We've had a lot of different trainings on so many things. But, we're trying to get
>
> to that point where we're writing across the curriculum because it is very
>
> important. Science, social studies, math, even reading, and language arts are not
>
> isolated classes. They're all tied together. So, even with the emphasis on
>
> vocabulary. That's been one of the things that we're trying to get across the board.

Teachers in this study recognized a need for more training that is most effective when supporting EB learners and support for utilizing the tools and resources they have been given. They desire to be able to transition to the point where the training is completely beneficial for their daily teaching within the classroom. T1 said:

> I think we need professional development for the staff. I think even though I have
>
> gotten an ESOL endorsement. That's great. That's fine. I think especially as much
>
> as that population's growing in our school every year system wide that we need
>
> professional development on it on how to reach our students.

Theme 5: Time to Collaborate with all Teachers who work with EB Students

Teachers expressed their concerns about not having enough time in the school day for collaborating with all teachers who work with EB students. They have so many other responsibilities that there is no time to set aside for planning and collaboration with teachers who are in similar situations. K1 said, "We need more time. Absolutely always need more time. Always many more time." K2 stated, "You need to have the time to do a lot of small groups, maybe even one-on-one." S1 stated:

> "I need something that no one can give us, which is time. Anytime we're asked,

what else do you need? Or what can we give you? It's we need more time. I need time to meet with another teacher to get advice because we all have to help each other. None of us are perfect, and we don't all have it all figured out. So, maybe just a common time or a day set aside, maybe a day that we have extra time. We could talk as a group that teaches students that are EBs and ask, what do you do in this situation? How do you address this? I would like to get ideas from other people."

The concern is that without enough time to collaborate, teachers feel as if they are not being exposed to pertinent information that could be offered by simply having a common planning and collaboration time set apart. Teachers expressed a need for vertical and horizontal planning and collaboration to better meet the needs of their EB students. K3 stated,

"A lot of the time it is just being prepared. Coming in, having that planning time with the regular teacher, and asking what are you teaching? That way I can come in and if I need to write vocabulary down, or if I need to use manipulatives just depending on whatever it is being taught that day, a lot of it's going to come down to effective co-teaching and co- planning."

K1 mentioned having two ESOL teachers that she goes to for help if she has a question. T1 stated that her best resource is her colleagues. She has a bilingual colleague that teaches EB students across the hall from her and has learned a plethora of helpful strategies and adopted many ideas from her and some of her other co-workers.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

To ensure that my data analysis was valid and credible, I utilized validation

strategies (Ravith & Carl, 2015). First, I collected data by audio-recording interviews via

Zoom with a transcription reader inside the meeting room. I also used member checking

to ensure credibility. I sent a summary of the findings so that all 12 participants could

check to make sure the data were accurate. All participants agreed that the data were

accurate and had no concerns or questions regarding the findings.

Credibility

I followed Shenton (2004) closely to ensure that the research was aligned. I took

steps to ensure that participants shared their honest feedback by using thoughtful

interview techniques such as preparing a list of interview questions in advance (Appendix

A), carefully reviewing the candidate's credentials, keeping the interview conversational

rather than confrontational, and carefully explaining the interview process and next steps.

I asked all the interview questions in the same order to each participant. After each

question was answered, I restated the answer for clarity before moving on to the next

question. A chance was given at the end for interviewees to verify that I had accurately

determined their conclusions. Each one received an email with the transcript to agree or

disagree with the data. They had time to respond to confirm the validity. All comments

and feedback were accepted and dealt with accordingly. All participants agreed on the

accuracy of the transcript.

Transferability

I used thick description of the data and context (Ravitch & Carl, 2016) and

deliberate variation in the selection of participants to establish transferability. I have

provided a detailed and rich account of the perspectives of participants who teach EB

learners, setting, and procedures for data collection. Other researchers who wish to follow

this study have a detailed description of the processes for data collection and analysis and

will be supported for further future research. The themes that emerged from the data are

directly related to the responses of my participants.

Dependability

I ensured reliable research (Shenton, 2004) and dependability by using

appropriate methods and can explain why they are appropriate (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), the collected data can answer the research

questions. To ensure the dependability of a study, I explored and acknowledged how my

potential prejudices and biases map onto my interpretations of the data to ensure reliable

research. I used a journal to categorize and check data between all ESOL-trained teachers

from Kindergarten, First Grade, Second Grade, and Third Grade.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the concern of objectivity with the qualitative researcher

(Shenton, 2004). The results are based on information gathered from the participants and

not my interpretations alone. This component and the others listed above have helped me

to validate my study. To achieve confirmability of my study, I ensured that my findings

were supported by the data I collected. I evaluated whether my findings were shaped only

by the collected data from the interviewees or by my interests, motivations, or biases. To

enhance the confirmability of my study, I supported the connection between the findings

and the data (Kyngäs et al., 2020). To establish confirmability, I used a strategy known as an audit trail to establish mindfulness in my results (Saldaña, 2015). I consistently used the interview prompts that had already been established while also following the guidelines for the interview without wavering. The process was documented accordingly.

Summary

In Chapter 4, I provided my results of data collection and analysis. I utilized the results of my study to answer the following research questions: What are K-3 teachers' perspectives on the challenges they face to meet the English language learning needs of EB students in the rural southeastern United States? What do K-3 teachers believe they need to effectively meet the English language learning needs of EB students in rural schools? I used a basic qualitative design to explore both research questions and my findings resulted in five themes. 12 research participants shared that they supplemented their current curriculum due to the insufficiency of their program to effectively meet the needs of EB learners. The participant's instruction included visual representations, realia, direct vocabulary teaching, parental involvement, colleague interaction, and online printable resources as supplements for their classroom instruction. In Chapter 5, I discuss the interpretations of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, and implications.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Researchers have determined that additional research is needed to understand the challenges teachers face in working with EB students to meet their English language learning needs (Al-khresheh & Orak, 2021; Gebhard et al., 2019; Harding et al., 2019). The purpose of basic qualitative study was to explore K-3 teachers' perspectives of challenges teachers face to meet the English language learning needs of their EB students in rural schools in the southeastern United States and to identify what K-3 teachers believe they need to successfully meet the English language learning needs of their EB students. I used 11 interview questions for 12 kindergarten through third grade teachers who had 3 or more years of experience teaching EB students in schools located in the southeastern United States. Utilizing a basic qualitative design, I explored all 12 participants' perspectives on challenges they face in working with EB students. I conducted Zoom meetings with live recordings and a transcription tool for transcribing each interview. I analyzed the raw data to understand the strategies that each educator used.

A total of five themes emerged during data analysis to address both research questions. Two of the themes address RQ 1 that explored kindergarten through third grade teachers' perspectives on the challenges they face to meet the English language learning needs of EB students. Teachers recognize that they can address challenges they face by the following: (a) relying on technology to address students' English language learning needs and (b) engaging in peer mentoring and co-teaching practices. The final three themes addressed RQ 2 that explored what K-3 teachers believe they need to

effectively meet the English language learning needs of EB students. To effectively meet the English language learning needs of EB students, teachers believe that they need the following: (a) support for incorporating developmentally appropriate practice, and linguistically and culturally relevant content into the curriculum, (b) training using resources that are effective in inclusive and heterogeneously grouped classrooms, and (c) time for collaborating with all teachers who work with EB students.

This study's results may help other elementary teachers in their endeavors to plan and implement positive changes in their classrooms and lead to more effective instruction of EB students and lead to the improvement of these learners' academic performance. These 12 participants did not have the necessary resources to support their learners, so they utilized supplemental materials to do so. The challenges they faced were deepened by a need for resources that meet the need of both English and Spanish speaking students. They used visual representations, realia, direct vocabulary teaching, parental involvement, colleague interaction, and online printable resources as supplements for their classroom instruction. They included the cultural backgrounds of their students by reading cultural sensitivity books from the school library or through their own purchases, projects that included cultural awareness, their home language, and parental involvement to keep the culture of their students alive.

The findings are supported by Snow's et al. (1989) theory of ILCT, which includes two learning objectives: (a) learning content-obligatory language and (b) learning of content-compatible language. Content-obligatory language is the language that is essential for understanding the content of subject-matter material. Content-

compatible language is a language that can be taught naturally.

I also used the TESOL framework, which integrates content and language in second and foreign language classrooms. All participants held ESOL endorsements to their teaching credentials. Some of the participants stated that although they were ESOL endorsed, they do not feel as if they were adequately trained through professional development to teach EB to their fullest potential. The TESOL framework confirms that there should be an integration of content and language taught adequately in second and foreign language classrooms and is based upon the following five stages: philosophy, principles, theory/choice, practice, and beyond practice/exploration.

Interpretation of the Findings

All 12 participants in this basic qualitative study gave insightful information about their years of experience teaching EB students. During data collection and analysis, I continued to consider the conceptual framework of Snow's et al. (1989) theory of ILCT and the TESOL framework. The conceptual framework was used as a connection tool for linking the themes and framing the findings from the study. I reviewed the current literature in Chapter 2 and all literature was relevant to the five themes that emerged from the educators' perspectives regarding EB learners. The results of my research are a direct reflection of the conceptual framework and can be applied to the framework.

RQ 1: Themes Related to Past Literature

Research Question 1 explored kindergarten through third grade teachers' perspectives on the challenges they face to meet the English language learning needs of EB students in the rural southeastern United States. The following two themes relate to

the recommendations of the teachers.

Theme 1: Relying on Technology to Address Students' English Language Learning Needs

The first theme that emerged from RQ 1 was that early childhood teachers of EB students address challenges by relying on technology to address students' English language learning needs. Technology motivates all learners (O'Leary et al., 2020; Tang et al., 2021). This theme is based on consistent reporting by participants regarding their requirements to teach EB students, yet none of them feel that they have the adequate resources (Ruiz, 2020) to do so. Fear and anxiety leaves EB students confused due to the language barrier (Hartshorn & McMurry, 2020). They feel that they need to supplement their current program and curriculum daily. A lack of resources present additional challenges for teachers of EB students who are ELs in rural schools throughout the United States (Ruiz, 2020). The 12 K-3 educators in my study stated that they implemented supplemental materials on a daily basis to instruct their students appropriately. All participants agreed that the program and curriculum that their schools were using were inadequate and that they would rather teach using sufficient technology. EBs learn successfully with the reinforcement of evidence-based instruction (Dussling, 2020). Thus, participants rely on evidence-based technology to meet the needs of their EB students. These findings are discussed relative to study effects for EBs and the usefulness of technology in classrooms (Telesman et al., 2019), supporting this theme of relying on technology to address students' English language learning needs.

Theme 2: Engaging in Peer Mentoring and Co-Teaching Practices

The second theme that developed was that early childhood teachers of EB students address challenges by engaging in peer mentoring and co-teaching practices. Peer mentoring can take place between students in a classroom. According to Uzzell and Ayscue (2021), students can learn from other students. Lower performing students can be paired with higher performing students to encourage a learning situation when one student can learn from the other. Some schools do not allow students of other nationalities to be in the same classrooms as the EBs. This sets EB students back because they have no peers to model the English language for them in conversations (Uzzell & Ayscue, 2021). Tuckman et al. (2021) mentioned that if teachers do not meet the English language learning needs of EB students, students are unable to progress.

Students require additional language support to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the English language (Winlund, 2020). Ee & Gándara (2020) mentioned that teachers pulling all of the load and being overworked without support increases risk of burnout. Paraprofessionals and co-teachers can help lighten that load. Diaz et al. (2022) found that paraprofessionals, especially those that are bilingual/bicultural have been vital partakers in the education of EB students. Larson et al. (2020) also found that the four best interventions that should be used in the classroom within a co-teaching model were naturalistic, routines-based interventions and explicit instruction on targeted skills. Engaging in peer mentoring and co-teaching practices aligns with a study by Larson et al. (2020) and Bauler and Kang (2020) who suggested that having another EL teacher push in and co-teach with the homeroom teacher

throughout the day is beneficial.

RQ 2: Themes Related to Past Literature

Research Question 2 explored what kindergarten through third grade teachers believe they need to effectively meet the English language learning needs of EB students in rural schools. The following two themes relate to the recommendations of the teachers.

Theme 3: Support for Incorporating Developmentally Appropriate Practices and Linguistically and Culturally Relevant Content into the Curriculum

The third theme was that early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need support for incorporating developmentally appropriate practices, and linguistically and culturally relevant content into the curriculum. This theme is based on consistent reporting by participants regarding a need for support (Johnson and Goldenberg, 2020) for incorporating developmentally appropriate practices and linguistically and culturally relevant content into the curriculum. They believe this support could come through several different modalities. O'Leary et al. (2020) tells us of the importance of increasing the inclusiveness of culture in each classroom. Teachers should develop a dependable, systematic method of ensuring cultural sensitivity (Cruz et al., 2020). Teaching methods that include cultural sensitivity are beneficial for EB students (Cruz et al., 2020). Ruiz (2020) found that identifying struggling students and giving them the support they need to thrive in school at an early age was crucial. Ruiz (2020) investigated factors that influence the performance of struggling EBs and examined how educators in rural areas are negatively affected by the lack of resources and support for emergent students' language, academic, and social development skills. Differentiation is used for supporting

teachers so that they can enhance learning for every student (Moosa & Shareefa, 2019).

Although most educators in Ee and Gándara's (2020) study expressed a continued commitment to working with their students in the current sociopolitical climate, being overworked without support added risk for burnout. Johnson and Goldenberg (2020) focused on elementary school levels; many unique materials were utilized to support learning including methods for supporting educators and contributed to an emerging literature that spotlights potential promising avenues for supporting teachers via professional development during regular times and in future widespread educational disruptions. These findings (Ruiz, 2020) revealed a need for teacher support in rural areas to enhance emergent students' language, academic, and social development skills, supporting this theme of needing support for incorporating developmentally appropriate practices, and linguistically and culturally relevant content into the curriculum.

Theme 4: Training Using Resources That are Effective in Inclusive and Heterogeneously Grouped Classrooms

The fourth theme was that early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need more training using resources that are effective in inclusive and heterogeneously grouped classrooms. Several researchers have noted that teachers are challenged to meet the needs of students due to insufficient training (Li & Peters, 2020; Ramasivama & Nair, 2019). Ramasivama and Nair (2019) discovered that teachers often lack the training and knowledge necessary to implement the curriculum and resources they have been offered. Results showed that without training, teachers do not enjoy implementing the curriculum

and resources. Johnson and Goldenberg (2020) spotlights professional development using resources that are effective in inclusive and heterogeneously grouped classrooms.

The conceptual framework driven by the TESOL framework and Snow et al.'s (1989) ILCT framework presented the need for content and language instruction in classrooms along with training for this purpose. Furthermore, Li and Peters's (2020) research confirmed that training teachers in professional development was required and to make it more effective, teachers should also do research and service during the training.

Theme 5: Time to Collaborate with all Teachers who work with EB Students

The final theme was that early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need time for collaborating with all teachers who work with EB students. Gebhard et al. (2019) suggested that collaboration among teachers is needed. These findings suggest that extra time spent in collaboration with all teachers who work with EB students is a necessity. Bauler and Kang (2020) stated that teachers who use the pull-out model to serve students do not have the time to help the students in a pull-out session adequately. They mention weekly preparation periods within the confines of the school day to prepare teachers to be in a diverse classroom with bilingual learners. Teachers in this study used many different models of serving EB students. Some used push-in. Others used pull-out. One teacher even mentioned using a consultative method of serving EB students. All models require extra time to adequately serve these students and teachers feel that this resource is lacking. This research aligns with Sacks and Murphy (2018) and Raymond (2018) regarding elevated risks of rural children having an increased likelihood

of facing negative outcomes during their life due to a lack of necessary time and resources to adequately teach them.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations that I faced were that all rural areas have unique characteristics such as demographics, materials, and professional development opportunities. The findings in this study may not apply to teachers in all rural schools throughout the United States because children may not lack English language development skills in other regions of the United States. This may limit transferability. In addition, there may be other rural schools with non-English speaking school populations. Further, I had a challenge in recruiting teachers from various instructional settings; however, I recruited teachers using school email addresses that are publicly available on school websites. The small sample size also limited the transferability of the study.

Recommendations

The participants from my study were 12 teachers. I recommend that future researchers conduct this study with ESOL coordinators and program directors to better understand their perspectives regarding services provided to EB learners along with updated professional learning opportunities in the rural southeastern region of the United States. The data that Li and Peters (2020) gathered after the professional development days showed a significant increase in the growth of ELL students. This has led Li and Peters to believe that more professional development or programs must be implemented for teachers to see the need for and importance of providing EL students with the services they deserve. 12 educators stated that they faced challenges and felt the need to use

supplemental resources when teaching EB students. I recommend that future research should be conducted regarding the challenges that teachers of EB students face and a program should be developed that will support all EB learners while also supplying necessary resources.

Implications

Intended Purpose

This basic qualitative study with interviews was conducted to explore K-3 teachers' perspectives of the challenges they face as teachers of EB students. These challenges included meeting the English language learning needs of their EB students in rural southeastern schools in the United States. Further, research was conducted with volunteer ESOL teachers to identify what K-3 teachers believe they need to successfully meet the English language learning needs of their EB students.

Positive Social Change

The results of this study may lead to positive social change. This study provided valuable information regarding how site administrators, policymakers, and other stakeholders could offer adequate resources including professional development that would lead to an increase in academic performance of EB students. Administrators may be motivated to provide adequate training and resources. Directors may agree to provide teachers with the necessary support while embracing language diversity as a positive social change. Positive social change resulting from findings of this study are that teacher perspectives of their challenges to meet the needs of EB students are known by stakeholders in rural southeastern schools in the US, and that stakeholders can then value

and support student bilingualism, and that teachers will have professional development on ESOL strategies, and resources needed to promote EB student success.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore K-3 teachers' perspectives of challenges they face to meet the English language learning needs of their EB students in rural southeastern schools in the United States, and to identify what K-3 teachers believe they need to successfully meet the English language learning needs of their EB students. This study's findings were identified with the following five themes: 1) Early childhood teachers of EB students address challenges by relying on technology to address students' English language learning needs. 2) Early childhood teachers of EB students address challenges by engaging in peer mentoring and co-teaching practices. 3) Early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need support for incorporating developmentally appropriate practices, and linguistically and culturally relevant content into the curriculum. 4) Early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need more training using resources that are effective in inclusive and heterogeneously grouped classrooms. 5) Early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need time to collaborate with all teachers who work with EB students. These themes were developed during the analysis of data from 12 early childhood education participants. Based upon my findings which are supported by my conceptual framework and review of literature, teachers need efficient resources to teach EB students and lessen the challenges they face by using effective technology along with more cultural awareness. Every participant believed that a lack of resources presents additional challenges for teachers of EB students (Ruiz,

2020). Among the challenges that teachers face are how they address cultural differences with students and their families which influences EB students' academic success (Ruiz, 2020). Every participant believed that to better prepare teachers for teaching EBs, there must be access to resources that will help teachers teach to the best of their ability and decrease challenges they face (Casey et al., 2021). Findings suggest that teachers need efficient technology, co-teachers, paraprofessionals, engagement in peer mentoring, support, training, resources, and time to decrease challenges they face. Findings from this study may lead to positive social change by creating an awareness of teachers' challenges they are faced with in meeting the learning needs of EB students and how teachers effectively meet the learning needs of EB students in rural southeastern United States.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Date of Interview_____

Start time: _____

End time: _____

Alpha numeric code: _____

Interview Questions for Kindergarten through Third Grade Teachers:

IQ1: Please tell me about your classroom that serves EB students and what service model/program you are using.

 Prompts: I heard you say…Please give me an example.

IQ2: What strategies do you use to communicate with your EB students?

 Prompts: I heard you say… Please elaborate.

IQ3: Please take me through the normal day in your classroom from the time the students enter the class.

Prompts: I heard you say…Please elaborate.

IQ4: What language do you feel is essential for students to understand the content material that you teach?

Prompts: I heard you say… Please elaborate.

IQ5: Describe how you teach language that can be taught naturally within the context of your subject matter.

 Prompts: I heard you say… Please talk to me more about…

IQ6: How do you encourage your EB students to practice their words and phrases in the classroom?

Prompts: I heard you say… Please elaborate on your most successful approaches.

IQ7: How do you encourage your EB students to practice their words and phrases in their specials (art, physical education, health, computer lab, music)?

Prompts: I heard you say… Please elaborate on your most successful approaches.

IQ8: How do you encourage your EB students to practice their words and phrases at home?

Prompts: I heard you say… Please elaborate on your most successful approaches.

IQ9: What current resources help you to appropriately teach your English language learners who are EBs?

Prompts: Thank you for that list of resources that would help you appropriately teach your Els who are EBs. Please elaborate on…

IQ10: What do you need to appropriately teach your English language learners who are EBs?

Prompts: I heard you say… Please elaborate on…

IQ11: Is there anything else that you would like to tell me that you need to help you appropriately teach your English language learners who are EBs?

Prompt: Thank you. You have given me insightful and valuable information. I will be sending you a copy of my findings and I would appreciate you giving me feedback.

Potential Follow-up Questions:

1. Can you tell me more about…?

2. What do you mean by…?

3. Help me understand…?

4. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol for K-3 ESOL-Trained Teachers

Prior to beginning the interview, the researcher will state:

Script

Welcome! Thank you for your attendance and participation today in today's interview.

My name is Dana Giddens. I am attending Walden University as a doctoral student and

conducting a study to explore K-3 ESOL on how to address the English language

learning in EB students enrolled in kindergarten through third grade in rural school

districts located in the rural southeastern region of the United States. A degree

completion requirement is to conduct a basic qualitative study with interviews to collect

data for my study. Today's interview will take approximately an hour and includes

several questions about your experiences and knowledge relating to EB students. I hope

to obtain your permission to digitally record the interview for accurate documentation of

the information shared. If you wish to discontinue the interview at any time or

discontinue the recording, you may let me know, and I will do so. Your current standing

with Walden University will not be impacted in any way.

Please confirm that the participation criteria for the study will be met by answering these

questions regarding demographics:

• What grade do you teach?

- Please tell me about yourself and how you came to be an ESOL teacher.

• How many years of teaching experience do you currently have?

• Please tell me about your school's geographic location where you currently teach.

Describe the size of your school and the demographics of your current students.

Data received from the interviews will be utilized to create a deeper understanding of strategies designed to enhance the learning of EBs. I, Dana Giddens, am the sole interviewer and researcher for this study. Your responses to the interview questions will be confidential (see consent form). The two of us have written signatures and dates on the written consent form. This certifies that we are in agreement to continue this current interview. A copy of the consent form may be kept for your records. I will keep mine as well. It will be kept on a computer that is protected with a password in a room where only I have a key to unlock the door. Please remember that your participation in the interview is completely voluntary. Please let me know if you need to revisit a question, take a break, or stop. Your participation can be withdrawn at any time with no repercussions. Prior to beginning, do you have any concerns or questions? If not, we will now begin with permission from you.

Appendix C: Alignment of Research & Interview Questions & Conceptual Framework

RQ1: Research Question: What are K-3 teachers' perspectives on the challenges they face to meet the English language learning needs of EB students in the rural southeastern United States?	
Conceptual Framework	Interview Questions
Snow et al. (1989) developed the Integration of Language and Content Teaching (ILCT) framework for the mainstream class, the ESOL class, the foreign language immersion class, and the foreign language in the elementary school (FLES) class. (1) communicative language in the content area (2) learning of content-obligatory language (3) learning content compatible language	IQ1: Please tell me about your classroom that serves EB students and what service model/program you are using. Prompts: I heard you say…Please give me an example. IQ2: What strategies do you use to communicate with your EB students? Prompts: I heard you say… Please elaborate. IQ3: Please take me through the normal day in your classroom from the time the students enter the class. Prompts: I heard you say…Please elaborate. IQ4: What language do you feel is essential for students to understand the content material that you teach? Prompts: I heard you say… Please elaborate. IQ5: Describe how you teach language that can be taught naturally within the context of your subject matter. Prompts: I heard you say… Please talk to me more about… IQ6: How do you encourage your EB students to practice their words and phrases in the classroom? Prompts: I heard you say… Please elaborate on your most successful approaches. IQ7: How do you encourage your EB students to practice their words and phrases in their specials (art, physical education, health, computer lab, music)? Prompts: I heard you say… Please elaborate on your most successful approaches.

RQ2: Research Question: What do K-3 teachers believe they need to effectively meet the English language learning needs of EB students in rural schools?	
Conceptual Framework Indicates:	Interview Questions:
Snow et al. (1989) developed the Integration of Language and Content Teaching (ILCT) framework that included two learning objectives: (1) learning of content-obligatory language; and (2) learning of content compatible language. The TESOL framework integrates content and language in second and foreign language classrooms. (1) philosophy (2) principles (3) theory/choices (4) practice (5) beyond practice/exploration	IQ8: How do you encourage your EB students to practice their words and phrases at home? Prompts: I heard you say… Please elaborate on your most successful approaches. IQ9: What current resources help you to appropriately teach your English language learners who are EBs? Prompts: Thank you for that list of resources that would help you appropriately teach your Els who are EBs. Please elaborate on… IQ10: What do you need to appropriately teach your English language learners who are EBs? Prompts: I heard you say… Please elaborate on… IQ11: Is there anything else that you would like to tell me that you need to help you appropriately teach your English language learners who are EBs? Prompt: Thank you. You have given me insightful and valuable information. I will be sending you a copy of my findings and I would appreciate you giving me feedback.

Appendix D: Sample A Priori Codes

Code	Participant Identifier	Excerpt
Communicative language activities	F3	"We'll have our intervention time, which is RTI time, and we pull small groups to work on what students need as far as in reading or math."
	T3	"One of the main strategies that we, as teachers, use at the elementary school level is to utilize a lot of direct vocabulary teaching. Vocabulary is something that is very important, especially academic vocabulary."
	F3	"I use synonyms for different words, so they know what the words mean and try to incorporate more language."
Content-obligatory language	S2	"I try to focus on academic language, and I try to create an environment that is conducive to learning."
	T3	Academic vocabulary is totally different from basic vocabulary, so I use vocabulary strategies for all of them to have that academic language and to get an understanding of what they know prior to a lesson, during a lesson, and throughout a lesson to make whatever we're teaching relevant so that it's not so abstract.
	S2	"I try to focus on the language of the standards so they can understand what I call the big words. But, I also try to teach them strategies to understand those big words."
Learning content compatible language	T1	"The English language in itself is an obstacle because with your ESOL learners, there's so many nuances to English. From our idioms to other figurative language to where we don't follow roles that it confuses them. So, even though I am a math and science teacher, I do spend a lot of time explaining.
	T2	"If they don't understand the concepts well in English, then I reinforce it with Spanish.

Appendix E: Sample Open Codes

Code	Participant Identifier	Excerpt
Reading	K1	"Independent reading time consists of a baggy of books at their level to read."
	F1	"Each table takes turns going to the library and getting new library books. I'm monitoring to make sure everybody is reading."
Writing	F1	"We write from different genres. We have three genres. We have persuasive, informational, and narratives and we teach children to write."
	S1	"I do writing centers for about 45 minutes, and during this time, the co- teacher is in there also. So, she's also pulling groups for writing."
Listening	F3	"They can always get on Google classroom and have those high frequency word videos that they play and listen to, so they're getting the word."
	F2	"We utilize the Language Master, which is a machine that is my voice, and we start with pictures. It shows pictures with me telling them what the pictures are. Then we move on to letters, numbers, shapes, and colors, and it is just my voice. They listen to the card over and over and it is amazing how much these children learn."
Speaking	S2	"I tell them to make sure they are speaking in complete sentences."
	T2	"We do a lot of discourse in the classroom because that is really necessary for them to be able to practice their language and their language skills."
Paraprofessional Assistance	F1	"I have a parapro first thing in the morning and either myself or my parapro will read with the students if they need a little extra support."
	F2	"They rotate through center groups, and they have to work on writing with my paraprofessional. She works with them on the phonics skills. They do fluency sentences as well as making sure they're reading the words correctly."
Communication	T2	"I have a good bit of students who are comfortable in the English language and using the discourse with the students. They get comfortable with each other and talking to each other. So, that seems to really help them out a lot."
	K1	"I bring over my ELL learners and I talk to them and ask them to make sure they understand what the mountains and the woods are. Then, we talk about what they would rather do."
Positive interaction	F1	"Representations of numbers are something that's universal that they may have to learn to count in English, but they can even count in Spanish if they needed to. But usually, your numbers are kind of a universal type thing. So. I found that, even students who have very limited English, Number Talks would be something that

		was a positive interaction, something they would not feel a lot of pressure with."
	K3	"I think it's important to teach them from a book, but to also give them opportunities to have as much interaction with their peers as possible."
Culture	T2	"I try to include a lot of their culture into the classroom to help them feel a little bit at home in here and make them feel a little bit more comfortable."
	T3	"Whether it's Chinese, Japanese, or another language, the first languages to me are the first important language, because then they got something to pull from."
Authentic project based learning	T1	"So, my kids that are left with me are having to design a zoo where the animal enclosures have a specific parameter and area."
	T1	"We have a project that's due and I'll ask them, have you started this? Then, we'll get into the conversation. Have you told your parents about what we learned?"
Hands on learning	T1	"We also do a lot of hands-on learning with the students. I have found with the use of manipulatives, they're able to see what's happening more than hearing me explain it."
	T3	"The strategies that are useful for ESOL students are a lot of pictures whenever we can and hands on."
Peer mentoring	K3	"I feel like the kids are able to pick up a little bit quicker from their peers than just being taught in front of a classroom."
	F1	"We can use peer tutors within the classroom. A peer tutor can help if they're having trouble understanding. If there's another student that speaks Spanish that's a little stronger, sometimes it's helpful to pair them together to work on assignments. So, I use peer tutoring for instructional purposes."

Appendix F: Sample Axial Codes, Categories, Excerpts

Category	Axial Code	Participant identifier	Excerpt
Teacher Talk	Teaching tasks	K2	"In the minds of my students, they realize, "Oh, she's talking about the ending sound and saying it along with the hand motions. Now, she's wanting me to enter it in boxes." So, that seems to work really good."
		S2	"When I talk about anonyms, we sing an antonym song so they can understand what an antonym is."
	Conversations with students	K1	"We talk about sounding out the words."
		F1	"We practice reading the story and when we're finished reading the story, we talk about it. We do comprehensive skills."
Positive reinforcement	Reassuring students	S1	"For the shy students who do not feel comfortable speaking the English language, I let them know that I am not going to get on to them if they don't get it right. I just use positive. reinforcement."
		S1	"I try to be positive and let my students know that it's okay. We're learning this together because we've always told ourselves that we don't know how they feel or what it would be like. So, I really start with just how I would feel and what I would need. I would need my teacher to smile and be positive and so I am just constantly reinforcing her that she can do it and we'll get to an end result one way or the other."
	Building Relationships	F1	"I pull individual kids to come and read to me and during that time, that's where I can do some conferencing. If I notice something that they're doing in the reading, that's the time that I can address that, work with them, and give them recommendations on how to improve the reading."
		F2	"We try to do two to three reading conferences with our students while the others are independently reading. We

			talk about a goal and we talk about their strengths and weaknesses at least three to four days a week."
Technology	Computer	K2	The program that is used schoolwide is a computer program. It goes against everything I've ever learned about English as the second language student. It doesn't teach them."
		F1	"They are doing something computer based where they're on Google Classroom and I will have their story of the week where they can listen to it."
	Clear Touch TV screen	S1	"We listen to our weekly basil story for the week and I have it playing on the clear touch so they can see the pictures in the book and they can follow along in their book as well."
		S1	"With our new phonics program, we have blended lines. If you tap it on the clear touch it'll say the word
Strategies	Small groups	K2	"I do what I refer to as ICU, like the intensive care unit at the hospital. It is for severely struggling students. I pull them and work with whoever needs help."
		T2	"We use a lot of small groups. We do small groups depending on what we are doing whether it is writing, Guided Reading word work, especially because it is any ESOL classroom. We do a lot of word work."
	Elkonin boxes	S3	"We have different methods of doing hand signals or using Elkonin boxes."
		K2	"I use Elkonin boxes. If I'm trying to get them to write something, we will count the sounds in the words. Like "fox" "f-o-x". How many sounds do you hear?"
Programs	Pull out, Push in, Single classroom	K1	"We are a push in. Most of our students are served by me and in my classroom, and it's a heterogeneous classroom."
		S2	"I would want to contact other counties, and say, "Okay, what do you do with your ESOL kids? Do you push in? Do you pull out? Do you use a computer program? What do

	Learning Programs	S3		you do?"
				"We also have programs that can be done at home. As far as reading books, we have Epic or Tumble Books and their programs that are accessible in the home."
Visual Representation	Charts	F1		"During number talks, you show them a visual representation, and then the children tell you ways to make that number and you record them on chart paper."
		F2		"We use a lot of visual aids and we also have anchor charts that we created for ELA, phonics, social study, science, and math that has pictures as well as vocabulary content for each subject."
	Pictures	S3		"We have picture cards. We do a lot of practice, not just learning the letter, but also, we practice the picture."
Grouping	Centers/small group	K1		"Lower learners go into a small group."
		F1		"We pull them and work with them individually and in small groups. The other kids are rotating through learning centers."
Differentiation	Charts	F1		"We do a lot of differentiation within the classroom. So, a lot of times, I'm pulling those kids. At that time, I'm pulling small groups working with skill groups or guided reading. While I'm doing that, the kids are rotating."
		F2		"We use a lot of visual aids and we also have anchor charts that we created for ELA, phonics, social study, science, and math that has pictures as well as vocabulary content for each subject."
	Pictures	S3		"We have picture cards. We do a lot of practice, not just learning the letter, but also, we practice the picture."

Appendix G: Categories and Themes

Category	Theme
Technology	Theme 1: Early childhood teachers of EB students address challenges by relying on technology to address students' English language learning needs.
Strategies	
Support	Theme 2: Early childhood teachers of EB students address challenges by engaging in peer mentoring and co-teaching practices.
Challenges	
Culture	Theme 3: Early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need support for incorporating developmentally appropriate practices, and linguistically and culturally relevant content into the curriculum.
Positive Social Change	
Teacher requisitions	Theme 4: Early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need more training using resources that are effective in inclusive and heterogeneously grouped classrooms.
	Theme 5: Early childhood teachers of EB students believe they need time to collaborate with all teachers who work with EB students.
Access to resources	