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Prekindergarten Teachers' Experiences Teaching Preliteracy to English Language Learners

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2018

Abstract

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MEd, Walden University, 2012

BS, Kennesaw State University, 2010

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Pre-K teachers in Metro Georgia have little to no training in working with English language learner/dual language learner (ELL/DLL) students, nor do they know how to instruct these students to meet Pre-K preliteracy criteria. As Pre-K classrooms contain increasing numbers of ELL/DLL students, the purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore teachers' need to support emergent literacy for ELL/DLL students in the Pre-K setting. The theoretical foundations for this study included Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Kreshan's theory of language acquisition. Thirteen teachers participated in the study. Selection criteria was (1) having 2 years of teaching experience and (2) having ELL/DLL students in their classrooms. Interview and observational data were analyzed using a priori, emergent, and thematic coding. The themes emerging from the study addressed teacher needs in four areas: professional development focused on the needs of ELL/DLL students and on providing sheltered instruction, time to collaborate with others in their ELL/DLL instructional practices, and technology as a source of materials and ideas. The project study is a proposed professional development course to help teachers teach emergent literacy skills to ELL/DLL students. The findings may lead to improved practices for teachers offering ELL/DLL preliteracy instruction and increased literacy development for ELL/DLL preschool students. Positive social change will occur as local school and community members recognize the increased contributions by well-educated ELL/DLL students whose road to success started in preschool.

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to my mother and father, who have instilled in me the fact that hard work pays off and have encouraged me always to pursue my dreams. I cannot thank you enough for your love and support during this time.

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I want to begin by thanking an anonymous mentor, friend, and believer, as without your encouragement and support, I would not have been able to complete this degree. I also would like to say a special thank you to Chair Dr. Katherine Hayes-Fondation, my second committee members, Drs. Jenelle Braun-Monegan, and Michael Vinella, and University Research Reviewer, Dr. Marilyn Robb. I am forever grateful for your continuing guidance and support. Lastly, I thank my editor for providing guidance and clarity in my project study.

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

The United States has welcomed many different minorities into the country and, as a result, the U.S. student population consists of more than 9% English language learners (ELL) or dual language learners (DLL: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, 2014). Further, the ELL/DLL population has grown by 32% over the past decade (August, McCardle, Shanahan, & Burns, 2014). Teachers of mainstream content who do not have a background in teaching ELL/DLLs face unique challenges in supporting them. While continuing to learn their native languages at home, ELL/DLL students learn English in school (Maxwell, 2009). Shin (2010) reported that nearly 5 million ELLs are enrolled in K-12 programs, and these students enter the classrooms unable to communicate with English-speaking students and teachers. Roy-Campbell (2013) defined these learners as "students who enter schools with a first language other than English and therefore need to increase their proficiency in English in order to meet the academic demands of schools" (p. 257). Georgia is the eighth most populous state in the United States, and it has experienced more than a 200% increase in ELL students (Calderón, Slavin, & Sánchez, 2011). There are more than 2 million ELL students in Pre-K through 3rd grade alone, and this number is predicted to rise because of the influx of Spanish-speaking students.

Many Pre-K classroom students in the local study site are Hispanic students, and many students are not proficient in English. Samson and Collins (2012) stated, "Many teachers of ELLs are increasingly concerned about being held accountable for their students' progress as measured by standardized tests" (p. 8). Frustration on the part of

facilitators and ELL/DLL students while teaching and learning fundamental concepts leads to challenges in meeting Pre-K standards that will make the students' transition to kindergarten more difficult. Emergent literacy skills are acquired during preschool, and Caesar and Nelson (2013) suggested that, during the elementary school years, many students have difficulty learning how to read and have deficits in their emergent literacy skills. There are five stages that Pre-K teachers should follow in teaching: listening, rhyming, alliteration, syllables, and phoneme blending and segmenting. Learning phonological awareness allows Pre-K students to begin to read and write, and teachers must be able to teach all students so that they are prepared to read and write in kindergarten. Emergent skills are fundamental for Pre-K students and failing to master them jeopardizes their future literacy.

Pre-K in Georgia is a state-funded program that provides formal schooling for 4- to 5-year old's in which nearly "29 percent of children participating in Georgia Head Start programs speak a language other than English" (Cheatham & Ro, 2010, p. 18). Pre-K curriculum includes the Creative Curriculum, which incorporates seven academic domains: creative arts, language arts, science, social studies, mathematics, social and emotional, and physical and health; each domain has standards that teachers are required to incorporate in their lesson plans (Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, 2014). Only four standards in Language are tailored for ELL students; however, these do not provide information about practices or further resources on ways in which to teach them. Teachers also are frustrated, as ELL/DLL students are being left behind because of their insufficient mastery of English (Samson & Collins, 2012). The absence of

resources and shortage of adequate Professional Development (PD) make it difficult for Pre-K teachers to instruct ELL/DLL students.

Georgia Pre-K classrooms have enrolled more than 7,500 ELL students (Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, 2014) and these numbers are projected to increase. Teachers need to have further training to enhance these youngsters' academic growth (Kyounghee & Hoover, 2009). Children learn how to communicate through stages of language development. Cunningham, Zibulsky, and Callahan (2009) reported that preschool educators may not have the content background necessary to enhance pre-literacy instruction, and therefore, sometimes misjudge what students know, which can result in providing them less than adequate instruction. Samson and Collins (2012) affirmed that educators who teach ELL students need to have the educational knowledge and background in diversity to accommodate the needs of ELL students. However, in the local district, there has been no ELL/DLL PD to support Pre-K teachers' literacy practices.

The purpose of this study was to develop a detailed understanding of the experiences of teachers who teach ELL/DLL students to meet the Pre-K criteria for standards of literacy. These teachers have little to no training with respect to teaching ELLs/DLLs, yet they work with them daily. Their perspectives were used to inform a PD course designed to support teachers who have ELL/DLL students in their classrooms and to enrich their classroom experiences to support literacy for all their students. The goal of the study was to query teachers who have taught ELL/DLL students about what they know and what they wish they knew. Teachers have provided instruction successfully and their students have met the criteria in the Pre-K literacy standards, while others have

struggled to meet them. It is important to document Pre-K teachers' struggles so that the project will help ensure that all teachers can support ELLs/DLLs by teaching the emergent literacy skills their students need.

Definition of the Problem

The problem in the local area is that there has been a high influx of ELL/DLL students in Pre-K classrooms, and teachers do not know how to instruct these students and how to address their needs best so that they meet the Pre-K criteria for literacy. Feinberg, Schaaf, and LaForett (2013) reported that, "On average, 16% of the children in the classroom spoke languages other than English" (p. 7). In a national study of state-funded Pre-K programs, Mead (2012, p. 3) found that "57 percent of Georgia classrooms ranked in the lowest level of instructional quality." Parents play a vital role in reinforcing what their children learn in the classroom. However, Good, Masewicz, and Vogel (2010) found that there often were communication gaps between teachers and parents with respect to student achievement, which makes it difficult for parents to understand what their children are learning in school. If the teacher cannot communicate with the parents because of a language barrier, parents may find it difficult to reinforce what their children are learning in the classroom.

The quality of instruction is especially important for Pre-K students, as they are experiencing the subject matter for the first time. Feinberg et al. (2013) conducted a study on the Georgia Pre-K program and found that classrooms need additional support for bilingual students. Researchers from the Editorial Projects Education Research Center (2011) stated, "Experts in the field and advocates of ELLs also have expressed concerns that not enough attention has been paid to including ELLs appropriately in

implementation of the standards" (n. p.). More ELL/DLL students will enter Pre-K and teachers need to know how to instruct these students so they can grow academically

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

Georgia was one of the first states to initiate a Pre-K program, which was piloted in 1992. The program began with 750 four-year-old, at-risk children (Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, 2014). Now, more than half a million students are enrolled in the lottery-funded program. The number of ELL students tripled between 1990 and 2012 and constitutes 20% of children ages 8 and under (Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, 2014). Feinberg et al. (2013, p. 19) reported that when evaluating teachers' practices, "Only 2.8 out of a 7-point scale from low (1-2) to middle (3-5) to high (6-7)" was achieved for instructional support in Pre-K. The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning provides contracts for different programs from birth to 5-years-old, and "Bright from the Start," a lottery-funded program, supports Pre-K students with social and emotional based learning. The program allows Pre-K students to attend school free of charge and is based on formal schooling (Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, 2014). It also offers one professional development (PD) program annually, with an emphasis on math and personal and social development. Other types of PD programs also have been used to support Pre-K teachers, such as podcasts, online workshops, and articles, but none of these pertains to literacy instruction for ELL/DLL students. In discussions at PD trainings, educators focus on the need for more support for ELL/DLL students' needs, as teachers have noted that the numbers of ELL/DLL students are increasing. A local director based in the surrounding area

indicated, "Our enrollment at the school has seen an increasing amount of ELL/DLL students and I know teachers are going to face difficultly communicating and teaching them for their academic and social success" (T. Carlyle, personal communication, August 22, 2015). The director had been at the study site school for nearly 15 years and tried to support her teachers as much as possible, but noted that limited educational tools make it difficult for teachers to achieve success with ELL/DLL students.

Evidence of the Problem in the Literature

Feinberg et al. (2013) found that, although Spanish-speaking DLLs made significant gains during Pre-K, they entered and left it significantly behind their monolingual English-speaking peers on all outcomes. The number of ELL/DLLs will continue to grow because of the large influx of immigrants to the United States. Roy-Campbell (2013) reported that 10% of 5.3 million students are ELL students, a 51% increase from 1998 to 2009. Georgia also had a 500% increase in ELL students between 1993 and 2003, which is projected to increase in the future (Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, 2014).

Teachers' misunderstanding of ELLs often leads these children to be placed in special needs classrooms or mislabeled as having a learning disability (McCrary, Sennette, & Brown, 2011). Jensen, Reese, Hall-Kenyon, and Bennett (2015) argued that institutions that instruct early childhood teachers do not develop teachers who can instruct students with diverse linguistic backgrounds. Pentimonti and Justice (2010) found that students in Pre-K who received high quality instruction exhibited better growth in emergent literacy, while those in a low quality instructional environment exhibited poorer performance. Because Pre-K schools in Georgia scored low in

instructional support, growth will not be as prominent as in higher quality Pre-K classrooms.

The purpose of this study was to develop a detailed understanding of the experiences of teachers who teach ELL/DLL students in the Pre-K criteria for literacy. Focusing on teachers' attempts to support literacy among ELL/DLLs in the Pre-K setting, the tools they have learned, and what they need to support that work. My goal was to gather information to inform a study that will improve the instructional practices of all Pre-K teachers in Georgia.

Definitions

Basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS): Students engage in social conversations daily, and BICS are used in social situations (Bonenfant, 2012).

Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP): Formal academic learning that includes different language proficiency levels for those who are learning a new language in areas such as speaking, reading, and comprehension (Bonenfant, 2012).

Common underlying proficiency (CUP): This method is implemented when a student speaks two languages, such as English and Spanish, and uses skills and concepts in both (Cummins, 1984).

Dual language learners (DLL): These are students who are learning another language, as well as the language spoken at home (Méndez, Crais, Castro, & Kainz, 2015).

English language learners (ELL): Defined as in DLL above (Shin, 2010).

Emergent literacy: This term refers to reading and writing concepts that develop into conventional reading and writing (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998).

Professional learning communities (PLC): PLCs create an environment for teachers to gather their thoughts and knowledge and provide students with high levels of instruction and learning (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2016)

Total physical response (TPR): Teachers use TPR to give directions in a language, and the student follows those directions using physical movements (Boyd-Batstone, 2013).

Realia: Tangible objects provided for visual/tactile support during classroom teaching (Kinard & Gainer, 2015).

Significance

Pre-K teachers in Georgia are unprepared to provide the high-quality instruction that ELL/DLL students need to succeed. Few scholars have addressed Pre-K ELL/DLL students; therefore, the insights provided in this study will assist local educators. Feinberg et al. (2013) stated, "These findings suggest that the addition of bilingual supports during children's classroom experiences may be a useful strategy for further enhancing children's acquisition of the skills and knowledge being taught in Pre-K and better prepare them for kindergarten" (p. 20). Determining ways in which to provide Pre-K teachers with strategies of rich instruction that allow them to teach ELL/DLL students literacy will enhance these students' knowledge and provide a smoother transition to kindergarten. Further, providing PD that offers insights about resources and ways in which to work with ELL/DLL students more effectively will help teachers instruct these students successfully.

The findings from the study also may help Pre-K teachers in the local area provide quality instructional literacy support for ELL students. Maxwell (2009) reported,

"Over 80% of Georgia's Pre-K classes in schools and almost 60% of Georgia's Pre-K classes in centers were rated as having basic instructional practice supporting children's language and literacy skills" (p. 11). Students receive minimal quality instruction. Interviews with, and observations of, Pre-K teachers were conducted during the study to understand how they perceived teaching literacy to Pre-K ELL/DLL students and what methods and strategies they used to enhance their students' success.

Research Questions

The research questions helped provide information to develop solutions to the local problem. An understanding of teachers' perspectives of ELL/DLL students and ways in which they instruct them will help teacher educators design PD that is needed in the state of Georgia. In this qualitative case study, I documented teachers' perspectives to provide the insight necessary to change teacher practice. Therefore, I addressed the following questions:

RQ1: What are teachers' experiences in teaching preliteracy to ELL/DLLs in the Pre-K setting?

RQ2: What do teachers say they need to support their work in teaching preliteracy to ELL/DLLs?

Literature Review

The challenges teachers face in meeting ELL/DLL students' literacy needs are prevalent not only in Georgia, but across the United States. Teachers should participate in PD that helps them become acquainted better with ELL students, their strengths and struggles, and which instructional strategies are most effective in helping them learn to read. The literature review was based upon peer-reviewed articles from the ERIC

database and other scholarly databases, including SAGE, Education Research Complete, ProQuest, and Google Scholar. I began my search with the following keywords: *PD, effective practices with ELLs, supporting ELL/DLLs' literacy development, teacher learning, literacy practices with preschool ELL students.* Saturation was reached when each new article provided the same information, and authors made the same references with respect to enhancing ELL/DLL students' literacy. The theories that informed the study included Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory and Krashen's (1981) second language acquisition theory.

Conceptual Framework

. Vygotsky (1978) and Krashen (1981) developed theories related to social interaction, development, and language acquisition. In the sociocultural theory of human learning, Vygotsky showed that social learning is a process people need to interact in society effectively, and teachers and students interact with one another daily, both socially and academically. Kennedy (2013) stated, "Cultural factors play an enormous role in social development. They may also explain many of the differences in children's styles of interactions" (p. 24). Vygotsky outlined the ways in which social interaction can promote the development of cognition; students need to experience social interactions in rich learning environments. Edwards (2014) found that, with respect to sociocultural theory, the relations between social, cultural, play, and learning experiences help second language (L2) students develop language. These interactions should take place among students, teachers, and outside experts. Chun and Frodesen (2014) added, "In the cognitive tradition, the focus is on the central role of the human mind in processing linguistic data that is heard or received as input, with a reduced role for

repetition and habit formation" (pp. 21-22). Students need to hear words repeated to enhance their language development, and teachers should maintain an open dialogue in the classroom that allows students to communicate continuously.

Vygotsky (1978) stated that student cultural development occurs on two levels, social and individual, such that language acquisition includes both social and cognitive skills. Vygotsky's (1978) social and cognitive language development can be related to Cummins' (1984) theory of language acquisition, in which basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) are acquired both individually and in a social setting. Cummins (1980) reported, "CALP is a reliable dimension of individual differences which is central to scholastic success and which can be empirically distinguished from interpersonal communicative skills in both L1 and L2" (p. 185). BICS refers to language skills used in social situations, while CALP refers to formal academic learning components, such as speaking, reading, and listening. However, these language skills are not acquired simultaneously. Teachers often believe that their students know English because they communicate in BICS or "playground language," but they have not mastered CALP, which is necessary for academic success (Cummins, 1984). According to Vygotsky, culture affects and shapes cognitive development. Further, as Diego (2013) stated,

> On a deeper level, multi-cultural theorists and practitioners have argued for teachers to understand the meaning of culture as an impact on learning and education; the nature of ethnic, racial, and urban cultures; and the role of culture in socialization, interaction, and communication (p. 4).

ELL/DLL students come from cultural backgrounds that often include traditions and beliefs, as well as languages, that differ from those of their teachers.

Vygotsky (1978) also described the way in which facilitators and other educators can use sociocultural theory to understand the way in which students learn, especially if they come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Preschool is one of the first environments in which children acquire social knowledge and interact with their classmates and teachers (Ozaydina, 2015). Teachers must be sensitive to students' cultural diversity to understand the ways in which they learn. Behroozizad, Nambiar, and Amir (2014) found that optimal cognitive and linguistic development takes place when children participate and are involved in social experiences. Students must interact with one another to acquire language. Pre-K teachers need to have background knowledge of ELL/DLL students and their language development to facilitate their success in future schooling. Teachers need to maintain an warm relationship with each student and know his/her background and culture so that student feels comfortable (Kennedy, 2013). ELL/DLL students can benefit from scaffolding, as they require additional support in linguistic and academic learning.

Teachers should work in a collaborative environment to share and implement teaching methods and strategies, as modeling and having materials to support ELL/DLL students enhance their academic success. In the sociocultural theory, Vygotsky (1978) addressed ways of knowing or cognition based on social interaction during growth and development. Vygotsky discussed human social interaction (working with others, active learning, and scaffolding learning) from a constructivist approach. Teachers and students who actively engage with one another facilitate continuous practice in the classroom, and

teachers should collaborate with one another to increase their students' academic achievement.

Despite its relevance to classroom practice, Ellis (2010) found that one possible explanation for the absence of constructivist strategies in many classrooms is the lack of research and time. Rizzuto (2017) stated, "Researchers have also established that teachers across U.S. public schools have largely developed negative theories about mainstream ELL students' ability to learn" (p. 183). Teachers do not use research to inform the tools they use in the classroom, either because they lack the technical knowledge to understand them, or their schedules are too full for them to examine and comprehend reports. Further, teachers often do not have time to collaborate with one another because of their schedules. Frequently, teachers lack access to reports or strategies theorists use because they have a limited understanding of ways in which to implement them and no additional resources to do so. Webster and Valeo (2011) found that there are many misconceptions and biases about teaching ELLs that can limit teachers' abilities to provide positive environments and lessons for them. Snow and Matthews (2016) found that teachers who have ELL students in their classroom find it difficult to teach unconstrained skills (vocabulary, grammar, and syntax) because of their lack of experience in teaching constrained skills (letter recognition, sounds, and print).

Vygotsky (1978) also focused on knowledge acquisition and suggested that teachers, as learners, should practice actively in their fields. García, Arias, Murri, and Serna (2010) stated, "Teachers who are assigned as instructors of these students can have no formal preparation, minimal formal preparation related to workshop training, or substantial coursework and experience" (p. 133). Although teachers should broaden their

knowledge of research theories and implement them in the classroom, they lack the time and ability to collaborate with other practitioners who understand the ways in which ELL students learn. The participants in this study were teachers who constructed their own knowledge through experiences that may provide insights relevant to the research questions in the study. Asking questions, exploring, and assessing what the teachers know about best practices contributed to the study's findings.

Krashen's (1981) theory of language acquisition also informed this study. Edwards (2014) reported, "It is important to note that cognitive, linguistic, and social factors all play significant roles in linguistic use, choice, and development" (p. 25). Krashen (1981) defined language acquisition as a form of natural communication, such that people do not know they are engaged in a language process. During language acquisition, communication is the main outcome and focus of the process. Krashen also is known for the input hypothesis (1981) or comprehension hypothesis (2003), in which input is useful in language acquisition only when it is comprehensible. Krashen (2015) reported, "An important corollary of the Comprehension Hypothesis is that we do not acquire language when we produce it, only when we understand it" (p. 2). Language instruction should contain input appropriate to the comprehension levels of the ELL students in the class. Krashen (1981) also discussed the importance of the affective filter. Nath, Mohamad, and Yamat (2017) found that students who were distressed scored lower in reading tests because they were more anxious about the outcome of their results. When students are anxious, their affective filter increases, and they are less likely to be receptive to learning.

For teachers to understand language development and acquisition's significance in providing support for ELL/DLL students, they need background knowledge or workshops about second language acquisition to implement effective strategies in the classroom. Siwatu (2011) stated, "Recently, researchers have expressed concern about the nature of preservice teachers' field experiences and whether the settings in which these experiences occur reflect ideal classroom conditions" (p. 358). Krashen (1982) reported that researchers do not interact with teachers or facilitators in a school setting, as they have moved on to other interests and are not conducting further studies on language acquisition and learning. Teachers do not acquire adequate information about ways in which to instruct ELL/DLL students. Further, Diego (2013) argued that, as ELL students enter elementary school, one of the greatest challenges is providing teachers with methods, concepts, and strategies to meet curriculum standards. In Georgia, there is little current evidence of ELL/DLL workshops for Pre-K teachers, but there are veteran teachers who have taught ELL/DLL students, and learning from their experiences can help novice teachers understand the ways in which ELL/DLLs acquire literacy best.

Second Language Acquisition

Like all Pre-K students, ELL/DLL students engage in language acquisition every day in the classroom; however, they also are engaged simultaneously in second language acquisition (SLA). According to U.S. Department of Education (2014), 21% of the U.S. population over 5 years of age speaks a language other than English at home (as cited in Goodrich, Lonigan, & Farver, 2017). Teachers and students communicate throughout the school day, but students who are learning a second language (L2) such as English often find it difficult to understand their teachers. Zashchitina and Moysyak (2017) found that

SLA encompasses ELL/DLL students who are learning a second language as well as their native tongue. SLA also is considered "cross-linguistic influence" or "transfer" (Amaro & Wrembel, 2016, p. 398), which refers to interactions between prior and current learning. SLA, which is considered a cognitive process (Larraza, Samuel, & Oñederra, 2016), occurs naturally during social interactions, as students and teachers interact constantly in a social setting during school. Teachers should provide complex language so that students who have limited language development can enhance their vocabulary and add to their prior knowledge or words they know already (Castrillón, 2017). Zashchitina and Moysyak (2017) found that if teachers provide concepts familiar to second language learners, then student language learning develops more effectively in the classroom. Hernandez (2017) found that SLA can be divided into two categories: the home and the classroom. SLA occurs naturally in the home because it is the setting in which young children learn to talk. In the classroom, SLA instruction refers to acquiring the target language in a formal setting. These settings also can be the environments in which informal and formal communication occurs.

Informal communication occurs when a student interacts with others, either during play or free dialogue. Aiping, Ying, Biales, and Olszewski (2016) found that L2 students acquire new words in both informal and formal communication and learn based on their environment and interactions with teachers and other actors. Formal communication occurs when the teacher provides instruction, such as phonological awareness in Pre-K. If Pre-K teachers do not know the trajectory of ELL/DLL students' language development, then they are at risk of not helping their students develop their language skills. Chang (2015) referred to Cummins' (1984) BICS and CALP acquired

both individually and in a social setting and argued that informal (BICS) and formal (CALP) should be introduced to teachers who have ELL/DLL students in their classroom, so they can understand the language acquisition process. Teachers can provide the greatest support for ELL/DLL students when they communicate both informally and formally.

Students interact actively with other students and teachers and begin to learn how to communicate with one another. Once students enter the classroom, language always is present, as students are immersed in literacy activities (Aiping et al., 2016), and this process allows them to begin shaping their communicative skills. Communication should occur in a neutral setting, as it allows students to become open with their teacher and have informal conversations with one another. In the natural approach (NA) theory, Krashen (1981) indicated that students should communicate within a natural environment. Accordingly, teachers also should interact and engage students in open dialogue conversations.

SLA encompasses informal and formal learning, and both should take place in a neutral or positive setting. Informal learning takes place in natural conversation outside the classroom, while formal learning occurs between the teacher and students in the classroom. Implementing both types of learning generates a foundation for ELL/DLL students to learn literacy concepts and language. With respect to interaction, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory contributes to an understanding of language acquisition, as Vygotsky described social interaction during growth and development.

Teachers can construct active learning communities in the classroom based on students' social interactions. Steinlen (2017) found that language can be both receptive

and productive as students (L2) begin to acquire new language. In addition to acquiring new language, Chang (2015) suggested that teachers should know the five stages of language acquisition that will help their ELL/DLL students develop language. The first stage is preproduction, in which ELL/DLL students are silent because they are not sufficiently confident to speak or have limited English vocabulary. The second is early production, in which ELL/DLL students begin to speak one or two-word phases; the third is speech emergence, in which ELL/DLL students begin to communicate with their peers with either simple words or sentences. The fourth is intermediate fluency, during which ELL/DLL students begin to communicate in more complex sentences to express their thoughts, and the fifth stage in acquiring language acquisition is advanced fluency, in which ELL/DLLs can have a fluid conversation and understand content in their classrooms. These stages unfold naturally in the classroom as students learn the social context through conversations, collaborations, and feedback from peers and teachers. Kim and Plotka (2016) found that teachers play a role in creating a safe and neutral environment for students as well as parents, and they need to respect their cultures and languages and demonstrate that skill with their students. Students should feel comfortable in their classroom environment because it promotes participation.

L2/SLA teaching is considered skills-based, as there are technical skills that need to coincide with literacy instruction. However, most teachers need more resources, training, or PD to ensure that L2 students are acquiring adequate language skills. Wei (2017) found that because many teachers do not have the background necessary to teach L2 students, they focus on correcting students rather than promoting language learned recently. Students are afraid to use their newly-learned language as they do not want to

make mistakes or be corrected. As teachers face increasing numbers of ELL students, SLA should be the primary focus in the way in which they teach these students. The challenge in schools is that teachers do not know what SLA is, or its process, because of the dearth of research and PD in the local area. Lee (2017) found that teachers should be more open-minded about their needs for ELL/DLL students, but they lack the knowledge to provide instruction to L2 students. Language learning consists not only of signs and symbols, but also is a complex social practice that teachers need to learn and practice. Markham, Rice, and Darban (2016) found that teachers' understanding of SLA also is limited; therefore, L2 students are not reaching their language development potential. Teachers who do not receive appropriate PD lack knowledge of SLA that prevents ELL/DLL students from reaching their full academic potential. Therefore, teachers require research-based evidence about SLA among preschool-aged children.

Oral Language Development

Students develop oral language during instruction in the classroom. Oral language is an essential part of Pre-K as students are developing new language skills. Whorrall and Cabell (2016) found that developing oral language skills during the preschool years is important in early literacy acquisition. Ying (2015) posited that when students play and interact with peers, their language use is related to their experiences and development. Teachers who engage ELL students in rich instruction can develop oral language that promotes academic growth.

Pre-K students communicate with their peers and teachers throughout the day. Galante and Thomson (2017) discovered that students acquire more oral language through dramatic play than traditional communication. Stagnitti et al. (2016) showed that

students in the play-based curriculum acquired more oral language than those taught the traditional curriculum. When ELL/DLL students first listen to general conversation in the classroom, they develop notions about the way in which the language works and feel more comfortable listening than engaging in the conversation. Lonigan and Milburn (2017) added that oral language begins in the preschool years and continues through elementary school years, but teachers need to know ways to include oral language development in their instruction. ELL/DLL students hear oral language in the classroom when teachers give directions, discuss content, and ask questions that require either one or two responses.

In contrast, McDough (2018) demonstrated that when educators do not provide opportunities for students to engage in open dialogue, it can slow ELL/DLL children's responses. If teachers do not hear from their students, they do not know how to help them. Further, children who do not talk do not exhibit their knowledge of expressive language skills (McDough, 2018) and when there are limited responses, teachers cannot support students' development of language learning. This process becomes a cycle when teachers lack the background knowledge necessary to provide strategies that help ELL students effectively. ELL/DLL students engage in many conversations throughout the day in Pre-K, but if those conversations do not promote their language development, they will experience little growth. Oral language skills start with the teachers instructing students, however, Caruso, Colombi, and Tebbit (2017) explained that within SLA, the development of oral language (listening and speaking) is the most challenging and neglected concept in the classroom. It is important for teachers to provide children with a clear understanding of new vocabulary words so that they can expand their word

knowledge (Whorrall & Cabell, 2016). Students need to acquire adequate oral language skills that can be taught through both structured, interactive, and engaging methods, as well as direct instruction (Hill, 2017). In addition to enhancing oral language development in the classroom, teachers should provide caretaker speech, realia and visuals, gestures, Total Physical Response (TPR), and oral reading (Boyd-Batstone, 2013).

During the Pre-K day, there are 2 large group sections during which a teacher can either read a big book aloud or implement a Language Experience Approach (LEA) chart. The LEA provides an open discussion about the students' experiences, which can be anything from their favorite color to where they would go if they had a car. These experiences improve students' language development over time. Teachers also can enhance oral language activities in small groups and individual settings, in which students develop oral language directly through teacher instructions. Oral language development also can be examined from the perspective of Cummins' (1984) BICS concept.

If teachers do not understand the concepts of SLA, ELL/DLL students' academic growth will suffer. Peterson et al. (2016) showed that attention to PD is the key to their success. Teachers who have ELL/DLL students in their classroom need to (1) be aware of the cultural nature of social competence, and (2) explore culturally responsive ways to interact in classrooms to build stronger oral language functioning (Jensen et. al, 2015). Whether teachers have had preparation or not, they are expected to teach ELL/DLL students at various stages in English proficiency (Hill, 2017). Teachers who teach ELL/DLL must learn to understand the ways in which these students acquire language.

Ates, Kim, and Grigsby (2014) conducted research that showed that discussion, interaction, and engagement are imperative for good oral language development. Heppner (2016) stated, "Oral language includes both speaking and listening with the purpose of communicating and provides the foundation for emergent literacy" (p. 460). Methods and strategies to develop language can support and expand students' oral language.

Emergent Literacy

Emergent literacy begins in Pre-K to later elementary years. ELL/DLL students acquire emergent literacy skills in the classroom when the teacher presents language development instruction such as phonological awareness. Ihmeideh (2014) found that emergent literacy is the earliest stage of literacy development. Strang and Piasta (2016) stated, "Emergent literacy skills include those related to language, print knowledge, knowledge of graphemes (letter name knowledge), letter sound knowledge, phonological awareness, syntactic awareness, and emergent writing," (p. 1338). Emergent literacy is a skill that Pre-K students must learn during the school years, and phonological awareness plays a significant role in preliteracy. Hoffman and Whittingham (2017) found ELL/DLL students are learning 'language' continuously during various activities and experiences throughout their day in the classroom.

Learning preliteracy concepts contributes to students' later reading skills and is beneficial for ELL students when they learn other subject matter. The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning's 2014 program, "Bright from the Start," list the importance of phonological awareness in Pre-K, and research has shown that components of phonological awareness are beneficial for ELL students (August et al., 2014). These

stages include listening; rhyming; alliteration; syllables, and phoneme blending and segmenting. Meeks and Kemp (2017) found limited research related to early literacy/reading and highlighted the challenges teachers face in the classroom because of their lack of knowledge. Therefore, teachers need to be familiar with teaching ELL student's emergent literacy. Returning to Kreshan's language acquisition (1981), if teachers know the steps necessary to enhance language learning, then it is easier for ELL/DLL students to build preliteracy skills. Byington and Kim (2017) found that teachers should include a literacy-rich environment that contains books, puppets, flannel boards, and writing tools.

Local Pre-K teachers receive one PD class annually, but during the past six years, there has been no PD on preliteracy in ELL students. If their annual PD provided teachers with current research-based concepts and methods to instruct ELL students, then they could overcome the challenges related to language learning. Werfel (2017) found that teachers need to provide effective intervention for students to succeed in emergent literacy skills. Exploring Pre-K teachers' experiences in developing ELL students' literacy has been deemed successful and can help close the achievement gap between Pre-K and kindergarten. Teachers need to have the self-efficacy to promote positive instruction in the classroom, as students may be unmotivated and disengaged otherwise. Hoffman and Whittingham (2017) found that one-size-fits-all PD does not help teachers acquire literacy practices and therefore, PD should be tailored to the students' needs and priorities.

Pre-K classrooms include not only ELL/DLL students but students who can speak fluent English but still need the language development skills to enhance their literacy

concepts. Folson et al. (2017) found that effective classroom literacy practices can be tedious, as there are different levels of language proficiency, and teachers face challenges because they must accommodate not only ELL/DLL students, but other students in the classroom. Vygotsky's (1978) notion of scaffolding allows teachers to provide resources and support for students who are learning new concepts. In addition, Folson et al. (2017) stated, "Average educator knowledge increased from the 48th percentile to the 59th percentile on the Teacher Knowledge of Early Literacy Skills survey when provided relevant PD" (p. 1). Folson et al. (2017) noted that teachers who went through a preparation program or received PD in reading instruction had improved understanding and content knowledge that enhanced scaffolding for their students. Teacher preparedness is for both students and teachers so that students receive the literacy rich instruction necessary, and teachers acquire knowledge about ways to provide literacy-rich instruction in their classrooms.

Academic Language

As students acquire informal language, formal language begins to play an important role in the classroom, and preschool programs have become the only avenue to acquire and develop formal and informal language skills (Markova, 2017). Barnes, Grifenhagen, and Dickinson (2016) found that academic language is associated with success in literacy and the content areas in elementary school and beyond. Academic language includes a variety of literacy concepts, so that students learn through interaction and engagement with the teacher and in other types of academic interactions. In addition, Barnes, Grifenhagen, and Dickinson (2017) found that exposure to academic language is associated with later academic success. Students can learn academic language through

play or formal conversations with their peers or teachers. It is challenging for teachers to teach academic language acquisition, as it includes comparing, classifying, synthesizing, evaluating, and inferring (Bonenfant, 2014). Students entering Pre-K are exposed to many different concepts and rules, and it can be difficult for teachers to begin to teach formal language. Barnes, Grifenhagen, and Dickinson (2016) stated further that it is difficult for ELL students to acquire academic language because of the complexity of the skills, and although English learners may be proficient in conversational English, their understanding and use of academic language may be less developed, which inhibits their ability to understand and describe complex ideas or concepts.

Pre-K teachers instruct ELL/DLL students in academic language by providing accommodating strategies such as word or sentence repetition. Barnes and Dickinson (2017) found that academic vocabulary is more difficult for students to learn but stated that repetition is a successful strategy that helps ELL students develop academic English. Smith et al. (2016) emphasized that students need to acquire academic language so they can become familiar with the academic vocabulary in testing mandated by the state, They further argued that testing language will become difficult for these students' future years of schooling, as tests consist largely of academic language. Cho (2016) suggested that ELLs can acquire academic language if they receive repetitive instruction. Many conversations that take place in the classroom encourage social interactions, such as open dialogue with other students, and the teacher and students exchange both academic and social language in these conversations. Markova (2017) found that language taught by the teacher was more difficult for preschool students to acquire compared to free-play instruction. Similarly, Chang (2015) concluded that both academic and conversational

language need to be emphasized. Teachers may lack PD about ways to acquire academic language skills because of the lack of research in academic language (Haager & Osipova, 2017). Teachers should be encouraging both informal and formal conversations in the classroom so that students can differentiate between play and academic language.

Implications

As the literature review showed, teaching literacy to ELL/DLL students is a challenging job that requires a deeper knowledge of SLA, and the development of oral language and vocabulary, and Georgia teachers are frustrated increasingly that they do not receive adequate resources and practices to help ELL/DLL students. Local teachers indicated what they do, what they know, and what they need to design interventions suited best to the challenges they face. The study will support all teachers by providing the PD necessary to teach the emergent literacy skills their ELL/DLL students need.

Summary

Elements such as language acquisition, oral language development, emergent literacy, and academic language contribute to ELL/DLL students' educational foundation and having research-based methods and strategies can help promote their future academic success. Oral language development is critical, as it strengthens ELL/DLL students' language development overall. Engaging in rich instruction and interacting during open-ended discussions can enhance ELL/DLLs' language development further. Teachers are models for these students, and they often repeat and mimic the teacher's language. In addition to engaging students, shadowing and cultural narratives contribute to oral language development on the part of ELL/DLL students.

Teachers create the literacy segment of their lessons with these phonological strategies in mind. Cheatham and Ro (2010) found pretend play and narratives can promote pre-literacy skills in the classroom. Social language takes place during interactions with teachers and students, and through it, students try to understand concepts, vocabulary, and words with different meanings (Sibold, 2011). ELL/DLL students are exposed to both social and academic language in the classroom, and academic language learning is not communicative, but consists instead of direct instruction in the rules of language (Ates et al., 2014). Academic English is a part of language learning, as students learn grammar rules and structure. Pre-K ELL/DLL students begin their academic language learning in the classroom as the teacher presents various concepts, skills, and the structure of language.

The following section presents the research design and methods. Implementing a case study provided detailed insights about the experiences that Pre-K teachers have with ELL/DLL students, and the ways in which they attempt to accommodate their teaching to these students' instructional needs.

Section 2: Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to acquire a detailed understanding of the experiences of teachers who teach ELL/DLL students in Pre-K criteria for literacy. The long-term goal is to use the research findings to help design PD for educators in Georgia. A qualitative design was the most appropriate approach to gain the in-depth knowledge required to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What are teachers' experiences in teaching preliteracy to ELL/DLLs in the Pre-K setting?

RQ2: What do teachers say they need to support their work in teaching preliteracy to ELL/DLLs?

Teachers may not have the background knowledge to instruct their ELL/DLL students, but they do have attitudes, experiences, and ideas about working with ELL/DLLs. Insights from this study can be used to create interventions for teachers and students alike.

Methodology and Design

The study method was qualitative because the purpose was to explore Pre-K teachers' experiences and perceptions, and their perceptions about best emergent literacy practices for ELL/DLL students was the central focus of the study. To understand the way in which Pre-K teachers receive professional support to help them teach ELL/DLL students in preliteracy, the participants were asked about their experiences with promising practices they have implemented or have seen implemented. This information can contribute to future models of effective instruction for ELL/DLL students.

A case study was the best approach because it allowed a detailed examination of a complex problem and focused on different Pre-K criteria for literacy, and a holistic examination of individual teachers and their experiences with ELL/DLL students. Yin (2014) stated, "The classic case study consists of an in-depth inquiry into a specific and complex phenomenon 'case,' set within its real-world context" (p. 321). Further, in a qualitative case study, the researcher is the instrument in collecting narrative and descriptive data. In a quantitative study, the researcher uses formal instruments to collect numerical data or employs a secondary or archival data analysis. Baškarada (2014) stated, "As such, case studies provide an opportunity for the researcher to gain a deep holistic view of the research problem, and may facilitate describing, understanding and explaining a research problem or situation" (p. 1). Other qualitative designs, such as grounded theory and ethnography, emphasize detailed components, such as cultural themes, or attempt to generate a theory (Merriam, 2009). Ethnographers describe people and cultures through the researchers' writing, and it is rooted in anthropology (Creswell, 2012). In this study, data were not collected over an extended period, nor did I examine the central phenomenon solely through a cultural lens. Grounded theory was not appropriate, because data collection and analysis are interrelated throughout the study (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Further, grounded theory did not fit because the study was not designed to develop a theory.

A quantitative approach was unsuitable for an in-depth examination of the core phenomenon because it presents findings in numerical form or statistics (Creswell, 2012). Gizir (2014) argued that qualitative studies should be conducted in a natural setting, so the observer can perceive content as it would be implemented normally day to day. In

this case study, I focused on a discrete phenomenon by examining a set of individuals, organizations, schools, departments, and events (Creswell, 2012). Collecting data from evidence provided by teachers' perspectives on the best instructional methods they implement with ELL/DLL students can provide insight about the way in which Pre-K leadership can support their teachers and other staff members in the district more effectively. Understanding and obtaining the perspectives of different Pre-K teachers also can generate guidelines for best practices that support ELL/DLL students' literacy. Answers to those questions certainly will yield information with respect to the struggles teachers and ELL students face.

Participants

There were multiple Pre-K schools in the local area, but I obtained permission to conduct the work only in two Pre-K private schools. The first school had 10 Pre-K classes and the second school had 3 classes. Participants were contacted through my director's local contacts with other Pre-K schools in the area, as she also owned other Pre-K schools. I obtained these teachers' e-mail addresses and sent them a cover letter that described the purpose of the study and asked them to recommend other teachers who might wish to participate. To gather sufficient data and ensure data saturation, 10 individuals were asked to participate in the study, and an additional 3 Pre-K teachers who worked in the district were recruited through snowballing sampling who met the study criterion of teaching for more than 2 years at the Pre-K level and who had ELL/DLL students. Snowball sampling is a form of purposive sampling in which research participants refer others to their studies. I used purposive sampling to reveal the practices and theory development that are effective for ELL/DLL students, because participants

recommend others who meet the study criteria (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). Individuals were selected who could provide insight about the central phenomenon; thus, the sample cannot be generalized to the population at large (Creswell, 2012). To ensure saturation in data collection, data were collected from the 13 participants until no new evidence (emerging categories, themes, and conclusions) emerged. Initially, to meet saturation, I conducted more in-depth interviews (asked questions that emerged during the ongoing data collection) and added observations until saturation occurred during the stage of data analysis.

My role was to implement the study in the local area, where there is a high influx of ELL/DLL students, to gain insights from the students' teachers. I was a Pre-K teacher in the same school for the past 7 years, but had not initiated any contact with the participants, as private Pre-K schools are distributed throughout the county. Because I interacted with teachers with whom I do not work, the participants were comfortable and honest, and it also reduced any potential bias on my part.

Having a cordial relationship with the participants is an aspect of the data collection process. Participants received and signed consent forms, and confidentiality was ensured by designating them with letters. In the consent forms, I documented that data would remain confidential, that participants could withdraw from the study at any time, and that the participants could decline to answer any questions that made them feel uncomfortable. The participants also were informed that there would be no consequences if they decided not to participate or withdrew from the study. Participants were neither coerced, nor given monetary rewards for their participation.

I obtained institutional review board (IRB; 07-19-16-0272055) approval first to ensure participants' rights were protected. I maintained an organized system to keep track of all the data collected, which were kept in a secure place at all times, either on a password-protected laptop or in a tangible folder. Interviews and observations were recorded to facilitate analysis, and the recorder was kept in a safe with a password. I will retain all data for 5 years and then shred them at the end of the study unless further analysis is anticipated for publication purposes.

Data Collection

Various kinds of data can be collected to answer research questions in a qualitative study. Concrete data, such as interview transcripts, observational fieldnotes, document reviews, can be collected and analyzed to provide findings that facilitate positive change in the local area. The data collected for this study included semi-structured individual interviews (Appendix B), interviewee responses to interviewer questions (Appendix C), classroom observation checklists (Appendix D), and fieldnotes taken during the classroom observations (Appendix F). Data collection began after participants signed the consent forms, and times and meeting places convenient to them were set. The interviews were conducted in conference rooms at both schools, as they were a neutral setting. Observations were conducted during each Pre-K teacher's classroom instruction.

Interviews

Interviews were semistructured and followed interview protocols, including an opening statement (Appendix B). Yin (2009) stated, "For interviewing key persons, you must cater to the interviewee's schedule and availability, not your own and the nature of

the interview is much more open-ended" (p. 85). Participants could ask questions about the research questions and study for clarification. Key questions, as well as probes that followed them, were used to facilitate natural conversation. There also was space to record comments and fieldnotes (Creswell, 2003). Interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' permission, which also was included in the consent form. The audio recordings allowed me to review participants' answers to interview questions and were transcribed verbatim for clarity and analysis. The interviews took place between August and October 2016, during which participants answered questions about themselves and were made sufficiently comfortable to give honest descriptions of their experiences and perspectives, which was part of the validation process of the study. Each interview lasted from 20 to 45 minutes. I established trust by having a positive attitude toward the participants and telling them exactly what the study entailed, after which I reviewed the consent form with them. Any questions and concerns were addressed during this initial meeting.

Observations

Data also were collected during observations in the participants' classrooms. All participants were observed during instructional Pre-K time. The length of each observation was 25 to 40 minutes, and each participant was observed one time during his or her instructional academic time. I used an observational checklist, The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), to document the ways in which teachers accommodated ELL/DLL students in their classrooms and during instruction (Table 1). The checklist consisted of 8 indictors, and I observed whether the participants implemented the indicator and took notes on the way in which they did so. Observations

added depth to the study, as they allowed me to see the way in which participants applied their background knowledge when working with ELL students and whether classroom practices contained the elements in the observation checklist. I observed participants holistically to capture them in the natural setting in which they taught and interacted with their students. Naturalistic observations provide a more nuanced view of participant behavior (Yilmaz, 2013) and provided deeper answers to my research questions. Audio recordings and fieldnotes, as well as the observation checklist, were implemented to achieve a detailed understanding of teachers' practices.

Fieldnotes

The third type of data collected for the study were fieldnotes. Fieldnotes were taken during observations of all participants. While observing each participant, I wrote a narrative about the concrete activities I observed and my thoughts about the way they accommodated ELL/DLL students in their classroom. I used fieldnotes to add more detailed findings that were compared to the interview and observation findings. In conjunction with the SIOP observational checklist, I wrote down notes about thoughts, behaviors, and activities to help me understand the central phenomenon. Each participant observed had corresponding fieldnotes, which provided patterns, as participants' similar practices during instruction that strengthened the findings. Repeated words in the fieldnotes facilitated the data analysis process.

Data Analysis

Qualitative scholars acquire detailed information about participants' experiences to understand their perspectives on topics of interest to the study. In this study, the objective overall was to obtain the perspectives of Pre-K teachers who have taught

ELL/DLL students and to learn what has helped them with their preliteracy instruction. Data analysis occurred after data had been collected, compiled, and transcribed from all the participants. Creswell (2012) explained that answering research questions through a detailed understanding of the central phenomenon requires rich descriptions to help interpret data, as well as offer exemplars of findings. After transcription, the individual interviews and the observations and fieldnotes were broken down to facilitate interpretation. The data analysis included three phases. The first entailed transcribing interviews, observations, and fieldnotes, the second synthesizing data to establish codes, and the third developing themes from codes.

Transcribing Interviews/Observations/Fieldnotes

The first step in the data analysis was transcribing the interviews. I audio recorded the interviews so that I could go back and understand each participant's perceptions pertaining to each interview question. I transcribed the interviews by playing the audio tapes repeatedly and rereading the interview questions. Next, I transcribed the SIOP observational checklist. Table 1 below shows the adapted SIOP used during data collection. The checklist provided insights about the ways in which teachers accommodate their ELL students.

Table 1

SIOP Observation Checklist

Indicators	Indicators observed in 13 participants
Lesson Preparation	
Students understand the activity clearly	13 of 13
The language is clear for all students	12 of 13
The activity accommodates all academic levels in the classroom	11 of 13
Visuals are used, such as pictures/graphs	13 of 13
Instruction is planned and differentiated for all students	11 of 13
Building Background	
Activities and lessons are consistent with students' background knowledge	11 of 13
Teacher goes over words with which students are unfamiliar (write, repeat).	13 of 13
Comprehensible Input	
Teacher speaks more slowly, pronounces, decodes, and blends for student understanding	11 of 13
Models the activity for clarification (e.g., modeling, visuals, hands-on activities, demonstrations, gestures, body language	13 of 13
Strategies	
Provides students with time to understand the activity (e.g., problem solving, predicting, organizing, summarizing, categorizing, evaluating, self-monitoring)	11 of 13
Teacher provides background knowledge to struggling students and activates prior knowledge	10 of 13
Implements questioning during the activity to promote higher level thinking	9 of 13
Interaction	
Teacher interacts and engages with students throughout the activity	13 of 13
Teacher allows students to discuss activity amongst classmates to support understanding	13 of 13
Teacher allows time for students to respond	13 of 13
Teacher allows reflection for students to understand lesson	5 of 13
Practice and Application	

Teacher provides manipulatives and materials to support activity (Realia)	13 of 13
Models the activity the students need to achieve	13 of 13
Enables writing, speaking, and listening in the activity	13 of 13
Lesson Delivery	
Teacher speaks clearly	11 of 13
Teacher engages students throughout the entire lesson/activity (At least 90%)	13 of 13
Teacher paces lesson so that students comprehend skill/content	10 of 13
Review and Assessment	
Teacher reflects on the lesson/activity	5 of 13
Repeats key concepts for students to understand in the activity/lesson	13 of 13
Teacher assesses students on their knowledge of the lesson/activity	13 of 13

Adopted from Short, D. (2008). *Making content comprehensible to English language learners: The SIOP model*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

I used the SIOP checklist to provide insight about what teachers provided their ELL/DLL students during instruction. With the SIOP checklist, I took fieldnotes throughout the observations to record what teachers were doing with their ELL/DLL students. The SIOP checklist incorporated codes such as repeating, visuals, models, and engages, which were added to the code book for further analysis. The fieldnotes were transcribed by going through each observation and rereading thoughts for more clarity. Transcribed interviews, observations, and fieldnotes then were generated into codes.

Synthesizing Data to Establish Codes

Preset coding (A Priori). Preset coding was implemented first, as I began with a list generated from the conceptual framework, literature review, prior background knowledge, and the questions asked during the interview. The a priori list did not have an excessive number of codes, because it was important that codes, categories, and

themes emerged from the data. For example, a priori codes that are established in the ELL/DLL literature included repetition, interaction, and collaboration, while some examples from a posteriori codes included facial gestures, music, and sign language. These codes included student interaction, modeling, and engaging, among others. A chart was used during data analysis to generate themes from the codes and narrow them into patterns. Each code was highlighted in a different color, and I used the color that corresponded to the code when analyzing the interviews, observations, and fieldnotes.

Emergent coding (A Posteriori). In addition to preset codes, a posteriori or emergent codes were generated from the combination of interviews, observations, and fieldnotes. These codes emerged in data analysis, in which concepts, actions, meanings, behaviors, and characteristics were incorporated. The emergent codes from the data provided insight about potential categories in the data. Examples of emergent codes that differed from the preset codes were tone, technology, music, and visuals. Once I exhausted all codes found in the data, I color coded each with similar characteristics. Codes and themes were identified during data analysis based on what each participant stated in his/her interview and demonstrated in the observation. Coding organizes and sorts data to identify patterns, and both preset and emergent coding were implemented in the study. These codes were analyzed further into categories and themes to address the research questions and are presented in Table 2 and 3. Word repetition and color coding were methods I implemented to identify themes. I examined all the interviews, observations, and fieldnotes to see what words or synonyms appeared most often throughout the data, and color coded them.

Themes Derived from Codes. After all preset and emergent codes were listed, I categorized and identified themes generated from them. Analyzing code words was a technique used to find the themes and generate the findings for the study. Classifying codes into categories and then themes derives from techniques such as word repetition or clustering. Word repetition was implemented using formal and informal analysis. Informal word analysis was implemented when the same words were repeated several times. For example, phrases such as repeating words, hand gestures, and visuals appeared multiple times in the interviews, as well as in observations and fieldnotes. I went through all the transcribed interviews, observations, and fieldnotes formally, generated a list of all the unique words, and then counted how many times each occurred.

With respect to RQ1, the themes "ELL strategies" and "technology" were evident in the codes and categories. Preset and emergent codes, including tone, repetition modeling, pictures, listening, hand and facial gestures, and student pairing were prominent throughout interviews, observations, and fieldnotes and were assigned to the category of instructional practices. From instructional practices, the resulting theme of ELL strategies emerged, as participants were implementing these particular strategies with their ELL/DLL students. ELL strategies benefit all students but are important for ELL/DLL students. The second theme used to answer RQ1 was technology. Again, codes such as Google, laptop, music, singing, and iPad were generated from all forms of data collected. From these codes, interactive/engaging activities was generated first as a category and then as the theme of technology.

The first research question asked: What are teachers' experiences in teaching preliteracy to ELL/DLLs in the Pre-K setting? Presented in Table 2 are two themes that

emerged from RQ1. The first theme comprised ELL strategies and the second theme, the use of technology. Under each theme, codes represent the theme that were derived from the data collection.

Table 2

Themes derived from codes to answer RQ1

RQ1: What are teachers' experiences in teaching preliteracy to ELL/DLLs in the Pre-K setting?	Theme 1 ELL Strategies	Theme 2 Use of Technology
	Repetition	You Tube
	Communication	Google
	Collaboration	Technology
	Social Interaction	Music
	Scaffolding	Laptop
	Tone	Singing
	Repetition	Smart Board
	Modeling	iPad
	Pictures	Computers
	Listening	
	Hand and facial gestures	
	Student Pairing	
	Realia	
	Pronouncing every word	
	Speaking in a slow rate	
	Speak in ELL language	
	Picture cards	
	Sign Language	

With respect to RQ2, two themes emerged from the data, "lack of PD" and "lack of collaboration." Lack of PD was established by triangulating the interviews and fieldnotes. The codes generated were PD training, certification, and assessments, which were categorized as professional learning/collaboration and subsequently as the theme of lack of PD. Lack of collaboration was the fourth theme that emerged from all the data.

Participants stated in their interviews that there was not much time for collaboration/limited meetings. The interviews, observations, and fieldnotes showed that the majority of participants needed collaboration to help them instruct their ELL/DLL learners better. These were broken into codes and then categories, such as collaboration and reflection, which then produced the theme of lack of collaboration.

The second research question asked: What do teachers say they need to support their work in teaching preliteracy to ELL/DLLs? Presented in Table 3 are two themes that emerged from RQ2. The first theme was lack of professional development and the second theme was lack of collaboration. Under each theme, codes represent the theme that was derived from the data collection. Table 2 and 3 represent codes that were established through preset and emergent codes that derived from the conceptual framework, literature, and data collection.

Table 3

Themes derived from codes to answer RQ2

RQ2: What do teachers say they need to support their work in teaching preliteracy to ELL/DLLs?	Theme 3 Lack of Professional Development	Theme 4 Lack of Collaboration
	Academic Learning Understanding cultural backgrounds Language acquisition Linguistic development Environment Active learners Sociolinguistic Direct Instruction Questioning No PD Training Need ESL Certification	Additional collaboration Need Professional Learning Communities (PLC) More time to share ideas Staff meetings

Reflection
More assessment
More language- based
methods

Summary

A qualitative study with a case study design was the best fit to obtain detailed perceptions of participants' feelings and the practices they use to help ELL/DLL students. Individual interviews, observations, and fieldnotes provided information that allowed me to address the research questions. Observations were conducted with an adapted SIOP checklist that consisted of 8 indicators: Lesson Preparation; Building Background; Comprehensible Input; Strategies; Interaction; Practice and Application; Lesson Delivery, and Review and Assessment. These indicators include subsets that tell the researcher whether participants are implementing these concepts. While observing participants, fieldnotes were made to understand better why and how some teachers implement the methods they do in their instruction. Analyzing the data from the checklist added more strength to the findings.

The problem of teaching ELL/DLL students is evident in the local area and understanding why and how teachers face challenges in teaching ELL/DLL students can promote positive social change. Collecting and analyzing data generated outcomes that were interpreted for future findings. Once the data were analyzed and themes were generated, presenting these findings to local teachers in the form of PD will help support those who are struggling to teach ELL/DLL students literacy.

Data Analysis Results

The following section discusses the findings that emerged from analysis of the data from the individual interviews, observations, and fieldnotes. I collected data from thirteen participants until they provided no new information for the study. To qualify, teachers had to have more than 2 years' experience at the Pre-K level and 2) had to have ELL/DLL students in their classroom. The findings were organized into preset and emergent codes and then into categories, and then organized by themes, after which the findings were organized according to each research question:

RQ1: What are the teachers' experiences in teaching preliteracy to ELL/DLLs in the Pre-K setting?

RQ2: What do teachers say that they need to support their work in teaching pre literacy to ELL/DLLs?

These questions helped me maintain focus on the principal goals of the study during data analysis.

Findings

The problem in the local area was the Pre-K teachers' lack of experience and expertise in teaching preliteracy to their ELL/DLL students. All participants but 1 said they did not have resources or PD in ELL/DLL instructional strategies and indicated that they needed such training, as well as collaboration to support their ELL/DLL students. Some participants reported receiving PD but said that it did not address teaching ELL/DLL students. As participants did not receive relevant PD, they created their own approaches to develop literacy in their ELL/DLL students by incorporating interactive measures, such as different technology-based devices. Many participants said that they

integrated technology into the classroom independently because it engages ELL/DLL students. Together with technology, strategies and methods that included repetition, hand gestures, and visuals were prominent codes in the data. These methods constitute sheltered instruction, as teachers are implementing instructional methods specifically for their ELL/DLL students.

RQ1. The first research question focused on teachers' experiences in teaching preliteracy to ELL/DLLs in the Pre-K setting. Individual interviews, observations, and fieldnotes contributed to the first theme, which was derived by organizing the preset and emergent codes into categories and then into themes. To answer research question one, the first theme was "ELL strategies that teachers implemented with ELL/DLL students." Technology emerged as the second theme, as participants reported implementing different interactive devices so that ELL/DLL students stayed engaged and focused throughout different learning activities.

Theme 1: ELL Strategies. Interview questions 1-4, 7, and 8 pertained to the first research question about teachers' perceptions of, and experiences through which, they help ELL/DLL students develop literacy. With respect to the first question, the predominant theme and pattern in the data included "repeating words or instructions for ELL students," "pairing a bilingual student with an ELL," and "using hand gestures and picture cards combined with repetition."

During the interviews, I asked questions that pertained to ELL/DLL instruction, accommodation, best practices, and what experiences teachers had with ELL students Most of the findings derived from the interviews because they included the most detailed data. All participants said they used repetition with their ELL students, so they could

build their language development continuously. Participant B stated, "When I teach, I try to do a lot of repetition. I have them repeat the English language back." All the teachers said that they found repetition beneficial with ELL/DLL students, as well as pointing to pictures or visuals to represent the word or using gestures during the lesson. These methods helped them teach preliteracy concepts, including listening, the first stage in preliteracy. In relation to research question one, all participants mentioned that to develop their ELL/DLL students' literacy, they attempted to engage students to increase English proficiency. Participant A stated, "One thing that I do with my ELL students today is using the laptop, listening radio in the listening center, and use a lot of hand gestures and repetition." During the interviews, teachers identified their best practices with ELL/DLL students, which included repetition, visuals, speaking more slowly, and if they knew Spanish, providing English and Spanish content for their students.

Ending the interview by asking what advice teachers would give to first-time teachers who have ELL students in their classes gave me a detailed understanding of what participants have tried and found successful. Comments such as, "Remain calm, repeat, clear and concise instruction, visuals, hand gestures, and be patient," were familiar words all participants used. When asked how they accomplished this, Participant A replied, "I find it very effective when I pair them off with other students who speak fluent English, speaking in a certain tone, pronouncing every word correctly, and hand gestures." Most participants stated that they provide positive feedback as one of their best practices in accommodating ELL students. Participant D indicated, "Again, a lot of hands on, talk back to me, a lot of visuals, colors, pictures, things more so students can

see rather than only hear. I use a lot of visuals, the way that I know they are learning and can provide feedback for me."

Theme 2: Use of Technology. Use of technology also was an emergent theme in the findings. Participants implemented technology because they had received no training from the state and therefore searched the internet for resources. During observations, all participants incorporated technology in their lessons, including PowerPoint presentations and songs in English and Spanish. For example, Participant B used YouTube to teach her students the days of the week and months of the year in a song format. Participant D added, "YouTube was my best friend. So, it's a great learning tool, they picked up on the colors just like...not only are they seeing it and hearing it, they are using their hands to demonstrate letters, phonics, shapes, greetings." Students were engaged and interacted with the song. Participant B added, "They love when I use YouTube because they use it at home or on their tablet and can relate to it, [the] majority of my students use YouTube and know what you can do on YouTube." During my observation of Participant C, she used both Spanish and English songs, as well as picture cards, to represent the word or concept together with the songs.

Gaining insight about the educational tools participants need or said they have used and found effectively helped inform the follow-up project. Through interviews, 11 of 13 participants indicated that they do not have appropriate educational tools and need workshops or PD to enhance their instruction. Participant G stated, "Google is my best friend." Technology was an emerging theme across respondents, as the internet provides a variety of strategies to enhance ELL development. For example, Participant E was implementing a lesson on listening. She told me that many of her students are still in the

first phonological stage, which is listening. There are five stages that Pre-K teachers should follow in teaching: listening; rhyming; alliteration; syllables, and phoneme blending and segmenting. Participant E used YouTube and showed a video about apples. The video highlighted several aspects of apples (shape, color, etc.). The teacher stopped each time a vocabulary word was presented, repeated it, and told the students to repeat after her. She did this several times throughout the video. All her ELL/DLL students were engaged fully and pronounced each word correctly.

RQ2. The second research question focused on what teachers believe they need to support their work in teaching ELL/DLLs preliteracy. Interview questions 6-9, and 10 addressed this question. All participants but 1 stated that they had not received PD about ways in which to support ELL students. The single participant who received such PD said she was selected randomly by the state to take an ELL/DLL support workshop over the summer.

Theme 3: Lack of PD. Lack of collaboration and PD emerged consistently in the data and emerged as a theme. Participants added that they need ELL/DLL PD or workshops for first-time teachers because they may not have peers with ELL experience and it would be challenging for them. Participant G stated, "Teachers should get ESL endorsements." She added that the demographics in the area are not going to change, but only will become more diverse with the greater influx of ELL students. Participant E stated, "I feel comfortable seeking outside resources or researching myself." I found that most participants searched Google to find resources to implement with ELL students. Participant D stated, "I'm self-taught." I asked her what that meant, and she said she

used the internet, books, and past college lectures to help guide her lessons with ELL/DLL students.

Understanding the kind of support and PD that teachers have received and want to receive was important, as it determined the kind of future project that emerged from the findings. Participant L stated, "More collaboration and training are needed to help us." Only 1 participant had received PD that pertained to ELL/DLL students. Other participants mentioned that PD would be effective if the Pre-K program offered it because of the high influx of ELL/DLL students in the area. Participant D stated,

> Honestly, unfortunately not that much and the information that I received was self-influenced because I felt it was important to know and Georgia Department of Early Learning doesn't support what teachers needed. In 2010, there were zero ELL students or cultures, but now it's an influx, so everything that I learned, I have researched.

In addition, Participant J mentioned, "We need more training or professional development." Individual interviews, observations, and fieldnotes provided teachers' perceptions of what they need to support ELL/DLL students.

Theme 4: Lack of collaboration. Participants indicated that collaboration is a very important tool to implement in the classroom because all teachers have different experiences that can help in challenging situations with ELL students. However, patterns in the data demonstrated that teachers do not collaborate often in their schools. All participants stated in their interviews that the need for collaboration was important, especially in providing ELL/DLL students what they need in literacy. While observing and taking fieldnotes, participant A expressed to his assistant teacher, "I wish we could

speak with the other teachers about student XYZ, his English is so limited." Further, Participant J was observed consulting the internet because there was no time to collaborate because of the Pre-K schedule. During overall observations, there were limited participants who never collaborated with their assistant teachers or other staff members during the time being observed. Participant B stated, "Yes, we collaborate but not that much because of time." Question 6 in the interview was asked to determine what teachers do to collaborate and how if they did not receive PD or workshops to support ELL students. Nine of 13 teachers said they did not collaborate with their peers or school officials, while the other four found it more beneficial to use the internet to find solutions to a particular situation. Participant D reported, "No, I don't collaborate because I am resourceful, I research for myself." Nonetheless, all participants mentioned that it would be beneficial to collaborate, because their peers have different experiences teaching diverse students. During Participant B's interview, she mentioned that she had a French student enrolled in her class whose brother was in another class. These students could not speak English, so the teachers tried to collaborate with each other to see how they could instruct the students. She explained:

> Last year I had a student who was ELL, but he spoke French though. That was tough because he came in literally not speaking any English at all. So, the teacher and I tried to collaborate because she has his twin brother, but the other teacher was not willing to speak with me.

During observations, Participant F did not collaborate with her assistant about several ELL students during her lessons, while Participant J consulted with a teacher from another classroom to identify resources her ELL students needed for the next

activity. Participant J was the only teacher who collaborated with another teacher about an activity pertaining to her ELL/DLL students.

Summary

Four themes emerged during the data analysis. With respect to RQ1, two themes emerged, ELL strategies and use of technology. With respect to RQ2, two themes emerged, lack of PD and lack of collaboration. Generating preset codes from the conceptual framework, literature, and background experiences laid a foundation for what teachers needed. Together with the preset codes, emergent codes were generated from the interviews, observations, and fieldnotes. I implemented a technique referred to as word analysis when transcribing all data. Informal word analysis was implemented by looking at words that were repeated several times, together with formal word analysis, which entailed counting the number of same or similar words/phases found throughout the data. Table 1 shows the way SIOP observations were used during data collection. The numbers indicate the thirteen participants included in the study and how many of them used the strategies/methods on the SIOP checklist. Tables 2 and 3 show the breakdown of coding/categories/themes, in which themes emerged from the patterns/categories of the codes. These themes answered both research questions about what teachers said they implemented with their ELL/DLL students and what they need for greater success in teaching academic literacy.

Discrepant Cases

During data analysis, I reread the data and created a table to make the research questions consistent with the findings. The table shows the codes generated from the interviews, observations, and fieldnotes. These were color coded and merged further into

themes and patterns. Important information in the data was accounted for and added to the table. In addition to member checking, I referred to all data and instruments used in the study continually to ensure consistency, validity, and reliability. I reread the data to ensure that all codes, patterns, and themes were consistent throughout the analysis, and found no discrepant cases.

Addressing Data Accuracy

I obtained IRB approval before the study began. I checked the interview questions and adapted the SIOP observation checklist thoroughly to ensure that I collected accurate data, which added another layer of validity and quality to the study. Referring to the IRB approval ensures that researchers collect appropriate and meaningful data that do not offend or harm their participants. Data collection was followed by procedures that were researched in qualitative methods books or provided by course professors. All data audio recorded were transcribed immediately to ensure they were fresh in my mind, and the member checks confirmed that participants' responses were recorded accurately to ensure the validity and reliability of the data. Each interview, observation, and set of fieldnotes was triangulated to ensure that all data collected were accurate and helped validate the findings.

Terms such as dependability, transferability, and conformability are used frequently when discussing the reliability and validity of qualitative research (Yilmaz, 2013). These terms replace validity and reliability used in quantitative research, but function to strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings. Validating findings refers to how truthful they are (Barusch, Gringeri, & George, 2011), and therefore, triangulation was used in the study. The data entailed interviews and observations that were

triangulated to reduce the risk of bias and misrepresentation. Triangulation was implemented by examining the interviews, observation checklists, and fieldnotes and comparing them to ensure they were valid and reliable.

Other strategies, such as member checks and peer review, strengthen credibility (Barusch et al., 2011). Member checks, which entailed having participants review their interview transcripts, were performed three times throughout the data analysis process. The first was performed immediately after the interviews, during which I asked participants to review the interview notes for accuracy. The second was performed after I transcribed the interview. I then returned to the schools and provided a copy for each participant to review to ensure accuracy. The last check was performed when I analyzed the data. I presented the findings to each participant and all agreed that my descriptions of their experiences and perspectives were accurate. I also performed the same member checks with the SIOP checklist and fieldnotes. I was careful about sharing observational fieldnotes, as teachers may feel defensive about their "performance" with ELL/DLLs. However, providing participants with interpretations from the interviews and observations, and asking them for feedback on the data collected during the study established validity and ensured that data were not misrepresented.

Unanticipated problems can arise during data analysis and produce unexpected results. For example, there may be discrepancies in the findings; I addressed these by rereading the data and ensuring that the codes and themes were consistent with the findings. A check sheet that detailed the data analysis procedures was used so that the same procedures were implemented each time an interview or observation was transcribed. I also ensured that a peer reviewer examined the data and the

patterns/themes generated from all interviews, observations, and fieldnotes. As there were no inconsistencies, I did not have to reanalyze the data to identify any sources of discrepancies.

Describing the Outcome Deliverable as the Outcome of the Results

Evidence from the interviews showed that teachers do not receive adequate PD to help them with ELL/DLL students. Evidence from the observations suggested that teachers do not implement reflection/collaboration, which is essential for ELL/DLL academic literacy growth. Suggested for the follow-up project proposed is a PD/training curriculum with accompanying materials. Most participants stated that they do not receive relevant training and that PD, either online or face-to-face, would enhance their practices with ELL/DLL students. If teachers understand second language acquisition and the way in which it works effectively with their students, classroom instruction would accommodate ELL/DLL students better. Teachers would feel more confident and positive about their ELL/DLL students, because many participants with whom I spoke felt frustrated and limited in their ability to help their students.

Conclusion

Participants described their experiences in detail during interviews, where were supplemented by observations and fieldnotes, all of which provided concrete data that were analyzed further to identify patterns and themes. The research questions helped me understand the experiences of those who teach ELL/DLL students and focused on what teachers do and the support they require. Vygotsky (1978) and Krashen (1981) emphasized the importance of social interaction, development, and language acquisition. Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory of human learning was evident during data

collection. Most participants stated that they include a buddy system in which they pair ELL/DLL students with another ELL/DLL student who is bilingual. Social interaction and learning helps ELL/DLL students understand the content of lessons. Together with this strategy, participants provide rich learning environments for all their students, and students interact with their peers and teachers during various lessons. Vygotsky (1978) also stated that language acquisition includes two levels, social and cognitive. During observations and in the interviews that teachers interact with their ELL/DLL students continuously and ensure that they interact with their friends as well. Participants find it very helpful when their ELL/DLL students who cannot speak English engage with other bilingual ELL/DLL students. Chapter 3 describes the follow-up project that will be implemented with local teachers in the area, in which a 3-day PD training program will be offered to provide research-based themes and methods from the data to facilitate literacy instruction for ELL/DLL students.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The follow-up project to the study was a PD program that will be implemented with local Pre-K teachers who instruct ELL/DLL students to provide training and inform them about resources. There were growing numbers of ELL/DLL students in the area where I taught, and teachers were not able to meet their needs. Families were immigrating to this area because it had a support community, which led to large numbers of ELL/DLL students in the classroom. In this study, I found that every participant had more than four ELL/DLL students in his/her classroom, and most stated that they need additional resources to help support their instruction. PD training will include ELL strategies, PLC, and collaboration, as teachers expressed their need for more PD that will help increase their knowledge of literacy for ELL/DLL students.

Rationale

The purpose of this study was to develop a detailed understanding of the experiences of teachers who taught ELL/DLL students to meet the Pre-K criteria for literacy. Most participants had more than 5 ELL/DLL students in their class, and 19 of 22 students in one teacher's class were ELL/DLLs. Feinberg et al. (2013) reported low scores for teacher instructional support in Pre-K. After collecting and analyzing the participants' data, it was clear that a PD would be effective in the local area, as many participants faced the same challenges: not having sufficient PD to learn about best practices to teach literacy through PLCs and collaboration. Another challenge was not having enough workshops or PD to support their ELL/DLL students' academic learning, such that teachers used Google to help them convey concepts. The results from the study

informed the PD and will allow teachers in the local area, as well as those state-wide, to obtain insight about what works for ELL/DLL students.

Literature Review

Pre-K teachers in the local area expressed their concern about the lack of PD that incorporates instructional strategies to help teach ELL/DLLs literacy. The literature review was based upon peer-reviewed articles from the ERIC database and other scholarly databases, including SAGE, Education Research Complete, ProQuest, and Google Scholar. I began my search with the following keywords: *PD, effective practices with ELLs, supporting ELL/DLLs' literacy development, teacher learning, collaborative learning for diverse students*, and *cultural learning communities*. Saturation was reached when each new article provided the same information, and authors used the same references about enhancing ELL/DLL students in literacy. In the literature review, I explain PLC, teacher collaboration, and teaching practices related to PD.

Teaching Practices with Professional Development

PD in schools provide teachers with necessary practices that support their students in the classroom best. With the growing number of ELL/DLL students entering Pre-K classrooms, teachers need to be prepared and would benefit from relevant PD that provides background knowledge on ELL/DLL instruction, specifically in literacy. Sawyer et al. (2016) found that when teachers received PD coursework that focused on literacy practices, children's literacy development improved. Teaching practices must accommodate all students in the classroom, and ELL/DLL students require more accommodation because of their weak English skills. Teachers should understand the ways in which ELL/DLL students learn to help them support these students as they

develop language skills. Teachers who participate in PD that addresses support for ELL/DLL students are more aware of language development, language comprehensibility, and linguistic demands (Baecher, Knoll, & Patti, 2016; De La Garza, Mackinney, & Lavigne, 2015). Davin and Heineke (2016) found that teachers benefited from dual language education models in relevant PD that their state provided, after which students' academic progress accelerated, critical thinking was enhanced, and the achievement gap narrowed. Franco-Fuenmayor, Padrón, and Waxman (2015) found that it is important for teachers to be knowledgeable in research-based instruction for ELL/DLLs and that PD can enhance such knowledge for these teachers.

Teachers can use questioning, practicing, and reflecting to implement practices in the classroom and increase their self-efficacy. Matherson and Windle (2017) found that the most useful PD focuses on active teaching, assessment, observation, and reflection. Roy-Campbell (2013) concluded that preparation and methods of preparation were the key components in helping educators. Emergent literacy development is a part of the Pre-K curricula, and if teachers receive PD to instruct ELL/DLL students, it can reduce or close the achievement gap (Matherson & Windle, 2017). Quezada (2014) found that once schools and communities receive the adequate training they need for their ELL/DLL students, they provide more comprehensive learning opportunities. A variety of PD approaches helps teachers develop practices designed to support ELL/DLLs, from most of which Pre-K teachers in Georgia would benefit.

Professional Learning Communities

PLCs can play a role in schools and classrooms. PLC offer benefits to the school, as they provide support, feedback, and reflection. Cansoy and Parlar (2017) and Sawyer

et al. (2016) found that in PLC, teachers are in a community that focuses on improving their school's culture, including academic success. Zawilinski, Richard, and Henry (2016) indicated that engaging in a community of practice and high levels of collaboration fosters deeper understanding of knowledge construction and thus results in improved student learning. To have a successful PLC in a school, members need to have goals and visions for their students' learning (Avila, 2015; Munguia, 2017). Krutka and Carpenter (2016) found that although PLC are effective in schools, school leaders need to be educated better to implement them effectively with their teachers and other stakeholders. PLC can benefit Pre-K classrooms, and if this method can be introduced to PD in the local area, teachers can begin to provide ELL/DLL students with the help they need in preliteracy.

Teachers who attend PLC can promote responsibility for student learning, reflection, and collaboration focused on learning, group, and individual professional learning (Watson, 2014). Vygotsky (1978) highlighted the learning that occurs when teachers share and interact socially with one another when involved in a learning community. Sompong, Erawan, and Dharm-tad-sa-na-non (2015) found that implementing PLC in schools provided the benefits of sharing, discussion, reflection, and collaboration to enhance instructional practices. As the population of ELL/DLLs continues to grow throughout the country, teachers can use PLCs to provide ELL/DLL students with methods and strategies that have worked either with previous students or in research. Choi and Sazawa (2016) found that teachers are aware that classroom demographics are changing, and a learning community brings them together to share their knowledge and ideas, improve their practices to enhance student outcomes, and grow

professionally in the school system. Song and Choi (2017) that teachers felt more supportive in instructing their students. PLCs can provide a positive change in school systems, particularly in relation to ELL/DLL students. As schools are becoming more diverse, PLCs can provide a support system for novice teachers or teachers who have not instructed ELLs/DLLs in their classroom. Schools and communities should open about diversity and the way in which to accommodate their teachers, so they can enhance their students' academic growth.

Collaboration

Collaboration has become a practice for teachers in the classroom. Mundschenk and Fuchs (2016) found that when teachers collaborated, they felt more motivated and productive with respect to student success. Collaboration is an educational tool for teachers (DuFour et al., 2016; Prelli, 2016) that is beneficial in schools, as it provides multiple opportunities for teachers to learn new practices relevant to their students' needs. Teachers who have ELL/DLL students should be allowed additional opportunities to collaborate because of the lack of PD/resources (Kelly & Cherkowski, 2015; Meurers & Dickinson, 2017). Effective teaching practices are the product of teacher learning and also are necessary for collaboration, both of which enhance teacher knowledge and pedagogy (Babinski, Amendum, Knotek, Sánchez, & Malone, 2018). Teacher PD and collaboration allow teachers to share experiences they have in the classroom with students and other facilitators. In the interviews, teachers stated that they do not engage in the collaboration they need and depend instead on tools such as the Internet to answer questions they have about their ELLs/DLLs' academic learning. Al et al. (2016) found that PD and collaborative learning are essential for teachers to succeed in developing

their students' literacy. Providing tools and methods needed to instruct ELL students also can promote positive social change in the community. DuFour et al. (2016) found that the essence of a successful learning community is the commitment to each student's learning. Each student learns differently; therefore, teachers need to tailor their methods to each individual learner.

According to the sociocultural theory of human learning, Vygotsky (1978) stated that social learning is a process in which interactions between students and their teachers and peers are important. Another form of collaboration that will be beneficial for schools with ELL/DLL students is active learning. Active learning occurs when teachers or students engage, develop, and learn from one another. Virtanen, Niemi, and Nevgi (2017) found that learners construct their thinking and learning actively and reflect on and control their learning process. As ELL/DLL students engage in acquiring language development skills, teachers who engage in learning actively can benefit from experiences pertaining to literacy instruction for L2 learners. As active learning continues to unfold in a school, Stephens, Battle, Gormally, and Brickman (2017) found that when teachers are provided with instructional feedback, it motivates them to improve their teaching practices. Active learning provides schools with diverse students because teachers and stakeholders share their knowledge.

Summary

Effective PD focuses on the instructional and academic skills teachers need to enhance their students' growth. However, I found that teachers do not receive information about research-proven practices to support ELL/DLL literacy instruction. Therefore, ELL/DLL students are unable to reach their academic potential because of the

lack of effective practices and resources for them and their teachers (Montelongo et al., 2013). The project was a PD program that focuses on instructional practices and effective ways to implement collaboration and PLC in schools.

Project Implementation

The PD course will be offered to support local teachers who have ELL/DLL students in their classrooms and enrich their classroom experiences to enhance literacy on the part of all their students. With respect to the larger body of the literature, I found that teachers needed support and could not teach their ELL/DLL students only with information they find on the Internet. All participants indicated that they find their resources on the internet and not through teacher PD. Only 1 participant of the 13 was selected to attend a course that incorporated additional help for ELL/DLL students and the ways in which teachers can accommodate these students.

Project Description

The project was a 3-day PD program that will be offered to all local Pre-K employees. The program was based on the findings from this study and incorporated best practices to teach ELL students literacy skills. Teachers will be provided with many strategies and methods, and by the end of the course, will have accumulated a set of these that they can use in their classrooms. The list will be divided into the 3 components presented in the PD course.

The PD session will take place at the beginning of the school year (August) so that teachers will have the tools necessary to help them in the classroom and will be presented in sessions on 3 consecutive days so that all information is provided for teachers to enhance their accommodations for ELL/DLL students in their lesson

planning. The first day will present background information on theories such as those of Vygotsky (1978) and Kreshen (1981) and will describe the way in which ELL/DLL students learn and the way in which teachers can provide the resources they need. The first day also will address technology and how important it is for ELLs/DLLs' language and visual development. Teachers will be provided with computer websites and apps that can be used on an iPad to help ELL/DLL students acquire language. The second day will address the teacher practice of sheltered instruction and its beneficial effects on ELL/DLL students. I will provide the background on sheltered instruction, its relation to the SIOP model, and the way in which it can be incorporated in instruction. At the end of session 2, teachers will be given an adapted SIOP lesson planning form and will be able to fill out their lesson plans based on the content they are teaching that week. The last day will incorporate the PLC necessary in a school setting and the way in which teachers can start a learning community in their schools. The objective of each of the sessions is as follows:

1. Provide research-based strategies and methods to develop ELL/DLL students' literacy.
2. Allow teachers to collaborate to gain insights and reflect.
3. Provide a SIOP lesson plan form that teachers can recreate in the classroom.
4. Provide a checklist of all strategies and methods presented in the PD that the teachers can create and use in their classrooms.

Each session will cover the phonological awareness stages that teachers instruct in Pre-K, and the way in which the strategies presented relate to each stage. The teachers will be provided with materials and tools for the sessions. Throughout the year, faculty

meetings will be held with teachers in their schools, and the PD will be revisited to ensure that teachers understand how it is effective in teaching ELL/DLL student's literacy.

Need for Resources and Support

The primary resource needed to implement the PD session is a designated location. Some Pre-K schools have conference rooms that have projectors, tables, and chairs for all teachers who attend. Directors of each school will sign up their teachers for the course, as space is limited. Each teacher who arrives will be given a booklet that will include the PowerPoint presentation, SIOP model lesson planning form, and a checklist of the strategies and methods that will be presented during the sessions. Support that will be needed for the PD session includes a presenter for the course, technical support, materials that will need to be printed prior to the PD program, and another PD administrator from the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning to ensure that teachers receive their professional learning units (PLU) toward their certification hours. I will present the course, as I implemented the study and analyzed the results, and can provide insight about what does and does not work with ELL students.

Potential Barriers and Solutions

There will be unforeseen barriers during this process, such as rooms booked already for other PD sessions or the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning not approving the course and possibly not allowing me to present it. Another potential barrier is technical difficulties that will prevent me from presenting the PD, as it would hinder the PowerPoint presentation. Solutions to these barriers will require patience and collaboration with peers involved in the PD session. If rooms are booked, sessions can

take place in other schools that have the resources to implement them. If technical difficulties arise, then I will use a hard copy of the PowerPoint that teachers can follow. Another potential barrier is that teachers may be reluctant to participate or collaborate and share their experiences with other teachers. Teachers will gain the benefits of the PD program by keeping an open mind and maintaining a positive attitude. Lastly, teachers may not be able to attend the program because they have no substitute to cover their classes, or because of illness, personal emergency, or maternity or family leave. In such cases, teachers will be provided a PowerPoint handout that contains all the PD information and will be encouraged to collaborate with others who have participated in the PD.

Goals

Goals for the session are that teachers learn about the ways in which ELL/DLLs learn and obtain the tools they need to achieve academic success in the classroom. Each session will be 8 hours long and will include two 15-minute breaks and a 1-hour lunch break. Registration will begin at 8:00 am so that teachers are signed in and can gather their materials for each session. The sessions will begin at 8:30 am and end at 4 pm. Each session will be interactive, as teachers will use their booklets as a learning guide. The booklet will have fill-in-the-blanks so that teachers pay attention and do not skip any material. At the end of each session, teachers will be able to reflect on what they learned that day. They will receive a leaf shaped card on which they will jot down what they learned and will be instructed to hang the leaf on a tree placed near the exit. The significance of the tree is that educators are always growing and learning, and the leaves represent the teachers' growth. Teachers will fill out an evaluation of the PD that will

include a survey and questionnaire that will be presented on the last day of the session. The questionnaire will ask 3 questions:

1. Which component of the course stood out to you and why?
2. What was your favorite strategy to implement with ELL students?
3. If you could present this PD session, what would you do differently?

Roles and Responsibilities

I will be the stakeholder responsible for providing an effective course and ensuring that the PD administrator at the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is informed about the course and the influence my study will have on teachers, especially those with a large number of ELL/DLL students in their schools. The PD administrator will be responsible for teacher login at each session, which will ensure that teachers receive credit for attending the sessions. The teachers also will play a role, as they will receive information about the PD session through their schools. I will send out the PowerPoint presentation and timeline indicating the content of each session. Directors will have to ensure that their teachers have this information before they come to the sessions so that they are prepared. The directors also will play a role during the process, as they will sign up their teachers for the session.

Evaluation

Local teachers have not received PD that presents knowledge and information about ways to help ELL/DLL students achieve literacy. The PD that is provided now is limited and usually includes content that is irrelevant to these teachers. The objective of this PD is to provide teachers with new perspectives and insight about the ways in which ELL/DLL students acquire language development skills, and what methods strengthen

this process. A summative evaluation will be conducted for the program, as the teachers' feedback can inform further PD opportunities.

Such an evaluation is most appropriate for the course because I include a brief, 10 question survey, as well as a 3-question questionnaire that focuses on what teachers say will help develop future trainings and workshops for teachers who have ELL/DLL students in their classrooms or schools. Knowing the value of the PD program and what teachers learned from it will help adjust the program to ensure that teachers acquire information most easily and effectively.

Stakeholders will include teachers, students, administrators, parents, and the community overall. The outcome of the PD program is that it will provide knowledge to those who may not know the best ways in which to instruct ELL/DLL students. Promoting awareness of ELL/DLL instruction throughout the community can have a positive effect because the local area will have the necessary best practices for ELL/DLL students. Parents will be assured that their children will have a positive learning experience because teachers are prepared and equipped with appropriate methods and strategies.

Implications for Social Change

Providing a PD training program that incorporates ELL strategies, collaboration, and PLC can provide stakeholders in the community with knowledge about teaching ELL/DLL students literacy. Parents, teachers, students, and administrators in the community will benefit from the PD program because they will begin to understand what educational tools ELL/DLL students need. If the local communities know what teachers are implementing in the classroom, then parents can support their children and teachers

better. The more that parents and communities are aware of what teachers are doing to help their children, the greater the likelihood of positive social change. Everyone in the community will benefit from the program because to date, no PD focuses specifically on ELL/DLL students. Awareness of what ELL/DLL students need in the classroom will initiate a learning trend with the teachers in the community. This will provide a positive social change in learning, as the PD will provide teachers with educational tools that can transform their ELL/DLL literacy instruction.

Conclusion

Section 3 presented the project proposed. Findings from the data in this study showed that every participant had more than 4 ELL/DLL students in his/her classroom, and most stated that they needed additional resources to help support their instruction. Providing a PD program will help stakeholders in the community become more aware of the educational tools teachers need to teach ELL/DLLs literacy. Reflecting and assessing has become a critical aspect of instruction because teachers need to know whether students have grasped content and skills. This is especially critical for ELL students, as teachers can work continuously on these students' academic development and learning. Section 4 presents reflections on the study, the way it helped me become a stronger scholar, and the way the follow-up project will contribute to social change in the community.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to obtain a detailed understanding of the way in which local teachers develop ELL/DLL students' literacy. There was growth in the ELL/DLL population in the local area, which I have seen in my class enrollment over the past 7 years. Insights from the teachers who participated in the study contributed to the proposal for a PD program for teachers in Georgia or the nation to use to help them develop ELL/DLL students' literacy. I found that teachers need such PD to support their ELL/DLLs. In the following section, I reflect upon my experiences developing the follow-up PD project and its positive social effects in the local area.

Project Strengths, Limitations, and Alternative Approaches

The follow-up project developed was a 3-day interactive training course that provides research-based facts and information from the findings of my study. The PD includes 3 days of sessions and incorporates the 4 themes generated from the findings of my study. The first day will cover technology and the way in which ELL/DLL students and teachers will benefit from incorporating technology in their lessons. There is a segment in the training that will allow teachers to explore different websites and free apps that support ELL/DLL students academically. The second day will present ELL strategies that constitute sheltered instruction and the methods and strategies they can use in their lessons and instruction for ELL/DLL students. Examples such as repetition, hand gestures, and realia are several methods of sheltered instruction. The last day will cover PLCs and the way in which they can be useful in schools and classrooms. Teachers will

be provided with different PLC strategies and methods with which to implement them in their schools.

Teachers will gain strengths from the PD. First, all the information and knowledge provided in the training came from participants in the local area and what they deemed successful in teaching literacy to their ELL/DLL students, along with best practices identified in the interviews, observations, and fieldnotes from the study that will be shared with participants. The study participants provided details of their experiences and knowledge that is incorporated in the PD training. Second, with the high influx of ELL/DLL students in the local area and because teachers receive limited or no training on the ways in which to instruct them, the PD presents new data and information that teachers are using in their classrooms now to help ELL/DLL students acquire literacy skills. Methods and strategies can change with time and innovations, and now that technology plays a role in helping ELL/DLL students develop literacy, teachers can apply these methods in their lessons now. The third strength is the ability to apply cultural learning collaboration and its importance for the community and school setting. Schools have more diverse students who are entering the classroom with little or no foundation in English, and as the participants stressed, teachers face challenges as a result.

The project has limitations as well as strengths, such as the teachers who have taught more than twenty years may be unfamiliar with technology by comparison to novice teachers, and the former teachers' ELL/DLL students could fail to develop literacy to the fullest extent possible. Another limitation could be the lack of collaboration in schools. I spoke with teachers who indicated that they consulted the Internet and then collaborate with a teacher. However, many teachers found that

collaboration was the key to their students' success. Lastly, teachers who believe that PD is not useful, and a waste of their time, will be a challenge. Teachers who appreciate the information provided in the course will broaden their knowledge of ELL/DLL students and provide them with the opportunity to learn with their English-speaking peers. This PD will prepare teachers for teaching literacy more effectively. Further, providing more training and PD for teachers who have a challenging time adapting to change will help them become more open to the importance of implementing methods based on research.

Alternatives to PD could include the following: the county could open a lab in which teachers work with ELLs/DLLs and develop materials and curricula to be provided to teachers; teachers could develop their own online chat rooms and blogs where they share best practices and where guest contributors provide insights and ideas, and preservice training for early childhood educators should include required bilingual, bicultural courses.

Scholarship, Project Development, Leadership, and Change

When I began the research journey, I was intrigued to learn the multiple steps necessary for my study to be successful. Before applying for the doctoral program, I knew that course work and a study were two of the main elements required in the program. Creating research questions that fit my study was challenging because I had to develop questions that address what I wanted to determine from the study. Choosing a research design and conceptual framework added to the scholarly process because these are the foundational pieces needed for any study.

Developing a PD project based on the findings from the study was an enlightening experience, because I had never created a PD as a teacher, and the project

required various components to be successful. Learning to put a project together was challenging, because of all the information that my study provided. Trying to organize and make the project engaging and interactive was one of my key concerns, because I have attended many PDs that were both noninformative and failed to engage me. The goal of the project was to provide as much information from my findings as possible, and offering a timeline and summative evaluation also allowed the stakeholders to understand what would be discussed during the training.

During the doctoral process, communicating with different stakeholders in the community and informing them about my project required me to assume a leadership role for the first time. During my 7 years of teaching, I had not served as a leader, and teaching participants about the findings of the study was liberating. The doctoral process gave me the tools needed to be a leader in promoting positive change in the community.

Scholar

As a scholar beginning the doctoral program, I knew I wanted to make a difference in the local area and help teachers who had experienced the same challenges I have faced with ELL/DLL students. Further, I knew when I entered the program that I was not a good writer, and this process has strengthened my writing skills and enabled me to communicate more effectively with my peers and become a leader in my school. Being an active scholar also has allowed me to see my own strengths and weaknesses. I always have interacted with peers and students, but after going through the interview and observation processes, I can now reflect on the critical thinking skills I can promote in my own students.

Practitioner

As a practitioner, my teaching abilities have strengthened, and I now feel more confident in the classroom. This will be my 7th year teaching, and during my doctoral work, my colleagues noticed that my voice was heard in meetings more than ever. Expanding my knowledge and becoming a continuing active learner in my school and community are just some of the many skills that this study has taught me, and I continue to maintain close contact with my director, parents, and stakeholders in the community.

Project Developer

I grew the most during the process of developing the project, as I had never created a PD course. I have taken many such courses and have thought to myself, the facilitator could have done this, and I would have changed that about the training. Developing the PD gave me a chance to be creative and innovative to ensure that teachers remain engaged throughout the session. I feel more confident about helping stakeholders in the community with PD, as the doctoral process has allowed me to grow in this area of expertise.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

As a researcher, the work conducted strengthened my beliefs and values as a facilitator and practitioner. I knew that I wanted to study ELL/DLL students' needs and the degree to which such a study would influence local teachers' understanding of what helps these students achieve literacy. Pre-K is the first time that children experience formal schooling, and literacy is a component in the curriculum. Stakeholders are able to see what changes need to be made to accommodate the ELL/DLL students.

Throughout the doctoral journey, I found that learning never ends. I learned from my mentors, chair members, and URR about ways to define and revise my doctoral study so that it became a scholarly product to present to all who recognize the value of developing the potential of every child in every school and to teach those who do not. Potential stakeholders include teachers, administrators, classified employees, and parents. I learned that there are countless opportunities to enhance PD and learning with ELL/DLL. ELL/DLL students are becoming more prominent in classrooms, and if I can provide a PD program that will benefit teachers who teach these students, than I am content that my work has created a positive social change in the schools and community.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

Other teachers and I have observed that ELL/DLL students do not receive effective instruction that allows them to develop literacy successfully; therefore, I wanted to conduct this study so that I could determine the way in which teachers instruct ELL/DLL students and what effective methods they implement in their activities and lessons.

I found that teachers need PD that supports them with ELL strategies, collaboration, and PLC. The project will have a positive social effect on the local community, as teachers have stated that they are not receiving the training they need to instruct ELL/DLL students. I determined the best practices that teachers use and have found effective for their ELL/DLL students. This can help other teachers in the state or nation with growing populations of ELL students in their classrooms. Pre-K, during which the ELL/DLL students' literacy journey begins, is the foundation for their future years of schooling. Stakeholders and organizations can use this study's results in their

schools to inform teachers and parents in their community what ELL/DLL students need to achieve literacy successfully.

I used qualitative methods, as I wanted to acquire local teachers' insights and perspectives about ELL/DLL students. I interviewed 13 participants, all of whom had taught ELL/DLL students or had them in their classrooms. Vygotsky (1978) and Krashen's (1982) theories served as the foundation of the study and dictated its direction. Interacting and active play, and the way in which teachers and students should interact with one another, were components derived from the study. One suggestion for directions of future study would be to conduct this PD at schools in other districts. Schools in the local area have a high influx of ELL/DLL students, and the PD can address those who need help developing these students' literacy skills.

Recommendations for Practice

Increasing numbers of ELL/DLL students are entering the classroom, and teachers face challenges in meeting their needs. The PD that I developed based on the study builds on current methods and strategies that teachers implement in their classrooms and provides additional strategies that have proven effective in improving ELL/DLL students' literacy. There is still room for further research on this topic, such as learning about teachers' perceptions of their ELL/DLL students, about ways to strengthen teacher practice in private preschools, and incorporating the strengths immigrant communities bring to the classroom. Teachers are entering schools with little or no knowledge of the ways in which to instruct ELL/DLL students. Because of my PD, they will be provided with foundational methods that can help them in their ELL/DLL instruction.

Conclusion

Teachers with ELL/DLL students must have the knowledge, methods, and strategies to help these students achieve academic success. Offering the PD, I developed, provides information not just for local teachers, but for those throughout the nation who have ELL/DLL students in their classrooms. I began this journey so that I could advocate for ELL/DLL students and make a change in the community, and the doctoral program has provided me with a scholarly foundation I did not have before. I feel knowledgeable as a facilitator now, and confident about providing information to fellow teachers and administrators in the local area. This journey has been enlightening and powerful because I learned the perspectives of local teachers and heard their insights about ELL/DLL students. I know the way an ELL/DLL student feels, as I too am an immigrant and not knowing how to communicate with peers and teachers was frustrating for me. I wanted to have a positive influence on ELL/DLL students. In the end, I hope that my research affects other teachers and helps them accommodate ELL/DLL students in their classroom.

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Appendix A: Project

The project information is based on my findings from the study and will incorporate details on how to instruct ELL students in literacy. The study revealed the following themes: Technology, ELL strategies, PD, and collaboration. In the past 10 years, technology has progressed in the school system and now has become a main learning tool for students in the classroom. Upcoming generations are now introduced to technology in their early years and now has become a common entity to have in the household and school. Repetition, picture ques, verbal and hand gestures are prominent methods that teachers are using to help instruct ELL students. Lastly, building PLCs helps provide information about building knowledge for teachers and students in the local school system. Technology, ELL strategies (sheltered instruction), and PLC's will be the three main components in the PD program that will provide methods and strategies for each component and how to implement with literacy for ELL students. The project outcome will be that teachers will be provided with an educational tool kit that they can take back to their classroom to help with their lesson planning and activities for their ELL students.

Project Objectives:

1. Provide researched based strategies and methods for literacy development for ELL students.

2. Allow teachers to collaborate with one another to gain insights and reflection.

3. Teachers will be provided with an adapted SIOP lesson planning form that can be recreated in the classroom for instruction.

4. A tool box kit with all strategies and methods provided in the PD will be created by the teacher to take and implement in their classroom.

Summative evaluations will be presented at the end of session 3 so that I gain perspectives on what teachers thought about the PD session and how it can be changed for future presentations.

Table A1.

Professional Development Schedule

Time	Day 1 Technology	Day 2 Sheltered Instruction	Day 3 Professional Learning Communities
8:00am-8:30am	Registration	Registration	Registration
8:30-9:00am	Getting to know your table (Activity) Who are we? Teachers will introduce themselves to one another and will learn about some of their interests.	Recap from Day 1 Each teacher will stand up and say good morning in the language that they chose for their homework.	Recap from Day 2 (Activity) Each teacher will have their friend and dish and will explain to the class what they brought and speak about their culture.
9:00am-10:30am	Power Point Presentation: Introduce my mother and she will start speaking in another language (Gujurati).	Power Point Presentation: What is sheltered instruction? *Add tips to tool kit.	Power Point Presentation: What is Professional Learning Communities?

	*Ask how teachers felt? *Why did I let my mother speak in another language to the class? *How was it being in the shoes of an ELL student? *Introduce my research findings to class. *Who are ELL? *Why technology? *Add tips to tool kit		*Relay back to friend from another culture and how the information can be incorporated into the classroom? *Add tips to tool kit.
10:30am-10:45am	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
10:45-12:00pm	Continuing power point and group time. Activity	How can we use sheltered instruction? Activity	Key components to build a professional learning community.
12:00pm-1:00pm	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
1:00pm-2:00pm	Continuing power point and ways to implement technology *Why BICS and CALPS play a role *Add tips to tool kit	SIOP model and the effectiveness of using it with students. *Add tips to tool kit	Building a professional learning community. Activity
2:00-2:45pm	Exploring different apps and websites on the internet and adding these to their tool kit.	Adapted SIOP form fill out	Group presentations on what they included in their professional learning community.
2:45pm-3:00pm	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK

3:00pm-4:00pm	Fill out leaf for reflection and closing. *For homework, teachers will need to learn how to say, "Good morning in another language. *In preparation for day 3 PD, teachers will be able to bring a friend from another culture and share their cultural background to the class along with their cultural food to for everyone to taste. *Add tips to toolkit	Adapted SIOP form fill out, fill out leaf and closing. * Remind teachers to bring a dish from another cultural background for everyone to taste along with a friend from another culture. *Add tips to tool kit.	Fill out leaf, Evaluation and closing. *Add tips to tool kit

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Professional Development Plan

Day 1: Technology

Time: 6 Hours

Objectives:

By the end of training day 1, teachers will be able to:

- Understand ELL students
- Understand CALP and BICS
- Why technology is helpful for ELL in literacy
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5PNeycNp54g

- Explore different apps and websites
- You Tube
- www.rlttech.weebly.com
- Abcmouse.com

Day 2: Sheltered Instruction

Time: 6 Hours

Objectives:

By the end of training day 2, teachers will be able to:

- Understand Sheltered Instruction
- https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=sheltered+instruction&&view=detail&mid=7A2108349F9322087C637A2108349F9322087C63&FORM=VRDGAR
- Understand SIOP model (Adapted)
- Fill out adapted SIOP model

Day 3: Professional Learning Communities (PLC)

Time: 6 Hours

Objectives:

By the end of training day 3, teachers will be able to:

- Understand a PLC
- Create and collaborate a PLC

- Explore

- https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=professional+learning+communities&&view=detail&mid=ED2B00416FDB84BEC191ED2B00416FDB84BEC191&&FORM=VRDGAR

Table A2.

Adapted SIOP Lesson Plan Form

Teacher:_____ Date: _____

*Note: this is not an evaluation of the instructor, but a tool to help instructors learn and use various behaviors and actions to create an effective teaching and learning environment.

SIOP Observation Checklist

Indicators	Indicators observed
Lesson Preparation	
Students understand the activity clearly	
The language is clear for all students	
The activity accommodates all academic levels in the classroom	
Visuals are used, such as pictures/graphs	
Instruction is planned and differentiated for all students	
Building Background	
Activities and lessons are consistent with students' background knowledge	
Teacher goes over words with which students are unfamiliar (write, repeat).	
Comprehensible Input	
Teacher speaks more slowly, pronounces, decodes, and blends for student understanding	
Models the activity for clarification (e.g., modeling, visuals, hands-on activities, demonstrations, gestures, body language	
Strategies	
Provides students with time to understand the activity (e.g., problem solving, predicting, organizing, summarizing, categorizing, evaluating, self-monitoring)	
Teacher provides background knowledge to struggling students and activates prior knowledge	
Implements questioning during the activity to promote higher level thinking	
Interaction	
Teacher interacts and engages with students throughout the activity	

Teacher allows students to discuss activity amongst classmates to support understanding
Teacher allows time for students to respond
Teacher allows reflection for students to understand lesson

Practice and Application
Teacher provides manipulatives and materials to support activity (Realia)
Models the activity the students need to achieve
Enables writing, speaking, and listening in the activity

Lesson Delivery
Teacher speaks clearly
Teacher engages students throughout the entire lesson/activity (At least 90%)
Teacher paces lesson so that students comprehend skill/content

Review and Assessment
Teacher reflects on the lesson/activity
Repeats key concepts for students to understand in the activity/lesson
Teacher assesses students on their knowledge of the lesson/activity

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Adopted from Short, D. (2008). *Making content comprehensible to English language learners: The SIOP model*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Table A3.

Evaluation Form for Professional Development Training

Course Name:
Facilitator:
Date:

Please answer the following three questions about the Professional Development you received

1) What did you like about the training? Why?

2) What did you learn and will implement with ELL students?

3) If you could change anything about the training that you received, what would it be?

Other comments:

Day 1
Agenda

- 8:00am-8:30am- Registration
- 8:30-9:00- Getting to know your table (activity)
- 9:00-10:30-Power Point Presentation: How did you feel? ELL? Project study findings, Why is technology important for students, *Add to tool kit box*
- 10:30-10:45-BREAK
- 10:45-12:00- Continuing power point and group time (Activity)
- 12:00-1:00-LUNCH
- 1:00-2:00-Continuing power point and ways to implement technology *Add tips to checklist*
- 2:00-2:45- Exploring different apps and websites.
- 2:45-3:00- BREAK
- 3:00-4:00-Fill out leaf for reflection and closing. *Add tips to tool kit*

Who are we?

Activity

- Around the room, there are different colors placed on the wall. Walk to your favorite color and stand there.
- Once, music stops, talk with one a teacher and discuss why you chose that color. (5 mins)
- Next, on tables there are pictures of vacation places (beach, mountains, camping, international travel, Disney world, and skiing): Walk and sit down at the table that best suits your type of vacation.
- Discuss with a teacher on that table why you chose that vacation and places that you've been. (5 min)
- Next, go back to your table and discuss with your table what color you chose and what type of vacation you like (10 min).

How did you feel?

- Reflect on how you felt when someone spoke and gave directions in another language?
- Why did I let my mother speak in another language to the class?
- How was it being in the shoes of an E.L.L. student?

- Share your thoughts to the table (5 minutes)
- Share your thoughts to the class (10 minutes)

ELL (English Language Learners?

- Who are ELL students?
- Raise your hand if you have ELL students in your class or have had them in your class?
- How do you accommodate them? Please share thoughts?

Project Study Findings

- I conducted a study in two schools in the local area of Cobb County. These schools have been in the community for nearly ten years and have showed a steady growth of ELL students.
- 13 participants were interviewed and observed about the following:
  - 1) What are the teachers' experiences in teaching pre-literacy to ELLs in the Pre-K setting?
  - 2) What do teachers say that they need to support their work in teaching pre-literacy to ELLs?
  - Results showed that technology, sheltered instruction, and Professional Learning Communities (PLC) are necessary for the academic growth in literacy ELL students.

Technology

- Tell me why technology is important for our students now?
- How does it help our ELL students?
- What devices are suitable for ELL students?
- How can we incorporate technology into our classroom/lessons?

BICS and CALP

- Students are continually implementing BICS and CALPS (Bonenfant, 2012) during their day with their peers and teachers and providing evidence from my research that can enhance learning will ultimately start closing the gap with ELL students.
- https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=BICS&&view=detail&mid=09C70FA0E3D053591D1509C70FA0E3D053591D15&FORM=VRDGAR
- http://www.everythingesl.net/inservices/bics_calp.php

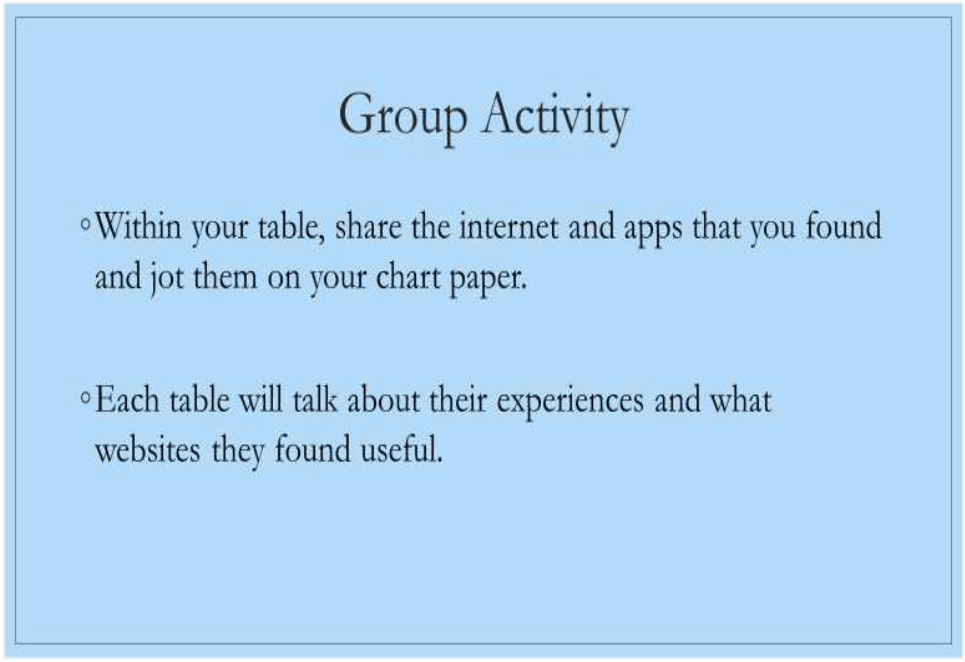
Tool Kit

- On your table, you will have a box that has index cards in them. These boxes are your personal tool kit that you will be able to take with you after the PD session.
- We will be jotting down methods, strategies, websites, and other information that will be helpful to instruct ELL students in the classroom.
- Please jot down any information you feel will help in your instruction with ELL students.

BREAK
10:30-10:45


Exploring websites/tool kit
◦ You Tube
◦ www.rlttech.weebly.com
◦ Abcmouse.com
◦ Explore the internet or tablet to find different websites and apps that would be appropriate for ELL students to promote literacy.
◦ We will share with one another
◦ Add to tool kit


LUNCH
12:00-1:00


Group Activity
◦Within your table, share the internet and apps that you found and jot them on your chart paper.
◦Each table will talk about their experiences and what websites they found useful.


BREAK
2:45-3:00

Closing/Reflection/ tool kit

- On your leaf, write down one fact/method/ information that you learned from today's PD. Place the leaf on the tree before you leave the room.
- For homework, teachers will have to research how to say good morning in another language. In the beginning of day 2 PD, each teacher will say good morning in another language.

Day 2
Agenda

- 8:00am-8:30am- Registration
- 8:30-9:00- Recap from Day 1 (Activity)
- 9:00-10:30-Power Point Presentation: What is sheltered instruction? *Add tips to tool kit
- 10:30-10:45-BREAK
- 10:45-12:00-How can we use sheltered instruction? (Activity)
- 12:00-1:00-LUNCH
- 1:00-2:00- SIOP model and the effectiveness of using it with students.*Add to tool kit*
- 2:00-2:45- SIOP form and filling it out.
- 2:45-3:00- BREAK
- 3:00-4:00- Continuing SIOP form fill out, fill out leaf and closing.*Add tips to tool kit*

Good Morning!

Recap from Day 1

- How did you feel when another person spoke to you in a different language?
- How can technology be useful in the classroom for ELL students?
- Exchange one idea that you found useful from day 1. Share with class.

BREAK
10:30-10:45

Activity

- Pretend you are planning for ELL students in your classroom. What methods/strategies would you use to implement literacy?
- Jot down your ideas on chart paper and will share to the class.

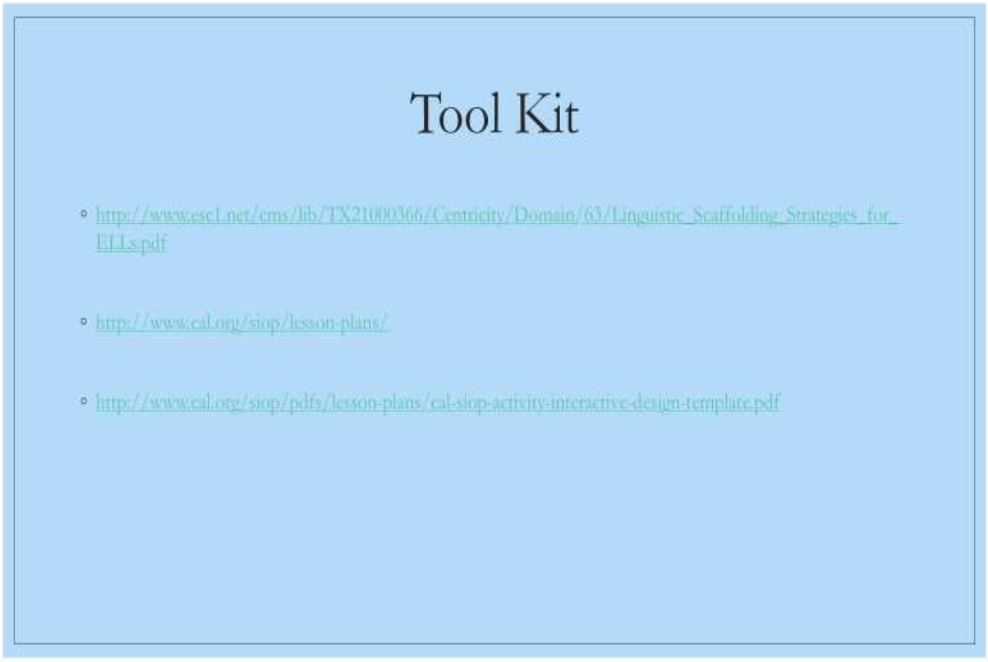
LUNCH
12:00-1:00

SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) Model

- http://www.actesl.vcu.edu/pdf/socialstudies/February2012/Brown%20-%20Social%20Studies%20-%20siopt_lesson_sept27.pdf

Filling out SIOP Form

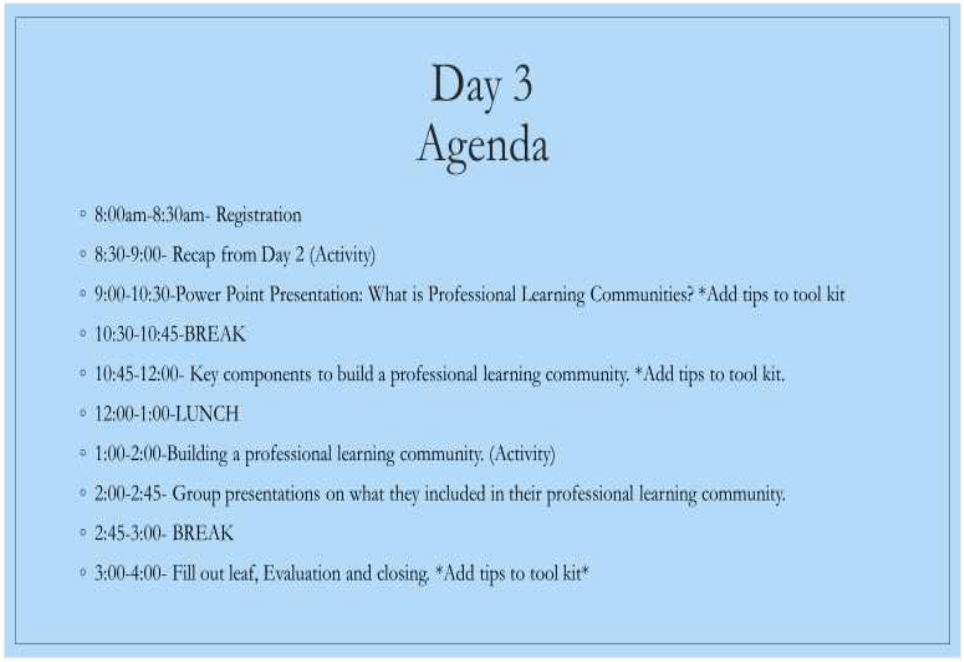
- On your table, there will be an adapted SIOP form that you will be able to fill out.
- Share ideas with your table.


Tool Kit
http://www.esc1.net/cms/lib/TX21000366/Centricity/Domain/63/Linguistic_Scaffolding_Strategies_for_ELLs.pdf
http://www.cal.org/siop/lesson-plans/
http://www.cal.org/siop/pdfs/lesson-plans/cal-siop-activity-interactive-design-template.pdf


BREAK
2:45-3:00

Continuing SIOP form fill out, fill out leaf and closing/reflection

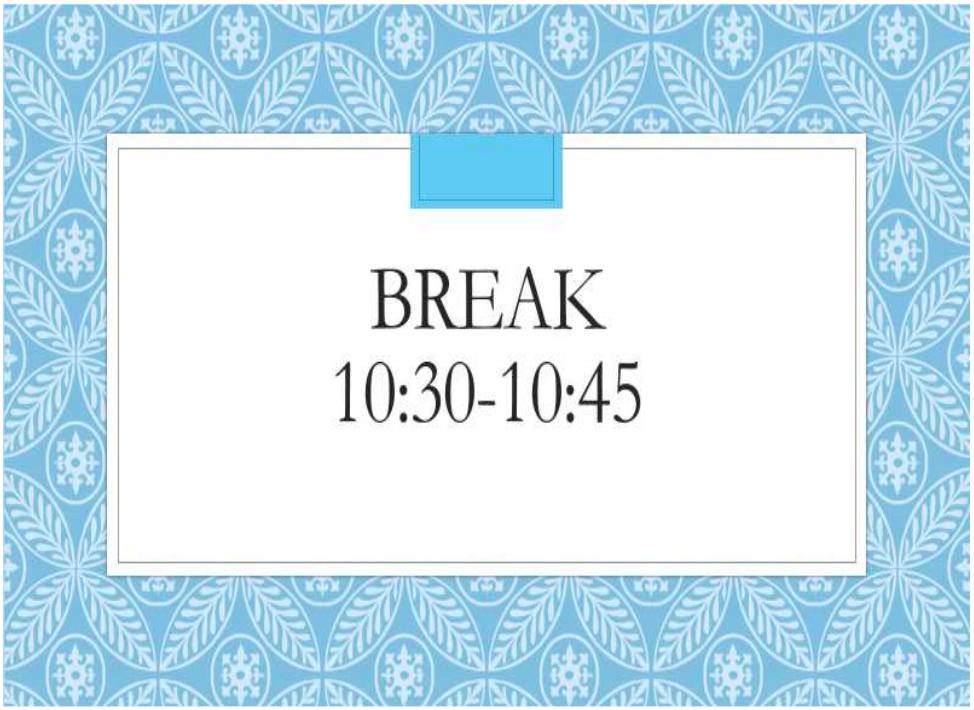
- Finish adapted SIOP template.
- On your leaf, write down one fact/method/ information that you learned from today's PD. Place the leaf on the tree before you leave the room.
- Day 3 reminder: Bring a dish from another culture/friend.


Day 3
Agenda
8:00am-8:30am- Registration
8:30-9:00- Recap from Day 2 (Activity)
9:00-10:30-Power Point Presentation: What is Professional Learning Communities? *Add tips to tool kit
10:30-10:45-BREAK
10:45-12:00- Key components to build a professional learning community. *Add tips to tool kit.
12:00-1:00-LUNCH
1:00-2:00-Building a professional learning community. (Activity)
2:00-2:45- Group presentations on what they included in their professional learning community.
2:45-3:00- BREAK
3:00-4:00- Fill out leaf, Evaluation and closing. *Add tips to tool kit*

Recap Day 2

- What did we learn about SIOP?
- How will it be beneficial for you and your students?
- Reflection

What is a Professional Learning Communities?

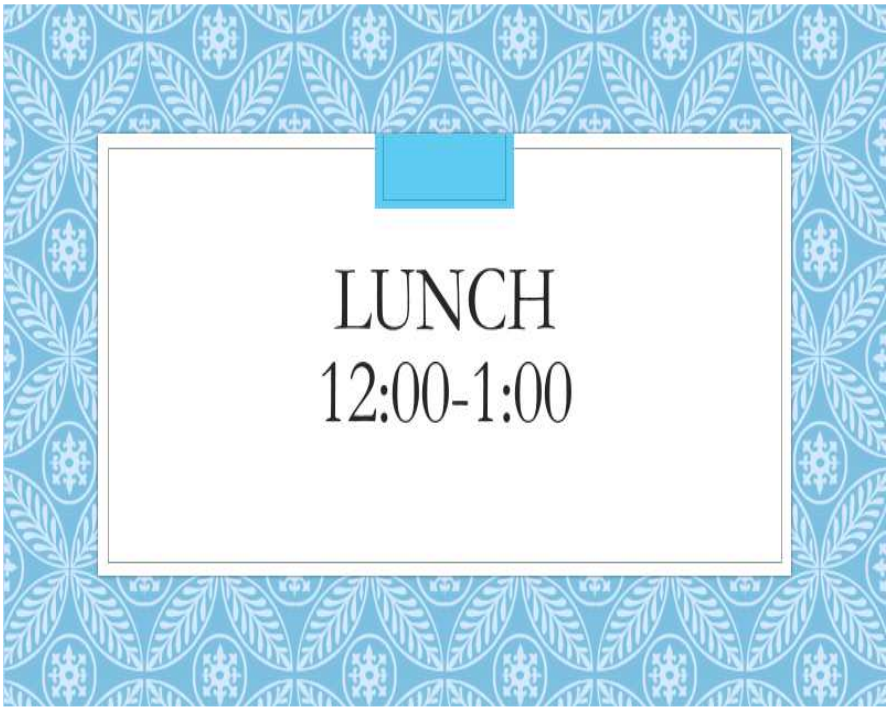


Key components to build a professional learning community.

https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=professional+learning+communities&&view=detail&mid=ED2B00416FDB84BEC191ED2B00416FDB84BEC191&&FORM=VRDGAR

*Thoughts?

*Please jot down any facts learned from the video into the tool kit.



Building a professional learning community. (Activity)

- Each table will represent a "school" (Can have fun with it and create a school name)
- Each person will be delegated to provide one aspect to help build a PLC for their school.
- Jot down your notes on chart paper.
- You will present your notes to the class.


GROUP
PRESENTATIONS


BREAK
2:45-3:00

Evaluation and closing.

- Incorporating technology, sheltered instruction, and professional learning communities in your classroom.
- On your evaluation sheet, please fill out and place the sheet in the middle of the table.

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1) Tell me about yourself; for example, how long have you been teaching and what do you like about teaching?

2) Tell me about your students? What are their strengths and challenges? What experiences have you had teaching ELL students? And your experiences with culturally and linguistically diverse students? Have you taken any workshops or have any background to support these students? On what did the training focus? How was it? What was the quality? Did you learn anything helpful? Has it changed your teaching in any way?

3) How do you accommodate ELL students into your lessons, activities, and daily routine? How do you know these accommodations are effective?

4) Phonological awareness is a major part of the curriculum. How do you support your ELL students' learning of these concepts? What methods or strategies do you use that you see have been successful? How do you know your ELL students have grasped the concepts?

5) What kind of support, professional development, or training do you receive to teach literacy to ELL students? Do you collaborate with other colleagues? If so, what information do you share in relation to ELL students?

6) Describe ways that you communicate with colleagues to obtain support, methods, and strategies to accommodate ELL students in literacy? Is this beneficial in your instruction of ELL students, and in what ways?

7) What methods or strategies do you use to instruct ELL students in literacy effectively? Can you provide examples, and describe what makes them effective?

8) In your teaching experiences, what would you say are the best methods to instruct ELL students in literacy? How do you implement them? Are they effective? What would you change to make instruction better?

9) Do you feel that you have the right educational tools to support ELL students, and if not, what do you think the right tools are for ELL student's academic success? If so, what are these tools?

10) If there was any advice you could give to first year teachers who have ELL students in their classroom, what would it be? Why these tools/methods/strategies?

Appendix C: Interview Responses

Question 1. I asked this question so that I could get a better background on the participant and the number of years they have taught. All participants had more than two years of teaching experience with ELL students (the criterion for teachers to participant in the study). Teachers had between three years and fifteen years of experience. Participant A explained he had over ten years of teaching experience with elementary students and within that ten, six years in Pre-K. Another participant stated, "I have taught over sixteen years and eight years in Pre-K and I love it!" Many of the teachers reported that they loved the excitement of the children in Pre-K and their willingness to learn.

Question 2. This question goes more in-depth about participants' students and their experiences with diverse students. Participant A reported that he had a mixture of cultures and races in his class. He elaborated and said he had African Americans, Latinos, and Caucasian. He also mentioned that he had five ELL students currently in his classroom. Participant E mentioned that with diverse students, especially ELL students, a lot of repetition is important during the lesson as they are getting the continued language development. Out of 13 participants, only one had had a training or workshop correlated with ELL students. Participant D mentioned she was picked to attend and teach a Summer Transition Program over the summer. She stated, "It is affiliated with Bright from the Start; it's a summer transitional program. They give you a lot of different strategies, ways to approach the visuals and different kinds of learners." The majority of the teachers said they either googled or collaborated with a peer if they needed resources to help them with their diverse or ELL students.

Question 3. This was one of my key questions as it directly relates to my research question. It was interesting to hear the responses to this question as participants have not received any workshops or training to help their instruction with ELL students. More than half of the participants said they implement repetition, hand gestures, visual cues, and pair buddy. Participant A reported, "I pair my ELL students with another student who can speak English and Spanish, this way they can translate with one another." The majority of the participants acknowledged that these methods were effective. They said they know by assessing them or visually or verbally hearing the ELL students repeat what the teacher did or said. The ELL demonstrated their understanding of the concept with either their peer or another teacher in the classroom.

Question 4. Phonological awareness is an important language development skill and concept to grasp in Pre-K. Almost 85 % of the teachers I interviewed said they were still on the listening stage when pertained with ELL students and some on rhyming. One participant mentioned when asked if her ELL students are grasping phonological awareness, "I think they are, but rhyming is such a hard concept to learn, that it takes a while. A lot of them are still on listening, hoping they catch up." I also observed this during my visits as teachers were teaching listening and rhyming, most the ELL students did not understand what their teacher was teaching during this segment of the day.

Question 5. Understanding the kind of support and PD that teachers have received and want to receive is important for my study as it will determine what kind of project will emerge from the findings. Only one participant received PD that pertained towards ELL students. Other participants mentioned that PD would be effective if the

Pre-K program offered it because of the high influx of ELL students in the local area. Participant D stated the following:

Honestly, unfortunately not that much and the information that I received was, self-influenced because I felt it was important to know. Bright from the Start doesn't support it. My first year here, there were zero ELL students or cultures, but now it's an influx, so everything that I learned, I have researched. I hate when students are just sitting there feeling left out, that breaks my heart. How can you grasp them, trial and error? I did realize through all the processes, anything with music."

Music was a common strategy that emerged from this question. Along with the interview question, I observed majority of participants incorporating music and songs for students to learn. One participant mentioned that when she put the music on, students were engaged and repeating the directions from the song. She continued to say that the songs that she implemented in her class are repetitive which is a great method of language development for ELL students.

Question 6. This question was asked to gain insight on how and what teachers did to collaborate if they did not receive trainings or workshops for supporting ELL students. Participant B stated, "We don't collaborate and talk with one another." Nine out of thirteen teachers said they did not collaborate with their peers or school officials. Participant D reported, "No, I don't collaborate because I am resourceful, I research for myself." The majority of the participants mentioned it was beneficial for them to collaborate because their peers have different experiences with teaching diverse students. I was interviewing participant B and she mentioned she had a French student enroll in her class and he had a brother that was placed in another class. These students could not

speak English, so the teacher collaborated with the other teacher to see how they could instruct their French-speaking students. She explained:

"Last year I had a student who was ELL, but he spoke French though. That was really tough because he came in literally not speaking any English at all. So, the teacher and tried to collaborate because she has his twin brother." (Participant B). The lack of collaboration has been portrayed to be a very important tool for teachers to implement in the classroom because every teacher has different experiences which can help in challenging situations pertaining ELL students.

Question 7 & 8. Learning what methods and strategies work with teaching literacy effectively gave me a greater understanding for how ELL students learn. Out of all the participants interviewed, every participant mentioned repetition as a method. This became an emerging pattern and theme in the data. Participant J reported, "Repetition, repetition, repetition when it comes to ELL students, they need the continuous repeating of words so that they can build and remember for their language development." Participant B added, "I really think the repetition, if their hearing it a lot and saying it back to you and their friends are saying it and it helps a lot." Along with repetition, teachers discussed hand gestures and picture cues which triangulated with the observations and field notes. I observed multiple hand gestures along with pictures being used to implement literacy.

Question 9. Gaining insight on what educational tools participants need or have used that are effective will help with the final project. Most participants expressed they do not have the right educational tools and need workshop or PD to enhance their instruction. Participant G stated, "Google is my best friend." Technology was an

emerging theme across respondents as the internet provides a variety of strategies to enhance ELL development.

Question 10. Ending the interview with what advice would teachers give to first time teachers who have ELL students in their class gave me an in-depth perception of what participants have tried and has been successful. Comments such as, "Remain calm, repeat, clear and concise instruction, visuals, hand gestures, and be patient," were common words used within majority of participants. Participants added that they needed ELL PD or workshop for first time teachers because they may not have peers who have taught ELL students and would be challenging for them. Participant G stated, "Teachers should get ESL endorsements." She continued to say because the demographics in the area are not going to change and get worst with the influx of ELL students.

Appendix D: Observation Checklist

Table D1.

SIOP Observation Checklist

*Note: this is not an evaluation of the instructor, but a tool to help instructors learn and use various behaviors and actions to create an effective teaching and learning environment.

Indicators	Indicators observed
Lesson Preparation	
Students understand the activity clearly	
The language is clear for all students	
The activity accommodates all academic levels in the classroom	
Visuals are used, such as pictures/graphs	
Instruction is planned and differentiated for all students	
Building Background	
Activities and lessons are consistent with students' background knowledge	
Teacher goes over words with which students are unfamiliar (write, repeat).	
Comprehensible Input	
Teacher speaks more slowly, pronounces, decodes, and blends for student understanding	
Models the activity for clarification (e.g., modeling, visuals, hands-on activities, demonstrations, gestures, body language	
Strategies	
Provides students with time to understand the activity (e.g., problem solving, predicting, organizing, summarizing, categorizing, evaluating, self-monitoring)	
Teacher provides background knowledge to struggling students and activates prior knowledge	
Implements questioning during the activity to promote higher level thinking	
Interaction	
Teacher interacts and engages with students throughout the activity	

Teacher allows students to discuss activity amongst classmates to support understanding
Teacher allows time for students to respond
Teacher allows reflection for students to understand lesson

Practice and Application
Teacher provides manipulatives and materials to support activity (Realia)
Models the activity the students need to achieve
Enables writing, speaking, and listening in the activity

Lesson Delivery
Teacher speaks clearly
Teacher engages students throughout the entire lesson/activity (At least 90%)
Teacher paces lesson so that students comprehend skill/content

Review and Assessment
Teacher reflects on the lesson/activity
Repeats key concepts for students to understand in the activity/lesson
Teacher assesses students on their knowledge of the lesson/activity

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Adopted from Short, D. (2008). *Making content comprehensible to English language learners: The SIOP model*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Appendix E: Observation Checklist Responses

Table E1.

Observation Checklist Responses

RQ1: What are teachers' experiences in teaching pre-literacy to ELLs in the Pre-K setting?	RQ2: What do teachers say they need to support their work in teaching pre-literacy to ELLs?
PA: The teacher repeated that phase three times and waited for students to all sit criss cross and their hands in their lap and with a bubble. The bubble meant no more talking. The teacher than greets the students with good morning and waits for the students to respond back.	He provides several listening activities and uses a laptop (video) to provide the sound of B for students to hear and see. The students repeat back to the teacher the sound of B several times.
PB: The students repeated and provided examples for words that students were not familiar with such as cupboard.	Students responded well to all questions and she repeated herself along with adding pictures so that students who did not understand could see what she was trying to say.
PC: I noticed she had some ELL students as the lead teacher asked them to color and they looked at her, then she gave hand gestures and modeled what she wanted them to do.	The teacher shows the students a picture of fall and asks what they see? The students respond with, "Trees, leaves," The teacher says the word fall in English and Spanish. She is continuously interacting with all her students and provides pictures, gestures, and modeling.
PD: She uses the puppet and changes her voice so that her students are engaged. She asks higher level thinking questions such as, "What foods do we have for breakfast?" One student responded and said, "pollo." The teacher continues to repeat her questions and provides visuals of different foods they can eat.	The teacher briefly sighed to her assistant they wish they had a smart board or some kind of technology to enhance her lesson.
PE: The teacher uses technology quite a bit during her activities. She played a color song and students followed along	The teacher models and demonstrates on the white board what she wants them to do. She gave indicators on what all was needed when trying to make a body.

with the directions. The song repeats what the students need to do.	They had to draw a picture of themselves and the teacher asked what body parts is needed. The students had to write their name in their journal. The assistant teacher wrote everyone's name in their journal so that they could copy and trace their name.
PF: The teacher goes over the letters of the alphabet. The teacher points to the letter while the students say the letter. She repeats each letter twice and the students repeat. She then proceeds to ask the students what sounds different letters makes. She goes over A, C, M, T, and W. The students respond to each letter and the teacher has words to represent each letter and sound. She points to each word when the student says the sound.	The teacher was not collaborating with her assistant about several ELL students during her lessons.
PG: She modeled and demonstrated what the left hand was and then the right hand. She showed the students on the left hand that it created an L so that should help students remember. She than demonstrated the right hand and students followed and replicated her. She repeated several times and was clear on her instructions and demonstrations.	She used a laptop because she did not have effective materials to carry out her lesson. The students were engaged the teacher mentioned she wished she had more resources.
PH: She than proceeds to language activity which included the letters of the alphabet. On sticks, she had the letter, and a picture to represent the letter. She stood in front of her word wall and as she said the letter, she asked what sound it made and what picture goes with that word. For example, she said, "M" and the students said mmmmmmmm, the teacher than asked what friend shows us the letter M and the students replied, "Mindy the Mouse." She then went to her word wall and asked what friends name to start with the letter M. She did all the names of the students in the class and asked several	The teacher continues to use props to support her lesson on letters.

ELL students to respond. She gave those clear and concise verbal cues and the student's response well. Some students stayed silent and she gave them amble time to respond.	
PI: The teacher was demonstrating different letter sounds by showing the students with her voice and a program on the computer called the "letter factory."	The teacher complained to her assistant that they needed more materials to finish her lesson on different rhyming words.
PJ: The teacher used her laptop and put you tube on to demonstrate different rhyming sounds such as cat, hat, and bat.	The teacher tried to collaborate with another teacher from another room to figure out resources her ELL students needed for the next activity but the other teacher did not show interest to collaborate with her.
PK: The teacher chooses several ELL students to respond to questions such as, "What does ice- cream taste like?" or "How does a cat feel?" The teacher would point to each sense and give them plenty of time to respond. He uses a pair buddy to explain in Spanish.	Teacher complains to his assistant that he needs more resources.
PL: The teacher started phonological lesson on listening, syllables, and rhyming. She started with Simon says and students followed along. Then she moved onto syllables, students sat in a circle and they had to clap out the syllables in their name and discuss how many claps. The teacher than moved onto rhyming and read a nursey rhyme for students to repeat.	The teacher uses laptop numerous of times to get suggestions on her lessons.
PM: The teacher has very high energy and is loud when talking to her students. She starts with saying good morning to all her students and how they are feeling today. The students respond, and the teacher provides facial gestures such as happy, sad, and grumpy as their visual.	Teacher uses props and pictures to help extend her lesson.

Appendix F: Field Notes

While observing participants, field notes were generated to better understand why and how some teachers implemented the methods they did in their instruction. The field notes were organized around the SIOP observational checklist. The checklist consisted of eight indictors and I would check to see if the participant implemented the indicator and jot notes on how they implemented that indicator.

The first indicator on the SIOP checklist was lesson preparation. Eleven out of thirteen participants did implement this indicator into their instruction. Under this indicator, making sure instruction was clear, accommodating, and visuals were provided were key components towards ELL needs. For example, Participant A was teaching his students patterns. He demonstrated the pattern that he wanted his students to repeat and provided a visual (red and blue cubes) and clarification on what the students needed to repeat. He made sure his instruction was clear and accommodated his ELL students with a pair buddy. He asked a student who spoke English and Spanish and asked her to translate his instruction to two ELL students who knew limited English. Another example was when Participant B was teaching the days of the week and provided visuals and modeling for students to follow. She put up word cards when that day was spoken, and I observed ELL students focused and interacted throughout the lesson.

Building background was the second indicator and my notes consisted of how participants were activating prior knowledge and how they used it towards their instruction. For example, Participant C taught a lesson on apples and when she was talking about apples, she reminded students about their activity they did about apples. The teacher brought in real apples and demonstrated what they were going to do with the

apples. Students answered her questions about that activity and she then started the build on the background for the next activity on apples. Repetition was implemented in many ways and has become a theme in the findings as evidence show that repeating words, gestures, and instruction helps ELL students. Participant D interacted during most of her instruction and my notes stated the following:

The teacher has very high energy and is loud when talking to her students. She starts with saying good morning to all her students and how they are feeling today. The students respond, and the teacher provides facial gestures such as happy, sad, and grumpy as their visual. She then starts singing the days of the week song. She uses a pointer to point to the day when it is said in the song. Students are singing along and moving their bodies as they are saying the days. The teacher repeats several times the days and how many are there in the week. She focuses on the number 7 and the students repeat the number 7 several times while pointing to the number 7.

This participant was very animated with her instruction and ELL students were engaged throughout the interval that I was there observing. Along with this participant, all teachers engaged their ELL student throughout literacy instruction. Music and singing were incorporated in many ways when instructing ELL students in literacy. For example, Participant A notes included:

Moving onto literacy and phonological awareness, the teacher is teaching the letter B and the sounds it makes. He provides several listening activities and uses a laptop (video) to provide the sound of B for students to hear and see. The students repeat back to the teacher the sound of B several times. He uses the letter in several words such

as ball, bee, beach, and allows students to add their response. He also points to the letter B on the letter chart.

Comprehensible input was the next indicator on the SIOP checklist list and this was to see if participant's instruction was clear and to see if students understood the concepts being taught. This indictor shows how clear concise gestures, decoding, and modeling was implemented into their lessons. All participants implemented many hand and facial gestures. For example, Participant D was going over the alphabet using sign language. I could tell that students learned the different hand signs as some were proficient while displaying the corresponding letter with the sign language. A general theme from this indicator was gestures, whether hand or facial, participants implemented this method to ensure that ELL students understood what the teacher was instructing. Another example from field notes include the following:

The teacher sang a pumpkin song. She used hand gestures to sing her song and students were following her hand gestures. It was also a rhyming song and students repeated the rhyming word. ELL students are sitting in the front of her and following along with her hand and facial gestures. I can see that they are interested and understand what the teacher is saying because of the use of props, gestures, and repetition. All participants included clear instruction which made it easier for ELL students to comprehend. Another example, Participant J taught alphabet and sounds, I observed the following:

The teacher reviews the letters of the alphabet. The teacher points to the letter while the students say the letter. She repeats each letter twice and the students repeat. She then proceeds to ask the students what sounds different letters makes. She goes over

A, C, M, T, and W. The students respond to each letter and the teacher has words to represent each letter and sound. She points to each word when the student says the sound. This participant went over the letters and clarified to her students what they represent and how they are used.

Strategies is the next indicator on the SIOP checklist. Observing how teachers instructed, and what tools and strategies help them to deliver their lesson helped answer my research questions. My field notes documented the use of strategies such as repetition, hand gestures, and picture cues. I observed different participants activating prior knowledge as a strategy, such as Participant F who displayed the following:

The teacher moves onto activating prior knowledge and asked students what they did yesterday. They said, "Shapes." The teacher than proceeds to different shapes on the wall and points to each shape and asking the students what shape is she pointing too? The students respond and along with pointing to that shape, they sing a song. They sang a different song to each shape (circle, square, triangle, and rectangle, oval). The teacher asked the students if they had any questions and then they proceeded to small groups.

This participant was one of the few who reflected by asking if there were further questions about what they learned yesterday, and some students replied saying, "Shapes are everywhere and make up different objects." Only 5 out of 13 participants reflected on their lesson during my observations. In another example, a participant implemented higher level thinking:

She then proceeded to ask students what they learn yesterday about community helpers. She asked higher level questions such as what a doctor do. What does a dentist do? She went around the room and asked each student. The students responded, and she

also related her experiences to them. She said she doesn't like shots and the students shouted out they didn't like them either. She asked an ELL student and the student replied in Spanish. The teacher tried to understand and asked her in certain Spanish and then she asked a student who could speak Spanish and English to translate. That student translated, and the teacher started to understand and then asked that student to tell her the teacher's response in Spanish.

This participant also spoke Spanish and translated her instruction in both English and Spanish for her ELL students. Another example was when Participant L spoke to a student in Spanish, she said, sit down in Spanish. The student responded and went to go sit down on the carpet. Along with this participant, Participant J includes the following observation:

The teacher starts off with saying good morning in English and Spanish. A student and parent walk in as she has greeted her students on the carpet and say, "Buenos Dias" to the parent. She has 18 students and 5 are ELL.

Field notes were collected for the next indicator on the SIOP checklist, interaction. This indicator was observed with all participants. Social and academic interaction was observed throughout the study. For example, these participants were observed the following:

The teacher transitions the students into a lesson on phonological awareness. They are learning letters and sounds. The teacher holds up a letter (letter card) and the students try to respond to her question. She provides examples for each letter such as a word and the students respond. She than starts a game with them, "If I say the sound,

you say the letter." The students repeated the letter and sounds." The teacher consistently engages with the students throughout the small lessons (Participant E).

Next, they move onto five senses. I can tell the class has been talking about the topic because they were proficient about each sense. The teacher told me that they have been working on it for a month. There are pictures on the wall to replicate the five different senses. The teacher chooses several ELL students to respond to questions such as, "What does ice- cream taste like?" or "How does a cat feel?" The teacher would point to each sense and give them plenty of time to respond. He uses a pair buddy to explain in Spanish (Participant A). These examples of notes show that participants are continuously engaging with their ELL students and find it effective when instructing them during their lessons.

Indicator 6 and 7 on the SIOP checklist include how teachers model, support, and engage with their students. Almost 90 percent of participants included strategies such as pair buddy, pointing, repeating, and picture cues as their method of instruction along with their personality. For example, Participant D was very enthusiastic when teaching. She was loud and funny and kept her ELL students interested the whole time during instruction. Being that engagement and interaction are a common theme during my findings, I found that having a fun personality makes lessons more interesting for ELL students. Participant M implemented a lesson on rhyming and she was very enthusiastic while teaching the word family –at. She provided picture cards that represented different –at words such as cat, hat, mat, bat, and pat. She showed each card to her students and I noticed she kept her ELL students in front of her, so she could repeat and point to each card. She had the ELL students repeat the rhyming word and kept them engaged

throughout the lesson. I did observe that she did not reflect on the concept she taught and moved straight onto the next lesson.

The last indicator includes assessment and review. This indicator was the least frequently observed and my field notes provided limited examples of how teachers implemented this indicator even though repeating is part of this indicator and that was prevalent in the findings. All participants repeated and continuously repeated their words, concepts, and instruction for their ELL students. For example, in the case of Participant A:

Moving onto literacy and phonological awareness, the teacher is teaching the letter B and the sounds it makes. He provides several listening activities and uses a laptop (video) to provide the sound of B for students to hear and see. The students repeat back to the teacher the sound of B several times. He uses the letter in several words such as ball, bee, beach, and allows students to add their response.

This participant included technology which was implemented in many other participants' observations. This became a theme in the findings because almost 85 percent of participants incorporated technology such as You Tube, CD's, videos, and tablets for their students' understanding. Even though participants continuously repeated, many participants did not review or reflect on their lessons. Examples from participants include the following:

They continued to do language and the teacher started to say the alphabet in sign language. The students seemed to know, and they started saying the letter and showing the corresponding sign language. The teacher modeled each letter and the students followed along. She teacher kept the student's attention and was repetitive throughout

her whole activity, even though most of her students engaged; there were some students who could not follow her because of the difficulty of using each sign for a letter. She did not reflect or assess if students understood or could show examples of different letters using sign language. (Participant G).

They are learning about patterns and students are pointing out different patterns in the classroom. The teacher chooses an ELL student and has the student show her a pattern. The teacher speaks to them in Spanish saying, “Camisa” and student understands where to look. The teacher has the student repeat the color pattern aloud. Patterns seemed to be a difficult concept for some of her ELL students in which she spoke Spanish so that they could understand her instruction but even though she repeated, she did not reflect or assess to see if her students understood patterns. (Participant K).

Appendix G: Cooperation from Research Partner

[redacted]

Date: 06/24/2016

Dear Sangeeta Dwarka,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled Pre-Kindergarten Teachers' Experiences Teaching Pre-Literacy to English Language Learners within the [redacted] As part of this study, I authorize you to recruit Pre-K teachers within the school and collect data (interviews and observations) from them. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include providing a designated room for interviews in a neutral setting, and allowing allocated instructional time for observations to take place in Pre-K classrooms. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Walden University policy on electronic signatures: An electronic signature is just as valid as a written signature as long as both parties have agreed to conduct the transaction electronically. Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Electronic signatures are only valid when the signer is either (a) the sender of the email, or (b) copied on the email containing the signed document. Legally an "electronic signature" can be the person's typed name, their email address, or any other identifying marker. Walden University staff verify any electronic signatures that do not originate from a password-protected source (i.e., an email address officially on file with Walden).

[redacted]
info@westcobbprep.com
770-435-5720

7/11/16

Dear Sangeeta Dwarka,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled Pre-Kindergarten Teachers' Experiences Teaching Pre-Literacy to English Language Learners within the [redacted]. As part of this study, I authorize you to recruit Pre-K teachers within the school and collect data (interviews and observations) from them. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include providing a designated room for interviews in a neutral setting, and allowing allocated instructional time for observations to take place in Pre-K classrooms. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

[redacted]
Director
info@westcobbprep.com
[redacted]

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Appendix H: Pearson Consent Form

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Jun 22, 2016 PE Ref # 195930

Sangeeta Dwarka
Walden University
100 Washington Avenue South, Suite 900
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Dear Sangeeta Dwarka,

You have our permission to include content from our text, ***MAKING CONTENT***

COMPREHENSIBLE FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS: THE SIOP MODEL, 4th Ed. by ECHEVARRIA, JANA J.; VOGT, MARYELLEN J.; SHORT, DEBORAH J., in your research study Best Practices for Literacy Practices at Walden University.

Content to be included is: 288-295 Appendix APlease credit our material as follows:

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