

PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING TO TEACH ENGLISH LANGUAGE
LEARNERS IN ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS

By

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To my wonderful, supportive family and my dear friends who believed in me and to my furry friends who were always there with unconditional love

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------|--|
| ELI | English Language Institute, an Intensive English Program at the University of Florida for international students before they begin degree programs |
| ELL | English Language Learner |
| ESE | Exceptional Student Education |
| ESOL | English to Speakers of Other Languages |
| FDOE | Florida Department of Education |
| IRB | Institutional Review Board |
| LEP | Limited English Proficient |
| NAEP | National Assessment of Educational Progress |
| NCATE | National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education |
| NCES | National Center for Educational Statistics |
| NCLB | No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 |
| ProTeach | Five-year, ESOL-infused Unified Elementary ProTeach (Professional Teacher) Program at the University of Florida resulting in both bachelor and master degrees in education |
| TESOL | Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc., an international professional education organization |
| UF | University of Florida |

Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School
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ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS-OF-OTHER-LANGUAGES INFUSION GRADUATES'
PERCEPTIONS ABOUT TEACHING AND LEARNING TO TEACH ELLS IN
ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS

By

Sandra Jean Hancock

August 2010

Chair: Candace A. Harper
Major: Curriculum and Instruction

This study explored the teaching experiences and perceptions of five graduates of the five-year ProTeach teacher education program at the University of Florida who had been teaching ELLS in mainstream elementary classrooms in large districts in public schools in Florida in order to understand the reality that such teachers might face. In addition, it examined their perceptions about the continuities and discontinuities of their university preparation and their teaching realities. Finally, it considered similarities and differences in experiences and perceptions between the two participants who had specialized in teaching ELLs in ProTeach and the three who had specialized in other fields.

The conceptual frameworks for the study were teacher socialization and teacher perceptions. Seidman's qualitative methodology of in-depth interviewing from a phenomenological philosophical perspective was used. Participants were interviewed three times; the first was about their life history to provide background; the second was about their experiences teaching ELLs in mainstream elementary classrooms; and the third was about their teacher education to teach ELLs.

Regarding the teaching of ELLs, common roles that participants described were that of (1) instructor of ELLs; (2) secretary; (3) nurturer; (4) parental liaison; (5) supervisor; and (6) advocate. The participants perceived the following as challenges and demands entailed in having ELLs in the mainstream classroom: (1) limited parental support and involvement; (2) time as an obstacle; (3) educational mandates; and (4) meeting the needs of diverse learners, including ELLs, in the same classroom. Common supports that participants perceived were (1) the presence of ESOL coordinators to complete assessment of ELLs and ESOL-related paperwork and (2) the provision of bilingual paraprofessionals for limited amounts of time daily. Shared perceived constraints in teaching ELLs in the elementary classroom were lack of (1) professional development opportunities; (2) time to prepare to teach and provide ELLs with needed individual support; (3) knowledgeable and skilled colleagues; and (4) parental support and involvement.

Regarding learning to teach ELLs, the majority of participants did not recall specific ESOL-related content in methods courses that were supposed to be infused. The following course content from the two ESOL stand-alone courses were perceived by participants as being important in knowing in order to teach ELLs: (1) second language acquisition theory and application; (2) ESOL field experiences; and (3) lesson planning. Participants recommended the following additions in the ESOL-infused teacher education program: (1) explicit ESOL content in infused courses; (2) additional content in ESOL stand-alone courses about legal requirements and procedures for educating ELLs in Florida schools; and (3) field experiences with ELLs in mainstream

elementary classrooms to reflect the settings where future teachers will likely be teaching.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The number of students identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) in K-12 public schools in the United States has risen dramatically, with over 4.7 million reported in the 2007-2008 school year (Boyle, Taylor, Hurlburt, & Soga, 2010). These students made up about 10% of the nation's student enrollment with most speaking Spanish but overall speaking over 400 different languages. ELLs are currently the fastest-growing population in American public schools (Wolf, Herman, & Dietel, 2010).

With the rise in ELL student numbers in the U.S. has arrived the trend of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) *inclusion*. Inclusion refers to the ESOL model of including ELLs who are classified as limited English proficient in general education classrooms where the language of instruction is English. Accordingly, general education teachers are charged with providing equitable educational opportunities for these (included) ELLs as well as special education students who have been mainstreamed in order to be in the least restrictive educational environment.

In Florida (the state of focus for this study), inclusion began to spread as an ESOL program model across the state's districts in the mid-1990s (in Florida and a few other states ESOL is referred to as ESOL, English to Speakers of Other Languages; the terms are interchangeable). Inclusion was propelled by the former director of the Office of Multicultural Student Language Education (currently the Office of Academic Achievement and Language Acquisition), a Florida Department of Education (FDOE) department, as a means to provide ELLs with better access to the grade-level curriculum and to integrate ELLs with general education students (Garcia, 1995). Many districts saw this as a budget-saving measure as ESOL teaching positions could be

eliminated or greatly reduced in number. ESOL inclusion is now the current prevalent model of ESOL instruction in Florida schools (Platt, Mendoza, & Harper, 2003; L. Rodriguez, personal communication, July 7, 2010).

ESOL inclusion places special demands on classroom teachers as they, in effect, become “jacks-of-all-trades” (Platt et al., 2003) including ESOL teaches. It carries with it roles and responsibilities that teachers may not be prepared for or want (Harper & Platt, 1998). Teachers must make standards-based curricula accessible to diverse groups of students with varying linguistic and cultural backgrounds, abilities, literacy levels, and special needs, and develop the English language skills of ELLs as quickly as possible in order to meet accountability targets (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2002).

Prior studies about the teaching and learning of ELLs in general education settings (e.g., Clair, 1995; Constantino, 1994; Curtin, 2005; Franson, 1999; Harklau, 1994, 1999, 2000; Harper & Platt, 1998; Iddings, 2005; Penfield, 1987; Reeves, 2002, 2004, 2006; Walker, Shafer, & Liams, 2004; Youngs, 1999) revealed many challenges that ESOL inclusion places on teachers, which may prevent inclusion from being successful in providing equitable opportunities for linguistic, academic, and social development (Clegg, 1996; Iddings, 2005). Part of this problem could be that few practicing (*inservice*) teachers have received professional development in ESOL (Kindler, 2002) or feel well prepared to address ELLs’ unique needs (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2001). Valdés et al. (2005) argued that specialized preparation for teachers was essential to give ELLs equitable access to the curriculum while they are developing English language skills; Harper and Platt (1998) argued that teacher support from ESOL staff was essential.

Some colleges and universities are attempting to address the need for highly qualified teachers and the movement of ELLs into mainstream, general education classrooms by integrating ESOL pedagogy into their existing teacher education programs' curricula. This approach to preparing preservice teachers for ELLs in their classrooms is referred to as *ESOL (or ESOL) infusion*. For example, public universities in Florida were charged by legislative action with preparing all future teachers with ESOL qualifications (FDOE, 2001). One allowable option for meeting this mandate in Florida was through infusion. ESOL teacher competencies can be integrated into existing teacher education coursework. In addition, two (or more) stand-alone ESOL courses were required. The successful completion of ESOL-infused teacher education programs provide program graduates with the credentials needed to qualify them to teach ELLs.

Literature on *teacher socialization*, an interactional process in which individuals become participating members of the teaching profession, suggested that teacher education was but one factor that affects teachers' beliefs, perceptions, and actions and is likely not the most influential factor (Grossman, Thompson, & Valencia, 2002; Lortie, 1975; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). Other variables, including personal, school context, educational policy, and political, also influence teachers' experiences in the classroom and how they make meaning from them (Achinstein, Ogawa, & Speiglman, 2004; Achinstein & Ogawa, 2006; Jordell, 1987; Schempp, Sparks, & Templin, 1993; Staton & Hunt, 1992; van den Berg, 2002; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). Zeichner and Gore (1990) and Cornbleth (2001) called for studies that consider district and school contexts.

Brown and Borko (2006) also called for studies that examine these as well as studies that describe how teachers influence their colleagues, institutions, and students.

Sachs (2001) argued that teachers need opportunities to tell their stories and make the tacit explicit, to create dialogue, to (trans)form an individual and collective professional identity, and to provide a means to renew teacher professionalism. Most studies about ELLs in the mainstream to date have used ELLs as participants rather than teachers (e.g., Cummins, 2000; Duff, 2001; 1995; Harklau, 1994, 1999, 2000; Stanovich, Jordan, & Perrot; 1998; Toohey, 1996; Wilson-Quayle & Pasnak, 1997). Of studies focusing on teachers, most researchers have studied general education teacher attitudes toward ELLs (Reeves, 2002, 2004, 2006; Youngs, 1999; Youngs & Youngs, 2001), depending primarily on quantitative surveys as data sources. In addition, much of the research on ESOL inclusion has focused on the secondary level (e.g., Duff, 2001; Fu, 1995; Harklau, 1994, 1999; Reeves, 2002, 2004, 2006; Stanovich, Jordan, & Perot, 1998; Youngs, 1999; Youngs & Youngs, 2001) rather than on the elementary grades. No studies could be located that give voice to teachers who were prepared in an ESOL-infused teacher education program in today's culture of accountability and anti-immigrant sentiment. In addition, no studies were found that were grounded in a phenomenological perspective. According to van Manen (1990), this perspective allows the researcher to discover the meaning of an experience through an exploration of "the particulars as they are encountered in lived experience," (1990, p. 10) coming to an understanding based on this experience.

Exploring the perceptions and experiences of graduates of an ESOL-infused elementary teacher education program who were involved in teaching ELLs in inclusive

settings address important gaps in the research about the realities teachers, and provide needed feedback to teacher educators.

Many graduates of ESOL-infused teacher education programs in Florida are now in the field teaching ELLs in elementary classrooms. The void in research on their experiences with ELLs and on the relevance of their ESOL-infused preparation and the realities in which they find themselves immersed needs to be filled. This study intends to fill the gap.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative exploratory and descriptive study was to give voice to graduates of a Florida ESOL-infused teacher education program in order to understand, from their perspectives, what it is like to teach ELLs in inclusive elementary settings. The study also provided feedback on ways that participants' teacher education program prepared them for the realities they actually encountered. In addition, it examined similarities and differences in the perceptions and experiences of teachers who had specialized in ESOL and those who had not.

The intent of the study was not to determine the depth of knowledge these teachers possessed about teaching ELLs, to examine their actual instructional practices in their classrooms, or to fit their stories into existing theoretical frameworks. Instead, the study sought to examine teachers' perceptions based on their own personal, subjective, and retrospective accounts of their experiences and the meanings they made of them. While such a qualitative study is not generalizable and is based on subjective views of participants, it can provide, nonetheless, practical and useful information (Patton, 2002). For example, findings and conclusions can provide information that teacher educators can use to modify their existing curriculum to

address the roles, responsibilities, challenges, support, and constraints these teachers have experienced.

Research Questions

The specific research questions and sub-questions I sought to answer were:

1. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their experiences with the teaching and learning of ELLs in mainstream classrooms?
 - 1a. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their roles and responsibilities related to the teaching and learning of ELLs?
 - 1b. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about the challenges and demands related to the teaching and learning of ELLs?
 - 1c. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about the supports and constraints related to the teaching and learning of ELLs?
2. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their preservice teacher education experiences to teach ELLs in general education settings?
 - 2a. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about ESOL-related content and activities in their teacher education program?
 - 2b. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' recommendations to make improvements to the ESOL-infused Unified Elementary ProTeach Program based on their teaching experiences?
3. How do the experiences and perceptions of ESOL-prepared elementary teachers who specialized in ESOL during their ESOL-infused teacher education program compare to those teachers who specialized in other fields?

Significance of the Study

Inclusion has become the prevalent ESOL instructional model in Florida K-12 public schools (Platt et al., 2003; L. Rodriguez, personal communication, July 7, 2010), making general education teachers responsible for both academic content and English language development instruction for ELLs. To prepare preservice teachers for teaching ELLs in mainstream classroom settings beginning in the 2000-2001 school year, public teacher education programs in Florida began infusing ESOL competencies into their elementary teacher education curricula in addition to requiring two or more stand-alone ESOL courses. In the summer of 2002, the first education student cohorts graduated from the College of Education at the University of Florida (UF) started from the five year ESOL-infused Unified ProTeach Program, which leads to a master's degree in elementary education. Many of these graduates are now teaching ELLs in inclusive classrooms in Florida public schools.

This study filled a gap in the literature by exploring ESOL-prepared teachers' experiences and their perspectives about their experiences teaching ELLs in mainstream, inclusive elementary classroom settings and about the match (or mismatch) between these experiences and their preservice teacher education. The findings provide teacher educators with better understandings of what is occurring in schools, what is expected of teachers, and what teachers' needs are in serving ELLs in such settings at this particular point in time. They make available "practical and useful knowledge for action" (Patton, 2002, p. 78) for teacher educators as they plan and implement ESOL content in teacher education programs. In addition, this study offers school administrators and other school personnel insights into teachers' classroom realities and ways that they can provide support and assistance for teachers.

Definitions of Terms

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Beliefs | “Judgments and evaluations we make about ourselves, about others, and about the world around us. Beliefs are <i>generalizations</i> about things such as causality or the <i>meaning</i> of specific actions” (Yero, 2002, p. 21). |
| English Language Learner (ELL) | Refers to a student who has “sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to deny him or her the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms in which the language of instruction is English” (Florida Department of Education [FDOE], 2009, p. 3) and “who require instructional support in order to fully access academic content in their classes” (Ballantyne, Sanderman, Levy, 2008) as well as instructional support to develop proficiency in the English language and to develop an awareness of American cultural mores in order to enable him or her to fully participate in a democratic society. |
| ESOL certification | In Florida, a qualification earned through the successful completion of a master’s degree in Applied Linguistic or TESOL and a passing score on the state ESOL teacher certification exam, which allows a teacher to teach ELLs language arts in K-12 settings. |
| ESOL endorsement | A rider (earned through the completion of mandated coursework) on a teaching certificate in another subject area that allows a teacher to be qualified to teach language arts to ELLs in the certificate subject area, such as elementary education. |
| ESOL strategies | Refers to methods, strategies, and techniques that promote English language development of ELLs. These include such activities as activating and building background knowledge; providing demonstrations, diagrams, and clear directions to make instruction comprehensible; providing cooperative learning opportunities that foster student interaction; and allowing extended time for students to respond. |
| Experience | Refers to events that can be recalled, reflected upon, and reconstructed. |
| Inclusion | Refers to the ESOL program model in which ELLs are placed in mainstream, general education classrooms where instruction is in |

English and where teachers are expected to promote English language development along with content knowledge

Infusion Refers to the preservice teacher education program model in which ESOL content is integrated into program curricula in order to address ESOL teacher performance standards. In the Florida infusion model, public universities must also provide at least two stand-alone ESOL courses in addition to ESOL infused regular curriculum coursework.

Mainstream classroom

Refers to a grade-level general education classroom in which a heterogeneous group of students is placed. In this document, such classrooms will also be referred to as mainstream, heterogeneous, and inclusive classrooms.

Perceptions Refer to the mental processes that involve thoughts and reflections about experiences as filtered through a belief system and the resulting personal meaning given to those experiences

Professional dispositions

Refers to “professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development.... [and include] *fairness* and the belief that all students can learn (NCATE, 1997-2010).

Professional educator/Practicing teacher/Inservice teacher

Refers to a certified teacher who is currently providing classroom instruction in a school.

Prospective/Preservice teacher

Refers to a student who is enrolled in a teacher education program at a college or university

Teacher education program

Refers to undergraduate or graduate educational program at a college or university that prepares preservice teachers for initial teaching certification.

Teacher socialization

Refers to process in which socio-political factors, teacher education programs, and schools as institutions, interact with individuals' values and beliefs in order to shape them to become participating, competent members of the teaching profession.

CHAPTER 2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This study explored the experiences of ESOL-endorsed elementary teachers who taught ELLs in heterogeneous classrooms and their perceptions of those experiences. In addition, it explored their perceptions of their teacher education program that sought to prepare them to do so. The research questions were:

- What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their experiences with the teaching and learning of ELLs in mainstream classrooms?
 - 1a. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their roles and responsibilities related to the teaching and learning of ELLs?
 - 1b. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about the challenges and demands related to the teaching and learning of ELLs?
 - 1c. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about the supports and constraints related to the teaching and learning of ELLs?
- What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their preservice teacher education experiences to teach ELLs in general education settings?
 - 2a. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about ESOL-related content and activities in their teacher education program?
 - 2b. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' recommendations to make improvements to the ESOL-infused Unified Elementary ProTeach Program based on their teaching experiences?
- How do the experiences and perceptions of ESOL-prepared elementary teachers who specialized in ESOL during their ESOL-infused teacher education program compare to those teachers who specialized in other fields?

Teachers were asked to take a retrospective look at what had occurred during their experiences teaching and describe what they considered to be challenges, successes, supports, and hindrances in teaching ELLs in a mainstream setting. In addition, they were asked to describe their perceptions of their teacher education program in preparing them to teach ELLs in inclusive mainstream settings, considering their teaching realities.

The constructs of teacher socialization and teacher perceptions served as the conceptual frameworks for this study. This study was based on the assumption that teachers bring to the classroom certain beliefs that have been constructed as a result of their socialization. The socialization process continues as they become professional educators and experience school through the perspective of a teacher rather than that of a student. The next section discusses these conceptual frameworks, followed by the literature base on educating ELLs in English-dominant classrooms and the preparation of teachers for ELLs.

Conceptual Frameworks

Teacher socialization and teacher perceptions are interwoven in that our experiences as children, students, and teachers nurture our individual beliefs and perceptions of the world. This study examined participants' personal and educational backgrounds and their teaching contexts from their own perspectives. I discuss the conceptual framework of teacher socialization followed by teacher perceptions next, describing what perspective of each was used as a lens for this study.

Teacher Socialization

Socialization is the complex process by which “people **selectively acquire** the values and attitudes, the interests, skills and knowledge—in short the culture—current in groups to which they are, or seek to become, a member [bold emphasis added]” (Merton, Reader, & Kendall, 1957, p. 287). Based on their classic, extensive literature review, Zeichner and Gore (1990) identified three paradigms of research on teacher socialization: functionalist, interpretive, and critical. Each of these paradigms are presented and the perspective taken for this study is discussed.

Functionalist perspective

The functionalist tradition of teacher socialization research “focuses on central tendencies and deemphasizes complexity, contradiction, and human agency” (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p. 3) and explains how individuals are integrated into existing social orders. Teachers are viewed as passive and as molded by external factors prior to their preservice teacher education, such as the behaviors of their own teachers (Lortie, 1975) and by their experiences during their internships and beginning teacher years (Brown & Borko, 2006).

Interpretive perspective

The interpretive tradition is concerned with the development of understanding about socialization based on the subjective meanings expressed by teachers rather than those made through researcher observations, “providing a window for viewing the teachers’ renditions of their in-school experiences” (Schempp, Sparks, & Templin, 1993, p.449). This view, which is sometimes referred to as the *interactional* and the *dialectical* approach (e.g., Achinstein, Ogawa, & Speiglman, 2004; Staton & Hunt, 1992), recognizes the ongoing interplay and negotiation between individuals and the various

contexts and structures in which they are located along with the potential of each to shape socialization patterns of the other (Achinstein et al., 2004; Brown & Borko, 2006). Lacy's seminal 1977 study, which sought to understand the experiences of teacher interns from their perspectives, has been the inspiration for many contemporary interpretive socialization studies in the decades since (Brown & Borko, 2006).

Critical perspective

The third and final tradition of socialization research discussed by Zeichner and Gore (1990) is the critical perspective in which “totality, consciousness, alienation, and critique” (p. 5) are the major thrusts as it raises race, gender, class, and other collective societal issues to conscious awareness. It also addresses the social action component that Schempp et al. (1993) believed was needed. This perspective considers historical and political contexts with the goal of creating social transformation for a more equitable society in which all can participate. Brown and Borko (2006) agreed with Zeichner and Gore (1990) that few studies related to teacher socialization have taken this stance.

The dialectical (interpretive) perspective serves as a conceptual framework for this study. The selection of a conceptual paradigm for research is dependent on the purpose of the study. The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the teachers' perceptions of their experiences in teaching and learning to teach ELLs in elementary classrooms. Falling within the dialectical (interpretive) paradigm, the terminology I have chosen is borrowed from Achinstein et al. (2004). The philosophical perspective of these researchers acknowledges that *dialectics*, that is, the tension between opposing forces that brings about change, occurs between teachers and socializing agents. Teachers are considered agents in their own right as they make choices based on their backgrounds and the relevance of options. Therefore, the one-

dimensional functionalist view was not appropriate for this study as it is concerned with the perpetuation of existing social order (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). This is not to say, however, that findings from existing research from the functionalist perspective cannot inform this study. In their review of research adhering to this perspective, Brown and Borko (2006) found consistency in findings suggesting that novice teachers assimilated to the attitudes and behaviors of currently practicing teachers and, as such, conformed to the status quo. This perspective reminds us that teachers' own educational experiences as children and their perceptions of colleagues they teach with since "the way things have always been" at a school can act as a powerful force in shaping teachers' views.

While Schempp et al. (1993) argued that a limitation of the interpretive approach is its focus on teachers' view of reality and its failure to make social transformations, a critical (or other preconceived) agenda was not taken to the research. Instead, teachers were given the opportunity to express their individual perspectives, sharing experiences and perceptions that are significant to them. Teachers identified and described critical issues, such as inequity, power, and constraints that were probed. However, this study was not framed around these concepts. Additionally, this study did not aim at social transformation though teachers had the opportunity to recall and reconstruct events in which they were agents of social transformation.

Dialectical teacher socialization frameworks

Various theoretical frameworks for teacher socialization grounded in the dialectical perspective were created. Reviewing such frameworks can be helpful in developing additional background about contexts and structures that have been found to influence teachers' behaviors, actions, and beliefs, and can provide confidence in conclusions

drawn from data (Schempp et al., 1993). Several frameworks are overviewed next in order to provide background and are presented chronologically.

Pollard's model depicted three levels of social contextualization of classroom coping strategies (1982). According to this model, teachers' actions are viewed as

active and creative responses to the constraints, opportunities, and dilemmas posed by the immediate contexts of the classroom and the school, and it is through these immediate contexts that the wider structure of the community, society, and the state have their impact on teachers (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p. 21).

Pollard's illustration of this framework is shown in Figure 2-1.

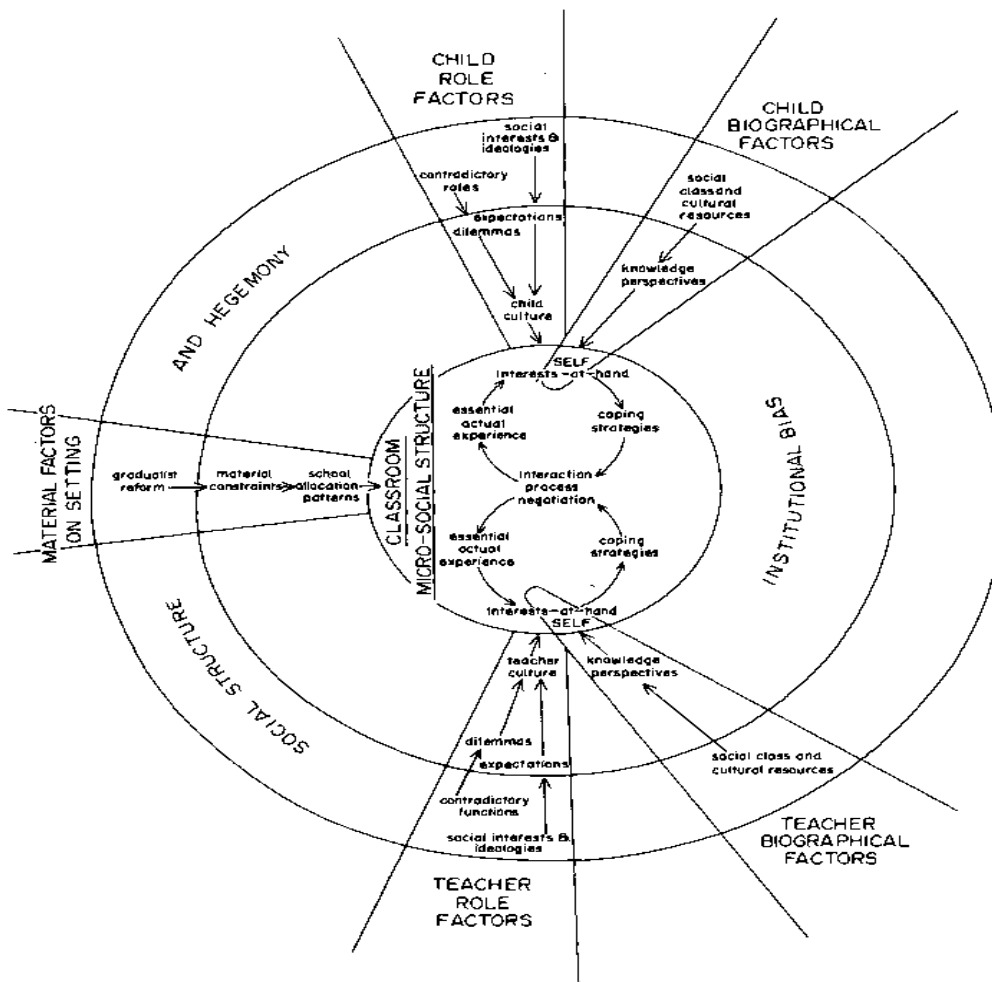


Figure 2-1. Pollard's revised model of coping strategies (1982, p. 33)

The first level affecting teachers' actions is identified as the interactive level in the classroom, emphasizing roles that students play in teaching and learning. The second, institutional level considers relations with colleagues and administrators among other school variables and considers how policy, politics, and other variables beyond the school affect what occurs both in the school and in classrooms. The cultural level links the classroom and school to the broader community and society. Zeichner and Gore (1990) reported that at this level some researchers have attempted to make connections between individual and groups of teachers and the classroom to macro levels of society and to issues of wealth and power.

Stanton and Hunt (1992) offered a framework with a graphic display from their dialectical perspective that has a chronological sequence from prior experiences to preservice to inservice representing the notion that "socialization occurs through interaction among several components: the individual (with her or his personal experiences and biography), the context, and the various agents" (p. 111). This model is depicted in Figure 2-2 on the next page.

Prior experiences and the immediate contexts of the teacher education program and inservice school setting are nestled within intermediate, societal, and cultural contexts, meeting the demand for an ecological perspective in research by Wideen, Mayer-Smith, and Moon (1998). This model depicts affective, behavioral, and cognitive changes taking place throughout this process.

Most recently, Achinstein and fellow scholars (2004) developed what they refer to as an interpretive and interactional socialization framework that evolved from an examination of socialization research. It consists of "three general domains that interact

to influence teacher socialization: the teacher, the local context, and the state policy environment” (p. 562). The local context includes several factors that affect the success of newly hired teachers. These include the school culture as well as human, social, physical, and access to the cultural attributes of privilege (cultural capital). In addition, the availability of professional development activities and the effects of state educational policy, such as prescribed instructional practices, were classified as local context variables. The research by the Achinstein team (2004) confirmed these as influential in teacher socialization.

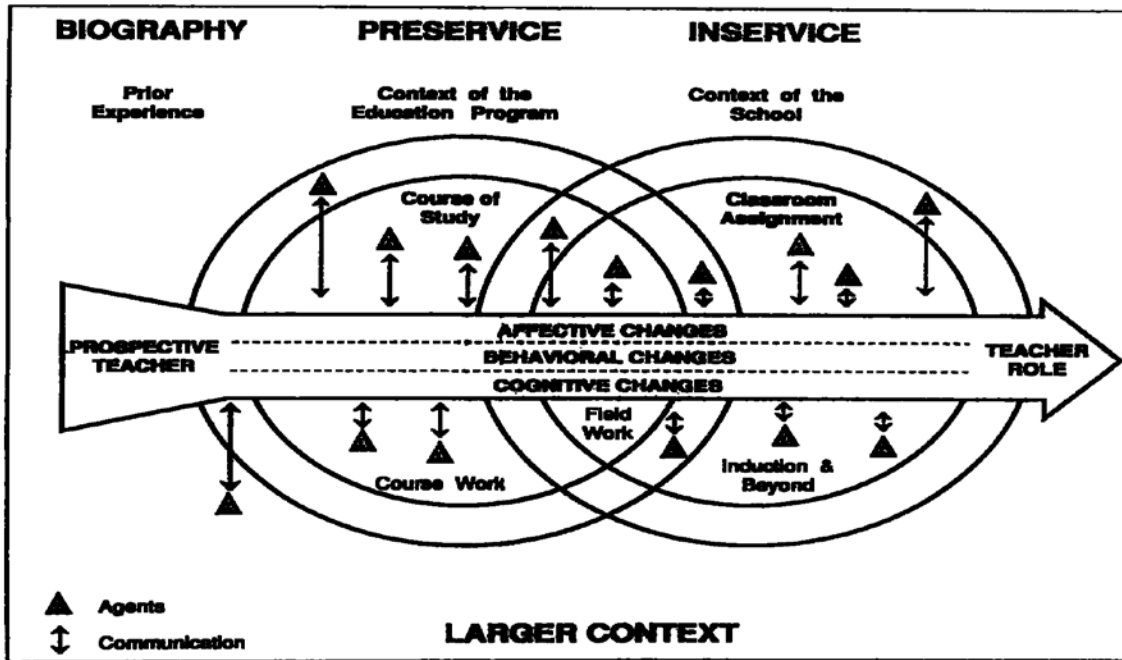


Figure 2-2: Stanton and Hunt's model of the teacher socialization process (1992, p. 112)

This study did not attempt to fit the data collected into any existing socialization (or other framework) because it was grounded in a phenomenological perspective. This view emphasizes themes emerging from participants' own experiences and perceptions of them. Thus, the described frameworks only provide the stance taken. That is, socialization forces act upon teachers and they act upon these forces.

Review of Studies Pertaining to Teacher Socialization

Current socialization research is presented next to show gaps in the research. The literature review presents three broad categories of teacher socialization research identified in the preceding discussion: (1) life history, (2) preservice teacher education, and (3) inservice teaching.

Life history

Lortie (1975) concluded in his classic study of teacher socialization that children went through an unconscious “apprenticeship of observation” when they attended school and developed ideas and beliefs about what teachers should do based on what their own teachers did.

Though Lortie’s (1975) participants had completed teacher education programs, many of them mimicked the behaviors of their prior teachers rather than applying what they were taught during college. My daughter’s behavior when she came home from kindergarten exemplifies the influence of teachers when children are young. Kelly would ask me to play school with her. During this role-play, Kelly transformed herself into Mrs. Hawkins, her own kindergarten teacher. Kelly mimicked the teacher’s talk, actions, and practices, which I had observed myself when visiting the classroom. For example, she calmly redirected me when I pretended to be off-task.

Preservice teacher education

Clift and Brady (2005) concluded from their recent review of research that prior beliefs and experiences mediate teachers’ practices and beliefs. In addition to prior experiences, Clift and Brady (2005) also concluded from their socialization literature review that beliefs about pedagogy and instructional practices are affected by course work and field experiences when teachers are enrolled in teacher education programs.

Hollins and Guzman (2005) reviewed literature specific to preparing teachers for diverse populations and drew similar conclusions. Although courses and various types of field experiences may affect preservice teachers' beliefs immediately following these events, their long-term consequences are inconclusive.

Inservice teaching

A contemporary literature review about socialization of new teachers by Clift and Brady (2005) confirmed earlier findings. The findings suggested that new teachers were socialized into the existing practices of the schools. For example, they used methods that were used in the school rather than using those that they had learned about in their teacher education program.

Some recent studies have focused on how state mandates affected teachers' socialization. Notably, Achinstein et al. (2004) and Achinstein and Ogawa (2006) concluded that state mandates can limit teacher autonomy and professionalism. In addition, mandates were found to, in effect, track teachers based on the socio-economic status of students and the community in which they taught. Those in poverty schools were forced to use explicit, direct, programmed instruction while those with more privileged students had greater autonomy in making curricular decisions.

In their recent review of literature on teacher socialization, Brown and Borko (2006) concluded that many competing factors influence teachers and that "there is a growing consensus about the interactive nature of the socialization process and the role of novice teachers in making choices and influencing the culture into which they are being socialized" (p. 227). For example, new teachers bring their teaching philosophies with them that may conflict with practices such as scripted instruction. They might chose to follow their beliefs about best practices, even if it is behind closed doors.

While contemporary literature reviews (e.g., Brown & Borko, 2006) have drawn similar conclusions to earlier reviews (e.g., Zeichner & Gore, 1990), none of the literature examined elementary teachers' perspectives about the teaching and learning of ELLs and their perceptions regarding their preparing for this role. This leaves an additional dimension that needs to be explored, especially in light of findings that nationally ELLs have been marginalized (Harklau, 2006; Iddings, 2005; and Meador, 2005) and that teachers have not had an apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) during their school years with teachers providing instruction to ELLs because there were no such students present. Therefore, they lack modeling of differentiated instruction for linguistically and culturally diverse students as well as exposure to cultural differences.

This section examined three traditions of teacher socialization research: (1) functionalist perspective; (2) interpretive/dialectical perspective; and (3) critical perspective. The choice of the interpretative, dialectical perspective that grounded this study was justified. This perspective assumes that teachers' choices and constraints, such as lack of resources, interact with one another and that both individual and contextual factors influence teacher perspectives (Brown & Borko, 2006). After defending the selection of the dialectical stance, an overview of the interpretative, dialectical frameworks of Pollard, (1982), Jordell (1987), Staton and Hunt (1992), and Aichenstein et al. (2004) and related findings from other research reviews were presented. The review of teacher socialization literature was useful in that it pointed out that life history, teacher education, and school experiences can all be influential in teacher socialization; therefore, these topics were covered in the interviews with the participants.

Teacher Beliefs and Perceptions

Using the keywords of *teacher* and *perceptions*, a database search of education-related literature was conducted. From those articles that appeared, several that contained the word *perception(s)* in their titles and key words in order to locate definitions, discussion, and references for perceptions were skimmed. However, none of the articles—even those that discussed the development and administration of instruments to measure perceptions of teachers and others in educational settings (e.g., Corbell, Reiman, & Nietfeld, 2008; Hall, Draper, Smith, & Bullough, 2008; Wolfe, Ray & Harris, 2004)—defined the term. The authors apparently assumed that the term *perception* was commonly understood.

Following this search, Internet database searches using the term *teacher beliefs* was conducted since Pajares (1992) noted in his seminal review of the teacher beliefs literature that beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, and other terms have been used synonymously by some. This search yielded an article by Judith Lloyd Yero (2001-2002) based on her 2002 book. Yero distinguished between facts, beliefs, and perceptions, respectively, in a clear, concise manner. Upon reviewing the literature about the philosophy of phenomenology, an article by Barker, Pistrong, and Elliott (2002), was found which provided assumptions of perceptions according to this philosophy, which supported the writings of Yero (2002). Yero's organization to develop the concepts of facts, beliefs, and perceptions were used; and assumptions about perceptions delineated by Barker et al. (2002) were incorporated.

Facts

"Facts are statements that *from a particular perspective* are part of 'consensus' reality" (Yero, 2002, p. 20). For example, most Americans agree that Miami is south of

Orlando because of shared understandings about directionality. Facts are supported by evidence and include definitions about concrete things. Envision a continuum with *fact* at the left endpoint and *belief* at the right. Movement is made from fact side of the continuum toward belief as complexity and abstractness about a concept or idea increases. In addition, the greater the amount of people who have differing views about something, the further the movement toward the right, belief, end of the continuum. While individuals might consider their thinking to be factual when this occurs, it is actually a belief (Yero, 2002)

Beliefs

At this point, readers might ask if the notion of belief, as discussed, is merely a belief or a fact. Pajaras (1992) described belief “a messy construct” and spoke of the lack of consensus about its definition.

Defining beliefs is at best a game of player’s choice. They travel in disguise and often under alias—attitudes, values, judgments, axioms, opinions, ideology, perceptions, conceptions, conceptual systems, preconceptions, dispositions, implicit theories, explicit theories, personal theories, internal mental processes, action strategies, rules of practice, practical principles, perspectives, repertoires of understanding, and social strategy, to name but a few that can be found in the literature (p. 309).

In a recent review of past literature and analyses of teacher beliefs as well as an investigation of handbook contributions on the subject, Hermans, van Braak, and Van Keer (2008) argued that consensus existed about three basic understandings about beliefs. “First, teacher beliefs can be represented as a set of conceptual representations which store general knowledge of objects, people and events, and their characteristic relationships” (p. 128). Individuals may be aware that their beliefs are not the same as others but may still perceive their own beliefs to be correct and even factual though evidence is lacking to support this (Abelson, 1979; Richardson, 1996).

According to cognitive psychology, beliefs epitomize individuals' view of reality and guide thought as well as behavior (Abelson 1979; Anderson, 1985).

Yero (2002) explained that a belief represents a choice—though not necessarily a conscious one—that a person has adopted from an array of alternatives. This makes a belief different from a fact. Yero illustrated this distinction through discussion about the educational concept *accountability*. While many agree that accountability in education is important, beliefs differ from person to person and group to group about what accountability entails and how it can be achieved.

A second commonality that Hermans et al. (2008) found across the literature is that teacher beliefs influence professional development and instructional practices. Supporting this statement, Kagan (1992) found that beliefs played a crucial role in teacher identity. Drawing on the writing of Nespor, Hermans et al. (2008) wrote:

Beliefs reside in episodic memory of which the content is generated by earlier experiences, episodes, or from cultural sources of knowledge transmission. This rather affective and emotional aspect of beliefs plays an important part in storing, assimilating, and retrieving knowledge by evaluating and judging gathered information (p. 128).

This substantiates the assumption that teacher beliefs, as a component of a general belief system and informed by prior experiences, guide the educational planning, decision making, and action of teachers. Yero (2001-2002) warned that “much of the ‘conventional wisdom’ of education is, in effect, a collection of outdated beliefs that retain the power to drive the behavior of the institution” (p. 2).

The third, and final, area of agreement about beliefs found by Hermans et al. (2008) was that the substructures of a belief system do not necessarily have a logical structure. A belief system, according to Rokeach (1968), contains “within it, in some organized psychological but not necessarily logical form, each and every one of a

person's countless beliefs about physical and social reality" (p. 2). One belief, in fact, may conflict with another in the same belief system when beliefs are left unexamined. In addition, some beliefs are foundational for others, which cause them to have more connections, thus more strength, in the belief system. Because they are more central, they are more resistant to change.

To summarize, beliefs can be conceptualized as storehouse of "general knowledge of objects, people and events, and their characteristic relationships" (Hermans et al., 2008, p. 128), through which individuals give meaning to themselves and the world. Educational beliefs are influential in teachers' thoughts, actions, and behavior. Finally, a belief system may not have a logical organization. Therefore, conflicting beliefs may exist within the same belief system. In addition, some beliefs are the root of others so they are difficult to change due to their depth.

For the purposes of this study, a belief is defined as "judgments and evaluations we make about ourselves, about others, and about the world around us. Beliefs are *generalizations* about things such as causality or the *meaning* of specific actions" (Yero, 2002, p. 21). Next, the relationship of beliefs and perceptions along with the definition of *perception* that will be used for the purpose of this study is presented.

Perceptions

Individual perceptions of one's world are based on beliefs that are held about self, the world, and others (Barker et al., 2002; Yero, 2002). As such, beliefs affect what individuals pay attention to, or perceive. "When people *believe* something is true, they *perceive* information supporting that belief. Beliefs alter expectations. People perceive what they expect to perceive" (Yero, 2002, p. 24). While the senses gather information from various sources, people only attend to a small portion of this information because

beliefs focus perception. Interpretation, or meaning, is given to the limited information retrieved through the lens of the belief system. Meanings that are perceived overshadow reality, events, or facts (Barker, Pistrong, & Elliott, 2002). Nonverbal communication and reactions to it also involve beliefs, and thus, perceptions. “At the unconscious level, you host beliefs that determine *what* you perceive and *how* you interpret those perceptions” (Yero, 2002, p. 103). Individual perception and the underlying beliefs system determine one’s reality and truth (Barker et al., 2002).

Of course, just as you perceive and interpret information through tunnel vision based on your belief system, others do the same. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that there is individual variation in beliefs and, therefore, perceptions and interpretations (Barker et al., 2002). The same event can be interpreted in different ways by different people with each individual attending to particular aspects of an experience. The meanings given to limited input reveal that beliefs are informed by prior experiences and culture (Barker et al., 2002; Yero, 2002).

For the purpose of this study, a perception refers to the mental processes that involve thoughts and reflections about experiences as filtered through a belief system and the resulting personal meaning given to those experiences. Belief systems and, thus, perceptions, as well as attitudes, are informed by prior knowledge, experiences, and culture. Perceptions remain relatively static unless changes are made to underlying belief system (Yero, 2002).

Now that the conceptual frameworks of teacher socialization and perceptions have been discussed, the research and literature base about the need for teachers who are prepared to teach ELLs will be discussed.

The Need for Prepared Teachers

Three variables that support the need for teachers who are prepared to teach ELLs will be presented. They are the increase in the number of ELLs in U.S. schools, academic achievement indicators of ELLs, and the lack of adequately prepared teachers to teach them.

Changing Demographics

The number of students identified as LEP in K-12 public schools has risen dramatically with ELLs making up about 10% of the student population in the nation's public schools (Boyle et al., 2010). Generally, the concentration of ELLs has been greatest in urban public schools, where this group made up over 20% of the total student population at the beginning of the millennium (Barron & Menken, 2002). However, the ELL number in some rural districts exceeded this, such as in Dalton, Georgia, where 50% of students were classified as LEP (E. Moore, personal communication, May 31, 2005). The greatest influx of immigrants was found to be in southeastern U.S. cities because of prevailing job opportunities in this region (Barros & Waslin, 2005; Wainer, 2006).

In the State of Florida (the location of this study), about 240,000 K-12 students (11% of the population) were reported as ELLs; these linguistically and culturally diverse students spoke 300 different languages, from Afar to Zulu (Rodriguez, 2009). While there has been a decline in non-LEP student enrollment since 1993, a doubling of LEP enrollment occurred over the 11-year period hence (Office of English, 2004).

Academic Achievement Indicators of ELLs

There is increasing disparity in student achievement and opportunities among student groups who differ by race/ethnicity, culture, and socioeconomics (Banks et al.,

2005). The academic achievement of ELLs is below that of any other subgroup on 2007 NAEP math and reading assessments administered to the fourth and seventh graders across the United States (National Assessment, 2007). According to 2007 U.S. Department of Agriculture data (cited in Ballantyne et al., 2008), about 60% of ELLs in the United States qualify for free and reduced lunch, classifying them as economically disadvantaged. Ballantyne et al. (2008) reported that the dropout rate of ELLs has historically been higher than that of non-ELLs. About half of the parents of elementary ELLs do not have a high school education (Capps et al., 2005). With ELLs being the fastest growing population in American public schools (Wolf, Herman, & Dietel, 2010), these statistics are especially a cause for alarm and call for teachers who are prepared to teach this population.

Needed: Prepared Teachers

The increasing number of ELLs in U.S. classrooms creates a demand for teachers who are adequately prepared to teach them. They must have a sense of self-efficacy as well as hold *professional dispositions* in order to provide ELLs with equitable educational opportunities. NCATE (1997-2010) defined professional dispositions as

Professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development.... [and include] *fairness* and the belief that all students can learn.

Ballantyne et al. summarized the most recent statistics taken from various sources that validate the call for prepared teachers:

- It is likely that a majority of teachers have at least one English language learner in their classroom.
- Only 29.5% of teachers with ELLs in their classes have the training to do so effectively.

- Only 20 states require that all teachers have training in working with ELLs.
- Less than 1/6th of colleges offering pre-service teacher preparation include training on working with ELLs.
- Only 26% of teachers have had training related to ELLs in their staff development programs.
- 57% of teachers believe they need more training in order to provide effective education for ELLs. (2008, p. 9)

Although ESOL instruction can take place in sheltered or bilingual settings, these data apply to mainstream teachers because ESOL inclusion is a frequently implemented model.

Mainstream classroom teachers may apply methods and strategies that have been deemed “best practices” in general. Many ESOL experts believe this is insufficient in addressing the unique needs of ELLs (e.g., Clair, 1995; de Jong & Harper, 2005, 2007; Costa, McPhail, Smith, & Brisk, 2005; Solórzano & Solórzano, 1999; Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. [TESOL] Task Force, 2003; Walker et al., 2004; Young, 1996; Zuniga-Hill & Yopp, 1996). Rather, they assert that teaching ELLs requires specialized knowledge about language and culture, the ability to apply effective skills based on individual student needs in order to promote academic and language learning, and positive dispositions toward linguistically and culturally diverse students and their families.

The ESOL Program Model of Choice: Inclusion

ESOL inclusion is a program model in which ELLs receive all instruction in general education classrooms. The language of instruction is English-only. ESOL inclusion mirrors special education mainstreaming that occurred following the 1997 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

This law required that students entitled to Exceptional Student Education (ESE) services receive them in the “least restrictive environment” (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004) so that all students could receive the same general education, to the extent possible (Schwartz, 2005; Thompkins, & Deloney, 1995). A difference between the ESOL and ESE models is that the latter has a cooperative/consultative requirement in which general education teachers and ESE teachers collaborate to meet the needs of children with disabilities (Iddings, 2005). Mainstream elementary teachers who have ELLs included in their classrooms may or may not have support from ESOL specialists.

Factors Leading to ESOL Inclusion

The number of general education classrooms with ELLs has increased over the past five years due both to the rising enrollment of ELLs entering schools and because of the increased implementation of ESOL inclusion in place of bilingual, self-contained structured immersion, and pullout models (Saavedra, 2005). Shift of ELLs to English-dominant classrooms has also been influenced from within the ESOL profession because of changes in perspectives on second language acquisition and teaching philosophies (Harper & de Jong, 2005; Young, 1996). According to Krashen’s theory of second language acquisition (1981), a non-native language is efficiently acquired in naturalistic, communicative settings in which comprehensible input is provided by native speakers of the target language. Swain (1995) argued that this is not enough—language learners must also be given opportunities for output through ample interaction with native English speakers.

Rhetoric found in contemporary literature, policy, and media suggest that English-dominant classrooms are optimal settings for ELLs (Iddings, 2005; Young, 1996). For

example, an excerpt from the *American Language Review* states, “Elementary classrooms provide a rich language environment, ideally suited for developing both social and academic language proficiency because of the many opportunities for interaction with native English-speaking peers” (de Leeuw & Stannard, 1999, p. 14). Policy changes (such as Proposition 227 in California, Proposition 203 in Arizona, and Question 2 in Massachusetts) have caused the dismantling of bilingual programs, leaving many ELLs to become rapidly integrated into English-only classrooms after as little as one year in structured English immersion classrooms (Mora, 2000).

Title III (Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students) of the NCLB (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) required that ELLs meet state educational standards and become proficient in English at a rapid pace (NCLB, Pub. L. No. 107-110, 115 Stat. 125 [NCLB], 2002).

Accordingly, general education teachers are required in some states to align curriculum and teaching strategies with English Language Proficiency Standards (Leos, cited in Reed & Railsback, 2003). Based on NCLB requirements (NCLB, 2002) and the omission of its reference to bilingual education, one can infer that general education classrooms are the preferred or recommended placement for ELLs because they provide access to English and address standards-based curricula. Policymakers hold the assumption that instruction is made comprehensible and that ELLs receive opportunities to participate in instructional activities and interact with English speakers, resulting in both academic knowledge and English language development. However, this assumption has not always held true—“mainstreaming [ESOL] pupils may have

granted [ESOL] pupils equality of presence, but has not necessarily secured equality of participation and achievement” (Franson, 1999, p. 70).

Other factors have also influenced the spread of the ESOL inclusion model, including the lack of qualified teachers, as well as budget considerations. The shortage of specialized ESOL and bilingual teachers has limited the availability of self-contained ESOL and bilingual classrooms (Kindler, 2002; NCES, 2001). In addition, it is simply cheaper to place ELLs into general education classrooms rather than providing them with bilingual instruction or specialized instruction by ESOL specialists in pullout or self-contained settings (Platt et al., 2003)—at least in the short-term.

ELL Inclusion in the State of Florida

In the 1994-1995 school year, inclusion was encouraged at multi-district meetings by the FDOE as a viable option in Florida districts to provide LEP students equal access to the standard curriculum. The effects of the FDOE’s encouragement of inclusion are seen in statistics from the 2004-2005 school year, which indicate that out of 1,578 elementary schools, 1,326 used an inclusion model for ESOL through language arts instruction and 252 used self-contained or other models (Saavedra, 2005).

A 1995 technical assistance paper, written and distributed by the FDOE office that implements state ESOL policy and provides oversight for districts included the following comment after office personnel received questions, criticisms, and concerns from Florida district ESOL supervisors: **“Nothing in this technical assistance paper...is to be interpreted as encouraging an indiscriminate rush to inclusion to substitute for existing successful educational practices. Inclusion, if it is to be implemented at all, needs to occur one student at a time”** (original bold emphasis) (Garcia, 1995). The technical assistance paper stated that inclusion was a preferred alternative

when the ELL population in a district did not support the provision of self-contained or other ESOL models. It acknowledged that teaching in an ESOL-inclusive classroom created more demands on the teacher—“The task for the teacher becomes more complex as the increasingly varied needs of the students are addressed” (para. 10).

Despite the fact that this technical assistance paper (Garcia, 1995) emphasized that districts should not rush into implementing inclusion, many Florida districts had already done that prior to its release. This shift was fueled by the fact that ESOL-inclusion could help relieve tight district budgets by eliminating specialized ESOL teaching positions. A few districts elected to provide ESOL resource teachers who served several schools, serving primarily to administer assessments, serving as ELL Committee chairpersons, and completing administrative paperwork. Though Garcia (1995) recommended a lower teacher-student ratio in ESOL inclusion classrooms, such data are not available from FDOE. Some teachers I know recently reported that their former district paid them an additional \$300 a year for having ELLs in their general education English classroom, making them feel better about this.

In summary, the movement of ELLs to general education classrooms was the result of many different causes, including rhetoric about the benefits of placing ELLs in English-dominant classrooms, policy changes that promoted English-only, and attempts by districts to save money. The next section examines what the literature says about the teaching of ELLs in general education classrooms.

The Literature: Teaching and Learning to Teach ELLs

ESOL inclusion offers the potential to provide ELLs with opportunities to interact and develop friendships with native-English speakers while developing English language skills and content knowledge. However, research has indicated that the talk

about the benefits of inclusion for ELLs and teachers' skill in providing necessary comprehensible input has not often been realized. Iddings (2005) made the following comment based on her literature review for her study of second grade ELLs in an English-dominant classroom in the Southwest U.S.:

Euphemized views of institutional settings where native and non-native speakers of English meet may serve to mask the historical, structural, and ideological conditions that continue to favor dominant groups, and to gloss over inherently unjust circumstances that typically undermine linguistic, ethnic, and/or racial minority students in our educational system (p. 167).

The literature base about the teaching of ELLs in mainstream classrooms presented below was classified into the following categories: (1) professional dispositions; (2) roles and responsibilities; (3) challenges and demands; (4) integrating language and content; (5) gaps in the literature base; and (6) components of an effective inclusion program.

Professional Dispositions toward ELLs

Guerra and Nelson (2009) argued that changes in teacher beliefs are required in order to improve educational outcomes for linguistically, culturally, and economically diverse students. School reform measures over the past 30 years have been ineffective in changing outcomes for this population. While teachers might feel a moral obligation to teach all students, some believe that the increase in student diversity is a problem (Howard, 2007).

Studies found that some teachers held negative attitudes toward ELLs. These teachers reported being resentful and frustrated because of the extra attention some ELLs needs, which on occasion resulted in them neglecting their needs (e.g., Clair, 1995; Constantino, 1994; Franson, 1999; Iddings, 2005; Penfield, 1987; Reeves, 2002; Walker et al., 2004; Youngs, 1999). In other studies, teachers were found to adhere to

a deficit view in which ELLs are seen as lacking in knowledge and skills rather than being viewed as assets, again leading to negative dispositions toward ELLs (Fu, 1995; Gersten, 1996).

A few studies have found positive dispositions by teachers of ELLs in English-dominant classrooms. For example, Zuniga-Hill and Yopp (1996) found that the exemplary teachers participating in her research consciously held positive dispositions and created a community of learners built around respect and mutual accommodation. In addition, they attended to linguistic, academic, and social milieus, which led to feelings of safety, trust, acceptance, and motivation by all students—for ELLs and others present. Edstam, Walker, and Stone (2007) found that a team of teachers in a rural Minnesota elementary school had increased their effectiveness by collaborating with ESOL specialists and creating and implementing an action plan that met the needs of ELLs in their classrooms. A recent study by Song, Thieman, and Del Castillo (2010) found that the majority of mainstream teachers in their study held positive dispositions toward ELLs because the teachers felt prepared and perceived ELLs to be more motivated and hard working. However, some indicated that teaching low proficiency ELLs was a source of frustration.

Lewis-Moreno (2007) called for school districts to determine and address teachers' negative attitudes toward ELLs in order to meet their needs. She argued that making the teaching and learning of ELLs a district priority carries a strong message to school-based administrators and teachers, especially if professional development and accountability measures are instituted. School districts increasingly are recognizing the need to implement professional development to help prepare teachers for the increasing

diversity in their classrooms. Lee and Luykx (2005) reported research findings on the impact of professional development activities on the beliefs and attitudes of science teachers about diversity. They identified four groups of teachers:

(a) teachers who were already committed to embracing student diversity in science education become more committed; (b) teachers who had not considered student diversity begin to recognize and accept it as important in science education; (c) teachers remain unconvinced of the importance of student diversity in science education; and (d) teachers actively resist embracing student diversity generally and in science education in particular. Even those teachers who are committed to educational equity face challenges related to student diversity in their teaching. Scaling-up efforts should consider a wide range of teachers' beliefs about student diversity, in addition to helping them acquire the knowledge necessary to provide effective instruction for diverse student groups. (pp. 420-421)

Howard (2007), Diaz and Flores (2001), Mohr (2004), and Williams (2001) all insisted that teachers abandon deficit views of ELLs and set high expectations for ELLs while viewing diversity as an asset. After all, ELLs have competence in one language, which constructs a base for acquiring English. Diaz and Flores (2001) argued that the challenge is "to organize the teaching-learning process to the potential and not the perceived developmental level of our children" (p. 31).

Roles and Responsibilities

Many studies revealed a conflict between teachers' notions of what they think their roles and responsibilities should be and what was expected of them (e.g., Clair, 1995; Constantino, 1994; Franson, 1999; Iddings, 2005; Penfield, 1987; Reeves, 2002; Walker, Shafer, & Iliams, 2004; Youngs, 1999). Some research has indicated that mainstream content teachers may not provide appropriate instruction for ELLs because they do not fully understand their roles or are not aware of ESOL methods that promote academic growth (Mohr, 2004; Gersten, 1999; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007; Yoon, 2008). Several studies have revealed that many teachers believed that their role was specific

to teaching academic content in order to meet curricular objectives and achievement assessments (Harklau, 1994; Markham, Green, & Ross, 1996; Penfield, 1987; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007).

Yoon (2008) examined three middle school language arts teachers' views of their roles as teachers of ELLs and effects of their positioning on ELLs' level of participation and their self-concepts as powerful or powerless. One teacher positioned herself as a teacher of all students; another saw himself as an English teacher of mainstream students and not an ESOL teacher; the final teacher considered herself to be a content teacher. Findings showed that teacher positioning determined pedagogical approaches and teacher-student interactions. Even in highly interactive classroom contexts, the teachers who did not perceive themselves as teachers of all students had ELLs who felt isolated and powerless. The teacher who viewed herself as a teacher of all students had ELLs who were stronger academically and felt more empowered.

Other research indicated that when an elementary ESOL teacher pulled out ELLs for language arts instruction or there was a secondary ESOL language arts/English teacher, classroom teachers may view ESOL teachers as being primarily responsible for the ELLs' education (Constantino, 1994; Harklau, 2000; Mohr, 2004; Penfield, 1987). However, a recent study by Song et al. (2010) contradicted these findings; a majority of teachers (26 out of 28 interviewed and 43 out of 48 surveyed) in their study considered it their role to teach all students, including ELLs. Reeves (2006) found that general education teachers in her study felt more responsible for the teaching and learning of ELLs and had more positive attitudes toward ELLs once the students became more proficient in English.

Some teachers do not hold ELLs with low English proficiency to high achievement standards because they want ELLs to have positive self-esteem and positive attitudes toward school. Rather, they focused on the affective domain so that their ELLs would have positive attitudes about school and themselves while they were learning English. Berzins and Lopez (2001) refer to this as the *pobrecito* (poor little one) syndrome. While such teachers may have good intentions by allowing ELLs to be passive, not holding them to the same standards, they are not helping them develop the knowledge and skills essential to meet the academic knowledge required for graduation. In addition, lessening ELL demand while providing them high grades because they are well behaved can provoke resentment by classmates who are held to more rigorous standards.

Challenges and Demands of Teaching ELLS

Research findings indicated that ESOL-inclusion placed demands and challenges on teachers that they may not be prepared or willing to handle (e.g., Clair, 1995; Constantino, 1994; Franson, 1999; Iddings, 2005; Penfield, 1987; Reeves, 2002; Walker, Shafer, & Iliams, 2004; Youngs, 1999). Many of these studies revealed a conflict between teachers' notions of what they think their roles and responsibilities should be and what was expected of them. In addition, some teacher participants found ELLs needed extra attention, causing teacher resentment and frustration, which caused them to neglect ELL needs.

Gersten (1996) spoke of the *double demands* of teaching ELLs; that is, the necessity that teachers attend to language development in addition to academic content learning. Although the 26 teachers in his study recognized the value of integrating

language with content, most were “overwhelmed with the intricacies of putting it into practice” (p. 20).

Several studies have concluded that some teachers believe that the time required to modify instruction for ELLs is just too much of a burden (Franson, 1999; Penfield, 1987; Reeves, 2002; Youngs, 1999; Walker et al., 2004). One justification for not providing appropriate accommodations was the need to balance work and family since the time teachers were required to modify instruction went beyond the allotted planning period in the school day. Another justification related to teacher concerns about fairness. Some felt that devoting extra time to ELL instruction would detract from instruction to other students in the class. In a case study of exemplary mainstream classroom teachers of ELLs, Zuniga-Hill and Yopp (1996) found that the teachers in their study did not allow themselves to be constrained by time because meeting the needs of ELLs was a passion. They believed that it was their responsibility to differentiate their instruction for ELLs and were determined to do so.

The following studies revealed that the language demand mentioned by Gersten (1996) were an unmet challenge to some mainstream classroom teachers. Harklau (1994) followed four high school Chinese ELLs over a three year period and found that mainstream classrooms provided authentic input about curricular content via teacher-led discussions; however, little effort was made by teachers to make their communication comprehensible or to provide opportunities for extended interactions. Both Harklau (1994) and Verplaetse (1998, 2000) found that opportunities to give extended responses in mainstream secondary settings were limited for ELLs in comparison to English-proficient students because ELLs were typically asked lower-

order questions that required one-word or simple phrase responses and because ELLs were more reluctant to speak.

While Gersten (1996) discussed the double demands of teaching ELLs, referring to teaching both language and content, still another demand exists—creating social integration of ELLs and other students in the classroom. Social integration in the classroom and school is critical in that it provides opportunities for interactions with English proficient students, helps with academic development, and eases cultural adjustment (Coelho, 1994; Hakuta, 1986). Findings from studies by Clair (1995), Harklau (1999, 2000), Iddings (2005), Norton (2001), Penfield (1987), Reeves (2002), and Toohey (1998), found that creating environments that foster social integration of ELLs provided challenges for mainstream classroom teachers. Some of the ELLs in these studies were marginalized, ridiculed, and isolated. Penfield (1987) found that some teachers became frustrated by the difficulty of establishing communication with ELLs and their families who were not proficient in English; she noted that this frustration likely affected the development of student-teacher rapport.

Integrating Language and Content Instruction

Enright (1991) cited research by Cuevas, DeAvila and Duncan, Genesee, and Krashen and Biber, that found that ELLs can develop English language skills when language instruction is integrated with content and when ESOL strategies are used to make activities understandable. ESOL strategies include such activities as activating students' prior knowledge; building background knowledge if it is lacking; providing visuals, demonstrations, diagrams, and clear directions to make instruction comprehensible; providing cooperative learning opportunities to foster student interaction; and allowing extended time for students to respond. Short and Fitzsimmons

(2007) wrote of the effectiveness of integrating language and content instruction. This method is supported by many ESOL experts (e.g., de Jong & Harper, 2005; Echevarria & Graves, 2006; Faltis, Christian, & Coulter, 2008; Verplaetse & Migliacci, 2008; Villegas & Lucas, 2002a).

Gaps in the Literature Base about Teaching ELLs in Elementary Classrooms

This review of the literature revealed several voids. Most studies investigating teachers of ELLs or ELL experiences in mainstream classrooms have been at the secondary level (e.g., Constantino, 1994; Duff, 2001; Fu, 1995; Harklau, 1994, 1999, 2000; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Markham et al., 1996; Reeves, 2002; Song et al., 2010; Youngs, 1999) with fewer studies directed exclusively at the elementary level (e.g., Franson, 1999, Gersten, 1996; Iddings, 2005; Platt & Troudi, 1997; Toohey, 1996, 1998).

Some research has included teachers who teach at both elementary and secondary levels (e.g., Byrnes & Kiger, 1997; Penfield, 1987; Walker et al., 2004). Most teachers studied in the existing literature base have had little, if any, specialized training that prepares them to teach ELLs. An exception was a longitudinal study of ESOL-prepared teacher graduates from Purdue University (refer to Athanasas & Martin, 2006; Athanasas & de Oliveira, 2007). The research base lacked specific focus on the experiences and perspectives of elementary classroom teachers who are considered qualified to teach ELLs by virtue of their graduation from teacher education programs with ESOL teacher competencies infused into coursework leading to an ESOL credential along with an elementary education certificate.

The section on ESOL inclusion concludes with a presentation of recommendations from the literature for successful implementation of the ESOL inclusion model.

Components of Successful ESOL Inclusion Classrooms

Four factors have been identified as resulting in the successful implementation of ESOL inclusion. These are staff development, appropriate curricula, adequate resources, and positive dispositions.

Staff development

Harper and Platt argue that “the critical issue is not the setting in which the student is placed but rather the nature of instruction within it” (1998, p. 33). To provide effective instruction for ELLs, teachers must have knowledge, skills, and dispositions to guide the teaching and learning of these students. Youngs (1996) warns that “regardless of good intentions to support mainstreamed ESOL students, teachers must have opportunities to gain specialized skills to work effectively with ESOL students; otherwise, **mainstreaming is not a positive solution**” (original bold emphasis) (p. 18).

The notion that every teacher—regardless of the subject taught—needs to be prepared specifically to teach ELLs is supported by many ESOL scholars and researchers (e.g., Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002; Cummins, 1997; Genesee, 1993; Gersten, 1996; Menken & Antunez, 2001; Mohan, Leung, & Davison, 2001; and Nieto , 2002). In Florida, teachers who are responsible for language arts and English instruction for ELLs, including elementary ESOL inclusion teachers, are required to complete 15 semester hours of ESOL coursework (or 300 professional development inservice hours) in (1) second language acquisition; (2) cross-cultural awareness; (3) ESOL methods; (4) ESOL curriculum and materials; and (5) ESOL assessment or complete an ESOL-infused teacher education program in which ESOL competencies have been “infused” through the program. However, just because teachers complete

this coursework does not necessarily mean that they are going to learn or apply it due to their dispositions and other factors.

Appropriate curricula

In order for ELLs to receive equitable educational opportunities, they must be given equal access to the (standards-based) curricula, as well as to all services and programs so that they can fully participate and benefit from education like non-ELLs. Justice Douglas wrote, “There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum: for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education” (cited in Coady, Hamann, Harrington, Pacheco, Pho, & Yedlin, 2003, p. 13), in the Supreme Court decision on the 1969 *Lau v. Nichols* case, in which plaintiffs representing ELLs sued the local school district for denying equal educational opportunities as promised in the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Harper and Platt (1998) defined an appropriate curriculum for ELLs as one that is adapted to ELLs’ proficiency and literacy levels and their educational and cultural backgrounds. Harklau (1994) and Short and Fitzsimmons (2007) argued that language must not be taught in isolation but rather integrated with content instruction in order to provide ELLs with the academic language proficiency that is required to succeed in school. Lucas et al. (2008) argue:

To scaffold learning for ELLS, mainstream classroom teachers need three types of pedagogical expertise: familiarity with the students’ linguistic and academic backgrounds; an understanding of the language demands inherent in the learning tasks that students are expected to carry out in class; and skills for using appropriate scaffolding so that ELLs can participate successfully in those tasks (p. 366).

It is unfortunate that ELLs in English dominant classrooms have not been provided opportunities for access to curricula, according to contemporary literature (e.g., Coady, et al., 2003; Gutiérrez, Asato , & Baquedano-López, 2000; Iddings, 2005). Instead, they tend to be segregated and assigned remedial skill-based work that does not promote academic content learning or the language knowledge that is necessary for them to succeed in school and later to participate fully in society.

Adequate resources

In addition to having an adequately prepared faculty and an appropriate curriculum based on standards and adapted according to ELLs' backgrounds and linguistic and cultural needs, resources for the teaching and learning of ELLs in general education classrooms are needed. The successful implementation of ESOL inclusion requires the provision of ESOL specialist support and time for collaboration (refer to Edstam et al., 2007). It is crucial that general education and ESOL resource teachers work together as equal partners holding the common goal of helping ELLs meet their potential. Bilingual paraprofessionals, working under teachers' supervision and direction, are also needed to assist ELLs by providing first language and tutoring support and assist with home-school communication.

Suitable supplementary materials for ELLs are other resources necessary for ESOL support. Bilingual dictionaries should be available in general education classrooms and ELLs should be instructed on their use. Other bilingual materials, such literature, texts, condensed novels, audio books, and computer software, can be beneficial to ELLs. Some research has shown that the use of bilingual books can help ELLs learn English vocabulary, build self-esteem and pride in heritage cultures, and

provide confidence when ELLs can recognize words in their first languages and locate them in English (Salas, Lucido, & Canales, 2001).

The English-only movement has been a strong force in the United States as reflected in standards-based reform measures (refer to Crawford, 2000; Cummins, 2000). The fact that NCLB (2002) does not mention bilingual education is a reflection of this. However, the provision of bilingual instruction and resources is supported by research. In their well-known longitudinal study, Thomas and Collier (2002) found that ELLs who received bilingual instruction tended to achieve higher outcomes over the long term than their peers instructed in only English.

Professional dispositions

Professional dispositions toward ELLs are essential in order to address their cognitive, linguistic, cultural, and affective needs. When teachers have these positive dispositions, they are motivated to gain and apply knowledge and skills as well as to locate and take advantage of resources that will help them teach ELLs effectively. Zuniga-Hill and Yopp (1996) found that the professional dispositions of the teachers in their study resulted in a positive classroom environment, which promoted a sense of community, acceptance, and belonging for both ELLs and non-ELLs.

Several studies have focused on general education teacher dispositions. Reeves (2006) found that teachers had a neutral to slightly positive attitude toward inclusion though they were reluctant to teach students who had not reached a minimal level of English proficiency and thought they lacked time to address ELL needs. The study of Walker et al. (2004) found that overall teachers held strongly negative attitudes toward ELLs due to such factors as lack of time to make accommodations, lack of preparation and efficacy about effective ELL pedagogy, and ethnocentric bias.

These findings, along with Youngs and Youngs (2001) conclusions, suggest professional development and exposure to other cultural groups were predictors of mainstream teachers' attitudes toward teaching ELLs, that the components of successful inclusion implementation overlap and influence each other. For example, preparedness affected teachers' ability to make appropriate accommodations to provide equal access, their dispositions related to teaching ELLs, and their interest in accessing existing resources or creating additional ones. Positive dispositions increased the likelihood that time would be spent to adapt curriculum, implement resources, and seek additional staff development.

This literature review proceeds to discuss how teacher education programs prepare general education teachers to meet the needs of ELLs in English-dominant classrooms.

Preparing Prospective Teachers for ELLs

Institutions seeking accreditation from the NCATE are required to meet its diversity standard, showing their commitment to prepare preservice teachers to meet the needs of all learners, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (refer to NCATE, 2002). Teacher education literature has recommended that teacher education programs take action by incorporating multicultural education content into their curricula. Voices of multicultural education scholars on preparing teachers for diversity and the argument that a multicultural education focus is not enough to meet the unique needs of ELLs are presented.

Teacher Preparation through the Lens of Multicultural Education

Gay and Howard (2000) argued that

[W]hether teachers intend to work in schools with students from predominately homogeneous populations or from multiple ethnic groups and cultural backgrounds, all need to develop multicultural knowledge and pedagogical skills. No students should graduate from any teacher education program and be certified or hired to teach without being thoroughly trained in multicultural education. Such education will go far beyond the one or two introductory survey multicultural courses that are typical of many current teacher education programs. (para 17)

Other multicultural education scholars (e.g., Banks et al., 2005; Cochran-Smith, 1995; Gay, 2000; Hollins, 1995; Lenski, Crumpler, Stallworth, & Crawford, 2005; Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002a; Zeichner, 1993), spoke of the necessity of incorporating multicultural education components into teacher education programs in order to prepare preservice teachers with needed knowledge, skills, and dispositions to address diversity.

The need for teacher education programs to prepare preservice teachers for diversity is heightened by the fact that the majority of the preservice teacher population mirrors the inservice teacher population in that they are predominantly White, female, monolingual, and middle class (Zumwalt & Craig, 2005). Due to their cultural backgrounds and socialization and educational experiences, they often hold different cultural references and worldviews than those of culturally and linguistically diverse populations (Au, 1980; Gay & Howard, 2000; Heath, 1983) and may be unable to identify with the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of future students (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Davis, & Fries, 2004; Gay, 2000). Alternatively, they may be what Cochran-Smith (1995) refers to as “colorblind,” believing that racial or ethnic background and socioeconomic status are irrelevant and that a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching is warranted.

Because many preservice teachers lack socio-cultural competence, that is, knowledge and awareness of their own and others' cultures; consciousness of social inequities; and skill in intercultural communication (Quintanar-Sarellana, 1997), teacher education programs must provide them with opportunities to examine their own sociocultural backgrounds, learn about linguistic and culturally diverse groups through study and personal interaction, and investigate issues related to power (Moll & Arnot-Hopffer, 2005). Through experiences, analysis, and reflection, preservice teachers are able to realize that their personal worldviews are not shared by all but are influenced by gender, race/ethnicity, socialization, and socioeconomic status (Villegas & Lucas, 2002b). This background is essential in laying a foundation to support culturally responsive pedagogy.

Teacher Preparation Specific to the Needs of ELLs

Although the concept of multicultural education addresses the teaching and learning of students from diverse backgrounds, Cummins (2001) and de Jong and Harper (2005) argued that multicultural education in and of itself does not adequately address the unique linguistic and cultural needs of ELLs. The notion that every teacher—regardless of the subject taught—needs to be prepared specifically to teach ELLs is supported by many ESOL scholars and researchers (e.g., Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002; Cummins, 1997; Genesee, 1993; Gersten, 1996; Menken & Antunez, 2001; Mohan, Leung, & Davison, 2001; Nieto, 2002).

The demand for specialized ESOL preparation is supported by educational outcomes of ELLs by teachers who have specialized ESOL preparation. According to a 2001 study by Hayes and Salazar and a 2002 study by Hayes, Salazar, and Vukovic (cited in Gandara & Maxwell-Jolly, 2006), teachers with ESOL credentials had higher

performing ELLs than teachers who lacked ESOL credentials. The argument is also supported by the perspective that teaching ELLs is different from teaching non-ELLs. De Jong and Harper (2005) contrast “just good teaching” for non-ELLs and effective instruction for ELLs based on second language acquisition theory. They make the case that mainstream teachers must understand (1) the process of second language acquisition; (2) how language and culture is a medium of teaching and learning; and (3) the need to set language and cultural objectives in addition to content ones.

Ballantyne et al. (2008) applied the NCATE Diversity Standards to the preparation of teachers of ELLs:

1. Teachers should acquire **pedagogical content knowledge** which addresses ELLs
2. Assessment and evaluation data should **measure** teachers’ preparedness to work with ELLs
3. Field experiences should provide **practice** and opportunities to see successful teachers **model** effective techniques in working with ELLs
4. Candidates should understand the range in **diversity among ELLs**
5. & 6. Unit should provide **qualified faculty** and **sufficient resources** to support teachers’ learning about ELLs (original bold emphasis) (p. 12)

Although demographics, the shortage of teachers prepared to teach ELLs, the shift of ELLs to mainstream classrooms, and the teacher education literature call for teacher education programs to prepare general education preservice teachers who are versed in ESOL pedagogy and who feel capable and competent to implement it at the onset of their careers, few teacher education programs have systematically and comprehensibly responded to this call (Menken and Antunez, 2001). Multicultural education scholars have found that isolated diversity courses alone encourage preservice teachers to view their content as irrelevant and unrelated to the theory and practice presented in

methods and other courses. They recommend instead the integrating, or infusing, of this content into existing program coursework, reinforcing its relevance (Grant, 1994; Villegas & Lucas, 2002b; Zeichner & Hoefft, 1996). However, not all scholars support infusion. Lucas et al. (2008) argued that it is “irresponsible to rely on an infusion strategy that requires distributing specialized knowledge and practices for ELL education across the faculty” (p. 370). They believe that most teacher education faculty lack knowledge, skills, and experience about teaching ELLs and that building their expertise takes time.

Many teacher education programs have begun implementing the ESOL-infusion model as a means to prepare teachers for the ELLs they will likely have in their classroom. The limited amount of available research on ESOL infusion programs has focused on the preparation of general teacher education faculty to better include issues related to ELLs in existing coursework (Costa et al., 2005; Meskill, 2005; Meskill & Chin, 2002; Schmidt, 2004).

Costa et al. (2005) implemented a faculty institute to provide them with prerequisite knowledge and skill to be able to infuse ESOL content into the teacher education courses they taught. Faculty participated in discussions about the sociopolitical context of public education the need for supportive school and classroom environments. In addition, they analyzed texts for language demands as well as observations they made while watching videos and visiting school sites. Emphasis was given to making specific changes to course syllabi that addressed objectives and activities specific to the teaching and learning of ELLs. While faculty members

increased their knowledge and awareness, the authors concluded that the change effort was influenced by the context of the institute.

Meskill (2005) also implemented a project to help faculty and others “learn about issues specific to ELLs” (p. 739). This training consisted of ESOL expert observations of instruction by faculty members, faculty workshops, and presentations by graduate students who were experts in ELL education. Topics covered were similar to those covered by Costa et al. As a result, most faculty members had more positive dispositions toward ELLs and believed they were more knowledgeable about ESOL topics. Faculty members reported that they planned on adding or strengthening existing content about the teaching and learning of ELLs in the courses they taught.

Some researchers have examined the infusion of multicultural education into teacher education programs at various universities revealing that the intent to include multicultural content and the actual implementation differ (Eferakorho, 2003; Fan, 1995; Forestieri, 2001; Izzaard, 1997). Another study of multicultural education infusion focused on the perceived usefulness by graduates (McNeal, 2005) with findings showing that some of the content was used to help establish multicultural classrooms when graduates became teachers.

The topic of ESOL infusion as a means to graduate teacher education students with preparation in the teaching and learning of ELLs has been introduced, and provided background about mandates in the state of Florida, the setting for this study, that specifies ESOL training requirements for teachers. The ESOL-infused Unified Elementary ProTeach (Professional Teacher) Program at UF from which my participants graduated is described.

ESOL Preparation Requirements in the State of Florida

The preparation of teachers for ELLs in Florida is currently governed by what is commonly referred to as the Florida Consent Decree (League of United, 1990). This legal mandate resulted from the settlement of a class action complaint filed by Multicultural Education, Training, and Advocacy, Inc. on behalf of the League of United Latin American Citizens, seven other minority advocacy groups, and individual students who alleged that non-native English speakers were not receiving an equitable education because of the lack of provision of comprehensible instruction and equal programmatic access by Florida schools (MacDonald, 2004). The FDOE and other defendants entered into a settlement agreement with the plaintiffs in order to ensure that ELLs were provided with appropriate instruction and access to educational programs that met their needs. The Agreement was entered as a Consent Order by the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida, Miami Division (League of United, 1990).

The Florida Consent Decree sets forth the compliance terms for the schooling of ELLs in Florida, specifying requirements in six areas (League of United, 1990). These areas are: (1) identification and assessment of ELLs; (2) equal access to appropriate programming (such as the provision of comprehensible instruction that is equal in amount, scope, sequence, and quality as that provided to non-ELL students); (3) equal access to appropriate categorical and other programs for ELLs (such as dropout prevention, Title I, and other support services); (4) personnel professional development requirements for English/Language Arts teachers of ELLs as well as other teachers; (5) compliance monitoring of districts by the FDOE; and (6) analysis of outcome measures to determine the provision of equal access and educational equity.

The Consent Decree (League of United, 1990) requires that inservice elementary and secondary English/language arts teachers complete 300 inservice hours, the equivalent of five three-semester hour courses, or a combination of inservice hours and semester hours in the areas of (1) cross-cultural understanding; (2) applied linguistics; (3) ESOL curriculum and materials development; (4) methods of teaching ESOL; and (5) testing and evaluation of ESOL in order to be qualified to provide ELLs with English/language arts instruction. The completion of this requirement leads to an ESOL *endorsement*, a subject area teaching credential that is added to an active teaching certificate in another area (e.g., elementary education, special education, or English). Any Florida teacher with the ESOL endorsement added to a pre-kindergarten-primary, elementary, special education, middle school language arts, or high school English certificate is considered qualified to provide primary language arts/English instruction to ELLs whether in general education, ESOL pullout, ESOL self-contained, or other instructional settings.

The Consent Decree (League of United, 1990) also specifies that math, science, social studies, and computer literacy teachers of ELLs must take 60 inservice hours or 3 semester hours of training while other-subject-area teachers (e.g., art, music, and physical education) must take 18 inservice hours or 3 semester hours of professional development. The Consent Decree was modified slightly in 2003, adding the requirement that guidance counselors and administrators complete 60 inservice hours or 3 semester hours of ESOL professional development (FDOE, 2005b). The FDOE also specified timelines for completion of all categories of professional development because timelines were not explicitly stated in the Consent Decree.

In 2001, the Florida Legislature mandated that teacher education programs at Florida public universities prepare preservice teachers in their prekindergarten-primary, elementary, secondary English, and special education programs with the coursework needed to obtain the ESOL endorsement, beginning with the 2000-2001 incoming freshman class (FDOE, 2001). By directing Florida teacher education programs to provide the ESOL coursework required for the ESOL endorsement, preservice teachers graduate from Florida public universities with the State of Florida ESOL qualifications prior to beginning their teaching careers, thus lowering the need for inservice ESOL preparation of new teachers by districts. This action also helped to reduce the number of teachers being reported as out-of-field in ESOL and removed ESOL as designated critical teacher shortage area in Florida as it had been since 1992 (P. Faircloth, personal communication, September 15, 2005).

The FDOE's demand for Florida teacher education programs to meet requirements set forth in the Florida Consent Decree (League of United, 1990) came about after a June 2000 revision to State Board of Education Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C., which stipulated after the change that:

Courses and school-based experiences shall include instruction, observation, practice, and competency demonstration in...teaching strategies for the instruction of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students which meet the requirements set forth in the ESOL Consent Decree for instructional personnel who teach Limited English Proficient students. (Rule 6A-5.066(3)(d)4, F.A.C., 2000)

The professional development requirements referred to in the above Rule are found in Section IV: Personnel of the Consent Decree (League of United, 1990).

The FDOE's Bureau of Educator Recruitment stipulated two options in the document, *Preparing Florida Teachers for Limited English Proficient Students* (FDOE,

2001) that would fulfill State Board of Education Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C. requirement to graduate preservice teachers with ESOL endorsement qualifications. The first option was to require a five-course/15-hour sequence of ESOL courses. This option would require other courses to be eliminated in order avoid requiring more than the maximum number of required semester hours allowed by a degree program.

Because adding all five of the ESOL courses to Florida public university teacher education programs was largely unfeasible, FDOE offered the infusion model as a second option. This alternative would allow Florida universities to include a minimum of two stand-alone ESOL-specific courses and to infuse FDOE-adopted Performance Standards for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (n.d.) into existing teacher education program coursework. Infusing ESOL endorsement coursework into teacher education programs would sufficiently address the five content areas stipulated in the Florida Consent Decree (League of United, 1990), and lead to teaching certificates in targeted subject areas (Bureau of Educator Recruitment, 2001). Because this option did not lead to the elimination of as many existing courses in a teacher education program or lengthen program completion timelines, the ESOL infusion model option was selected by most public universities, including the teacher education program at UF, which will be discussed next.

UF'S ESOL-Infused Elementary Teacher Education Program

The participants of this study were graduates of UF's five-year ESOL-infused Unified Elementary ProTeach Program. A better understanding of this population's experiences (which is referred to as their *realities*) and perceptions about the teaching of ELLs in mainstream elementary classrooms and about their preparation to do so is

discussed. Background about the ESOL-infused teacher education program at UF is described.

UF is a land-grant university, that is, an institute of higher education designated by the state of Florida to receive the benefits of the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890, and is designated with a Research I classification, meaning that faculty scholarly endeavors such as conducting research, obtaining grant funding, and writing books and journal articles, are priorities in addition to teaching. UF is the second largest university in the United States and is located in the North Central Region of the state. The university is a major employer in a town of about 108,000 residents, a number that fluctuates in the summer when many college students depart.

The College of Education at UF offers a five-year unified elementary/special education teacher education program, which is referred to as the Unified Elementary ProTeach Program. This program, begun in 1999, prepares preservice teachers for elementary (and early childhood) certification with an ESOL endorsement and the option to obtain dual certification in special education in the fifth, master's year. The program enrolls about 200 students annually, with about half completing the fifth year (S. Halsall, personal communication, March 17, 2008). About 15% of students complete requirements for both elementary (or early childhood) and special education certificates (S. Halsall, personal communication, March 17, 2008). The ProTeach program has been approved by the FDOE and is aligned with the Florida Accomplished Practices (FDOE, 2007b), performance outcomes that are correlated with effective teaching practices. In addition, it has been approved by NCATE (College of Education, 2007).

The ESOL (ESOL)-infused Unified Elementary ProTeach Program holds the perspective that its graduates will likely be teaching in classrooms where ELLs are integrated with native English speakers, whether through full inclusion or as part of a pullout ESOL program (Bondy & Ross, 2005). The program was developed around two inter-related themes, democratic values and knowledge of content and inclusive pedagogy. One of the ProTeach goals is to produce reflective professional educators with the abilities to develop supportive and productive classrooms for diverse learners, including those from culturally and linguistic diverse backgrounds, those who are receiving special education services, and those who are at-risk (that is, students who have displayed poor academic performance, have had prior retentions, are of low socioeconomic status, and/or are potential dropouts). Another goal is for program graduates to have the ability to develop collaborative relationships with colleagues, families, and community members in order to provide alternatives that address individual learner needs (Ross, Lane, & McCallum, 2005).

Students begin the ProTeach Program as juniors and are placed into cohorts each semester. They follow a required program of study with each cohort taking core courses together. Students must also take coursework related to an area of professional specialization. Areas of specialization include children's literature, ESOL, interdisciplinary (math, science, social studies, and literacy), literacy, math/science, and technology. They are required to complete 12 semester hours of specified graduate level courses in selected specialization areas. Those specializing in ESOL must choose 12 semester hours from the course options specified in Table 2-1 in addition to

completing the two ESOL-infused courses, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TSL) 3520 and TSL 5142.

Table 2-1. ESOL specialization course options: Unified Elementary ProTeach

| Course number and title | Semester hours |
|---|----------------|
| TSL 6245: Principles of Language for ESOL Teachers (Required unless enrolled in internship during fall) | 3 |
| FLE 6167: Cross-Cultural Communication for Educators | 3 |
| FLE 6165: Bilingual and Bicultural Education | 3 |
| TSL 6145: Curriculum and Materials Development for ESOL K-12 | 3 |
| TSL 6373: Methods of Teaching English as a Second Language | 3 |
| TSL 6440: ESOL Testing and Evaluation | 3 |

Source: University of Florida, 2010

Cohorts are enrolled in two ESOL stand-alone courses, which address TESOL/NCATE Standards for the Accreditation of Initial Program in P-12 ESOL Teacher Education (TESOL Task Force, 2003), taught by specialists in ESOL, as well as ESOL-infused methods and other courses in order to fulfill ESOL endorsement requirements. The first stand-alone, TSL 3520: ESOL Foundations: Language and Culture in Elementary Classrooms (formerly TSL 3520), is taken in the undergraduate senior year, and the second stand-alone, TSL 5142: ESOL Curriculum, Methods, and Assessment, is taken in the master's year, typically after preservice teachers have completed their internship. Content and assignments of each of these courses is described next.

TSL 3520: Foundations of language and culture in the elementary classroom

As the course title implies, TSL 3520 examines topics related to applied linguistics and cross-cultural communication that are relevant for teachers of ELLs at the elementary level. It introduces language structures, language functions, the principles and processes of first and second language acquisition, and the influences of native languages on second language acquisition, academic achievement, and literacy. In

addition, it overviews the nature of culture, inter- and intra-cultural variation, characteristics of typical American culture, socio-cultural considerations in educating ELLs, and culturally responsive pedagogy.

In TSL 3520, preservice teachers currently participate in two types of out-of-class field experiences, the ELI Partner Exchange and the Service Learning Project and write reflective focus papers linking concepts of language and culture to these experiences. Service learning was not an opportunity during the time participants in this study were in ProTeach. During the ELI Partner Exchange, preservice teachers participate in five one-hour weekly conversations with adult international students who are enrolled in the English Language Institute (ELI) on campus to improve English skills. The preservice teachers and ELI students discuss issues related to second language acquisition and culture, such as cultural adjustment, similarities and differences between cultures, and language learning experiences. Based on their conversations, students write reflection papers, making explicit connections to course readings.

Preservice teachers select from a number of options to carry out the Service Learning Project. One is collaborating with local high school ESOL Program teachers and participating in what is referred to as Gator Buddies; preservice teachers and high school ELLs go on five-weekly social outings. Another option for preservice teachers is to meet with high school ELLs to plan and implement fund raising activities for the school's International Club. Preservice teachers reflect on their experiences and their learning related to course topics in another focus paper. Other service learning opportunities have been available in the past, including ELL tutoring, interacting with

migrants at a migrant camp, and fundraising for a foundation that provides assistance to local migrant families.

In past semesters, preservice teachers were scheduled to conduct observations in elementary, secondary, or adult ESOL classrooms and wrote focus papers based on their experiences related to course content while enrolled in TSL 3520. However, these field experiences were discontinued due to the lack of availability of ESOL classrooms. The local school district has a small population of ELLs and uses an ESOL center school pullout model in which most ELLs in the district are bused to a single elementary, middle, or high school with only two or three ESOL classrooms at each site. The number of ELLs is dwindling in the district, and more ELLs are encouraged to attend their zoned schools. Field experiences in these classrooms as well as in general education classrooms with ELLs in the local and surrounding school districts are organized during the second ESOL stand-alone course.

TSL 5142: ESOL curriculum, methods, and assessment

TSL 5142 is a graduate-level required course, scheduled in the fifth year of the ProTeach Program, usually in the semester following internships, with the goals of preparing preservice teachers to create equitable learning environments for ELLs. This course extends the concepts of linguistic and cultural diversity covered in TSL 3520, applying them to ELL curriculum development, teaching methodology, and assessment in the context of the general education classroom. Students gain experience in integrating English language development activities while teaching content and promoting higher order thinking.

Assignments in TSL 5142 include the analysis and critique of an existing lesson plan situated in a thematic unit and critique from the perspective of ELLs' needs, as well

as the development of content-based lesson plans in content areas that address the needs of ELLs. During this course, preservice teachers participate in a 10-hour minimum (1-hour weekly) ESOL field experience in classrooms with credentialed ESOL teachers supervising. Preservice teachers have opportunities to implement methods with ELLs that have been addressed in the course. Each student is responsible for completing related tasks: observing the classroom to identify teacher and student language use; sharing with peers in class about their experiences; and conducting an observation of a peer's lesson plan implementation, including pre- and post-discussion components.

Diversity issues related to the teaching and learning of culturally and linguistically diverse learners should be infused into other ProTeach Program coursework, including methods courses, which are taught by faculty in the various program areas. Prior to official entry into the ProTeach Program, students must take EDG 2701: Teaching Diverse Populations, which examines demographics, the nature of culture, prejudice and intercultural understanding and awareness, as well as EME 2040: Introduction to Education Technology, which addresses second language learning technology, the digital divide, and meeting the needs of diverse learners (Emihovich, Webb, Krantzler, Vernetson, & DePuydt, (2003)..

Some students choose to leave UF after obtaining their 4-year Bachelor of Arts in Education degrees to obtain teaching positions, though they are not recommended for certification by the university because they have not completed their internships and other coursework required in the fifth year of the ProTeach Program. However,

graduates with Bachelor degrees in education are able to obtain temporary certificates while they complete teacher certification requirements (refer to FDOE, n.d.).

Students completing the five-year ProTeach Program can obtain temporary Florida teaching certificates that carry the ESOL endorsement, which is an add-on credential that may be bound elementary, special education, early childhood, or other teaching certificates. The ESOL endorsement does not have to be renewed through additional coursework or inservice professional development points as teaching certificates do. After completing the state-required beginning teaching program and completing three years of successful teaching, teacher graduates earn Florida professional teaching certificates that are valid for five years (refer to FDOE, n.d.).

Although some graduates of the ProTeach Program move out of state or change career paths, most choose teaching positions in Florida, with many returning to their hometowns. Once they have obtained teaching positions in Florida elementary schools, the number of ELLs they will have in their classrooms is dependent on the location of the district and on the school within the district. In general, districts in South Florida have the greatest number of ELLs while those in the north and Panhandle regions have the fewest. In addition to South Florida districts, districts that include the cities of Orlando, Tampa, and Clearwater/St. Petersburg in Central Florida also have high numbers of ELLs.

From Prepared Students to Ready, Willing, and Able Teachers of ELLs?

The provision of an ESOL-infused, nationally accredited elementary teacher education program does not guarantee that its graduates have the capability or willingness to teach ELLs. In fact, Freeman (2002) argues that “the notion that preservice teacher education can fully equip a teacher for a career in the classroom is

erroneous” (p. 11). The socio-cultural and situated nature of learning, in general, and learning to teach, specifically, are ongoing and mediated by context, experiences, and beliefs (Bandura, 1989; Solomon, Battistich, & Hom, 1996). Zeichner and Gore (1990) have called for research that addresses “how... teachers [are] shaped by and in turn influence, the structures into which they are socialized” (p. 341). Given that what teachers believe, learn, and do is filtered and dynamic, research that looks specifically at the perspectives of teachers who have graduated from an ESOL-infused teacher education program has been needed. Such research contributes to an understanding of the effectiveness of such teacher education programs. In addition, it can assist faculty in planning course content.

A few case studies (e.g., Artiles, Barreto, Pena, & McClafferty, 1998; Sleeter, 1989) have examined teachers’ knowledge, beliefs, and practices related to multicultural education following completion of teacher education programs that included multicultural pedagogy. The researchers found that learning about multicultural issues and strategies in teacher education programs does not always result in the application of this knowledge to actual practice. A recent review of research on teaching diverse students by Hollins and Guzman (2005) identified the need for studies that attempt to connect teacher education program preparation for diversity to learning, teaching experiences, and student outcomes. In addition, the reviewers found that attention to the instructional planning for diverse learners has been neglected in research. Based on a gap she observed during her review of the multicultural teaching literature, Sleeter (2001) recommends research that follows teacher education graduates into their teaching careers.

The purpose of this section has been to review the literature base on preparing teachers to teach ELLs and to identify gaps in our understanding. Since research is lacking on ESOL infusion, related research was presented on the infusion of multicultural education into teacher education programs' curricula and its effectiveness. The section ended by questioning whether such teacher education resulted in teachers with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to be effective in meeting the needs of ELLs. This study sought to answer this question based on teachers' own perceptions of what they face in diverse elementary classrooms and on their reflections on their participation in the ESOL-infused teacher education program at UF.

Summary

This chapter began by discussing two conceptual frameworks, teacher socialization and teacher perceptions that ground this study. Next, literature indicated the need for teachers who are prepared to teach ELLs in mainstream classrooms was presented. Following this, inclusion, the ESOL model of choice in Florida and many other states, was discussed. A review of the literature related to teaching and learning to teach ELLs in mainstream classrooms was examined, with gaps in the research base about teaching and learning to teach ELLs in elementary classrooms identified. The ESOL infusion model implemented in the Unified Elementary Program at UF was then presented. At the end of the chapter, literature was offered about the success of past efforts to prepare teachers for this population.

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore ESOL-endorsed elementary teachers' perceptions about their experiences teaching ELLs in general education classrooms and about their teacher education to do so. In addition, it explored differences in experiences and perspectives among participants, those who specialized in ESOL and those who specialized in other areas. This study captured teachers' senses of their roles and responsibilities as teachers for ELLs amongst their other duties and provided a description of their challenges, constraints, and successes as located in the current educational context. Findings yielded useful feedback about the educational needs of future teachers who will teach in today's educational context.

In-depth interviewing from a phenomenological philosophical perspective (Seidman, 2006) was a qualitative methodology that addressed the purpose and questions of this research, as it has "an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman, 2006, p. 9). In-depth interviewing is considered both a methodology and method (Seidman, 2006). Strauss and Corbin define methodology as "a way of thinking about and studying social reality" and method as "a set of procedures and techniques for collecting and analyzing data" (1990, p. 2).

According to Seidman (2006), this methodology reflects the principle that people act according to the meaning they make of their experiences. An assumption of this approach is that participants' perspectives can be made manifest and are meaningful (Kavale, 1996). As a method, in-depth interviewing is a means of collecting data about

perceptions and experiences that cannot be observed directly, including participants' feelings, intentions, beliefs, and interpretations.

Philosophical Foundations

Underlying any methodology is a fundamental philosophical orientation – a way of viewing the world that provides context to a study and a related epistemology, which is an explanation of how we come to know. Therefore, the selected methodology and philosophy must be in alignment with one another, as well as be appropriate to the purposes and questions of the research at hand (Crotty, 1998; Wilson, 2002). Coming to understand the perceptions of the participants and the meaning that they attach to their experiences of teaching and learning to teach ELLs required individual conversations between teacher participants and the researcher and brought forth the tacit and unexamined.

In-depth interviewing from a phenomenological perspective (Seidman, 2006) accepts basic tenets of the philosophy of hermeneutic phenomenology, which is a branch of interpretivism. Merriam (1998) argued that the philosophy of phenomenology is the hallmark of all qualitative research and, thus, needed no explication. However, there exists several interpretations of phenomenology, as well as its epistemology of constructionism. Therefore, main orientations of phenomenology and justification of the selection of a contemporary one is discussed. Briefly overviewed is interpretivism, which is the category of philosophy of which phenomenology is a part.

Interpretivism

Interpretivism developed in response to positivist attempts to explain human social realities because of arguments that natural sciences differed from social sciences (Crotty, 1998). Crotty reported that contemporary orientations of interpretivism derived

from the work of Max Weber (1864-1920), Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), Wilhelm Windelband (1848-1915), and Heinrich Rickert (1863-1936). Max Weber acknowledged that human and social sciences had differences; however, he argued that, like natural science studies, social science investigations of historical and cultural phenomena should use methods that provide empirical evidence and causal explanations. Alternatively, Dilthey and others posited that social sciences required different research methods that allow for the individualization of social reality in social science, as generalizability found in natural science studies were not believed to be applicable to social sciences (Crotty, 1998).

A researcher adhering to interpretivist tenets is curious about how people make sense of experiences related to a phenomenon rather than testing theories, conducting experiments, and using measurements as positivists do, or adhering to social and power structures as critical theorists attempt to do (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002). Interpretive approaches “look for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world” (Crotty, 1998, p. 67), while realizing that experiences can never be fully described. Falling within the paradigm of interpretivism is the philosophy of phenomenology, which will be discussed next.

Phenomenology as a Philosophy

Phenomenology developed as a philosophy and expanded into a research methodology. Phenomenology served as the philosophical foundation for this study but not as the research methodology as the plan was not to limit findings to commonalities across participants about the essence of being elementary teachers who are charged with teaching ELLs in elementary classrooms. Interest was shown in differences among participants’ perceptions and experiences as well as contextual and background

variables influencing these. Patton (1990) contended, “One can employ a general phenomenological perspective to elucidate the importance of using methods that capture people’s experience of the world without conducting a phenomenological study that focuses on the essence of the shared experience” (p. 71). Provided is an overview of the historical development of phenomenology from philosophy to a methodology to provide background.

Transcendental phenomenology

The historical development of phenomenology has been dynamic and is still in flux today (Speigelberg, as cited in Laverty, 2003). German mathematician turned philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938; 1931) is considered to be the founder of phenomenology (Koch, 1996; Polkinghorne, 1989). Even Husserl’s own initial conceptualization, referred to as *transcendental phenomenology*, changed over his own lifetime. Provided are key identities and contributions in the evolution of phenomenology to provide foundational knowledge, beginning with Husserl’s philosophy of transcendental phenomenology.

Transcendental phenomenology, referred to as Husserlian phenomenology, is considered epistemological in that it is concerned with how we come to know. Husserl’s most basic philosophical premise was that we come to know what we experience through conscious awareness, that is, by actively thinking about an experience—our perceptions, recollections, and reflections (Patton, 2002; van Manen, 1990). This relates to Husserl’s conceptualization of *intentionality*, “when the mind becomes conscious of something, when it ‘knows’ something, it reaches out to, and into, that object....Consciousness is directed toward the object; the object is shaped by consciousness” (Crotty, 1998, p. 44). Husserl believed that it was possible to isolate a

phenomenon consciously from everyday temporal and contextual influences, moving it to what he referred to as the *intersubjective ego* (Gurswitsch, 1964). This was to be achieved through the process of what Husserl referred to as *bracketing*, or the setting aside of existing beliefs and biases after they were drawn into conscious awareness (Crotty, 1998; Husserl, 1931; Lavery, 2003; Moustakas, 1994). Once the mind was purified, in effect, Husserl posited that a phenomenon of interest could enter the cleansed mind, rise above consciousness, and then be brought back to consciousness with meaning attached. The description that resulted from this “return to consciousness” was considered the *Essence* of the phenomenon. Husserl posited that Essence was objective, universal truth, and valid because of the bracketing of all biases and preconceptions.

A later writing by Husserl (1970) showed a shift from this original transcendental orientation, which was evidenced when he referred to *lifeworld*. The concept lifeworld includes habitual, common sense, and taken-for-granted experiences that occur without conscious thought and is based on beliefs about self, the objective world, and others who share a common experience. When the lifeworld is reflected upon, meaning emerges—tacit and new understandings can be made explicit, existing understandings can be validated, and forgotten meanings can resurface. This latter ideology revealed Husserl’s perspective that meaning is derived from humans interacting in the world (Crotty, 1998; van Manen, 1990), which is a tenet of the epistemology of *constructionism*, which is explained later.

While Husserl considered his initial conceptualization of transcendental phenomenology as being objective because of his belief that it was possible to bracket

out all biases and preconceptions, his later position was that coming to know was both objective and subjective, a constructionist view, because of the interaction and influence between the world and the individual (Crotty, 1998). The notions of “coming to know” as (1) being subjective; (2) as being objective; and (3) as being both subjective and objective are demonstrated in the following examples. Imposing meaning when reading a text reflects subjectivism while the literal interpretation of a text reflects objectivism. Current thought about reading comprehension reflects both subjectivism and objectivism. The reader interacts with the text, co-constructing the meaning of the words on the page by considering what lies in between the lines and applying, likely unconsciously, cultural learning and assumptions. With Husserl’s assertion that acquiring meaning was both subjective and objective, he replaced the term *Essence* with *essence*, reflecting his newfound orientation that an objective, universal description of a phenomenon was impossible. He realized that biases could not be totally bracketed, or eliminated. A contemporary of Husserl’s, Heidegger, built on Husserl’s initial philosophy of transcendental phenomenology. Heidegger’s hermeneutic perspective is described next.

Hermeneutic phenomenology

German-born Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), like Husserl, did not initially begin his career in philosophy; rather, his interest was theology. Heidegger became intrigued by Husserl’s philosophy of phenomenology and began teaching at the University of Freiberg where Husserl taught. Husserl arranged that Heidegger replace him as a professor at the university with the expectation that Heidegger would perpetuate the philosophy of transcendental phenomenology. However, Heidegger disassociated

himself from Husserl once he obtained the position since he had begun to question Husserl's perspective (Lavery, 2003).

Heidegger created another branch of phenomenological philosophy called *hermeneutic phenomenology*. Heidegger, and those adhering to his philosophy, viewed phenomena as textual in nature, requiring interpretation (Hein & Austin, 2001), hence the use of the term *hermeneutics*, meaning "to interpret texts." Both spoken and written words are considered to be texts. The notion that interpretation is required to discern meaning is but one difference between hermeneutic and transcendental phenomenology. Other differences, as well as similarities, will be described next.

Both early Husserlian (transcendental) and hermeneutic phenomenology are concerned with lived experiences, having the goal of developing understanding of even the trivial by creating meaning (Lavery, 2003). Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology differed from Husserl's early notion in that Heidegger believed that consciousness is shaped by historically lived experience, which includes cultural background that shapes individuals' worldviews (Heidegger, 1962). Thus, *historicality*, the historical connection of past to present, determines what one considers real and true though an individual may not have self-awareness of how cultural norms and mores, social interactions, and prior experiences have influenced him or her. Munhall described Heidegger "as having a view of people and the world as indissolubly related in cultural, in social and in historical contexts" (cited in Lavery, 2003, p. 8).

Heidegger's philosophy holds an ontological perspective because it emphasizes being-in-the-world instead of the epistemological one of early transcendental phenomenology, which emphasized how we come to know. Human actions are

perceived to define the world context in which they are situated while the context of the world defines and sets boundaries on human actions due to interplay, interaction, and influence (Stewart & Mickunas, 1990). Accordingly, multiple interpretations of a phenomenon are possible.

Those adhering to hermeneutic phenomenology seek to describe the world as lived by humans as well as humans' reaction to the experiences of interest (Valle & King, 1978). It is understood that individuals can never fully bracket their worldviews or derive pure meaning unadulterated by context as shown by Kockelmans' argument:

At the very moment the philosopher begins to reflect he has already engaged himself in the world, society, history, language....The phenomena, the things themselves, must be accepted by the philosopher the way they really are, but this can be done only by interpreting them from a conception of world which is already there before the philosopher can begin to reflect. (1987, p. 27)

Application of phenomenology to research

The movement in phenomenology following transcendental and hermeneutic phenomenology was the application of the philosophy of phenomenology to research in the social sciences, starting with Alfred Schutz's (1899-1959) use of it for research in sociology (1962/2007). Schutz argued that social science was different from physical science because social science researchers attempt to interpret the same experiences that participants themselves are interpreting (Wilson, 2002). According to Schutz (1962/2007), each individual acts in the world based on a personal system of relevancy. Each person makes choices about experiences and interactions with others based on what is deemed appropriate to the situation at hand. Social researchers can focus on this tacit knowledge (Wilson, 2002).

Schutz's application of phenomenology to research in sociology (1962/2007) led to phenomenology methodology in other areas of social science, such as the application of phenomenology to psychology research by Giorgi (1985) and Wertz (1984).

Phenomenological methodology has been applied to many contemporary nursing studies, which have the goal of understanding the experiences and perspectives of patients (Koch, 1996; Thomas & Pollio, 2001). Some contemporary educational researchers (e.g., Kuhel, 2005; Rentz, 2006) have followed the phenomenological research methodology delineated by Moustakas (1994), which applies Husserlian phenomenology, with the purpose of understanding the essences of particular phenomena. Other educational researchers have used other methodologies that are grounded in the philosophy of phenomenology as they not only seek to understand commonalities in lived experience but are also interested in understanding contextual differences (e.g., Bradford, 1997; Cook, 2004).

Dissertation Philosophical Stance

The contemporary orientation of the philosophy of phenomenology was used as the philosophical foundation for this study. Listed are the assumptions of this perspective, which are hermeneutic in nature.

Assumptions of contemporary phenomenological philosophy

A basic tenet of phenomenology is that the world consists of phenomena, or lived experiences, terms that are used interchangeably in the literature (Crotty, 1998; Husserl, 1931; Moustakas, 1994). Barker et al. (2002) report four central assumptions of contemporary phenomenological philosophy based on their literature review. The first assumption is that perceptions are primarily psychological and determine our

actions, thoughts, and feelings. Accordingly, the meanings individuals perceive carry more force than reality, events, or facts.

The second assumption is that understanding is the goal of science. Understanding derives from exploring a lived experience while taking into account intent, purpose, and meaning. The third assumption is that reality and truth are not based on fact but on individual perception. Multiple perspectives result from individuals and groups having different lifeworlds.

The fourth and final assumption delineated by Barker et al. (2002) is that individual perceptions of one's personal lifeworld are based on multiple implicit presuppositions each holds regarding self, the world, and others. These presuppositions are often tacit and unquestioned. For example, when a person ends a conversation with a typical American acquaintance by saying, "Let's get together soon," the American does not take these words as an invitation because such an expression is tacitly understood to be a polite way to end a conversation.

Discuss follows of the epistemology of constructionism, which serves as a characteristic of contemporary phenomenology.

The epistemology of constructionism

Phenomenology carries the epistemology of constructionism (Crotty, 1998) as evidenced by the assumptions presented (Barker et al., 2002). Crotty (1998) described the constructionist view:

There is no objective truth waiting for us to discover it. Truth, or meaning, comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world. There is no meaning without a mind. Meaning is not discovered, but constructed. In this understanding of knowledge, it is clear that different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon....In this view of things, subject and object emerge as partners in the generation of meaning. (pp. 8-9)

This epistemology posits that meaning is socially constructed. That is, knowledge is created and then viewed as reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

In this study, the term *phenomenology* is used to mean the study of the participants' experiences based on their recollections and perceptions rather than through the lens of existing theories and understandings. Meaning-making is considered a complex process. It requires that the participants bring forth past events from their memories, reconstruct details surrounding them, consider how past and present are intertwined, analyze and synthesize present experiences in view of the contexts in which they are situated, and express this to the researcher (Seidman, 2006). According to Vygotsky (1987), changing experience into language is a meaning-making process in itself.

In this study, meaning is not to be considered as solely constructed by the participants. The nature of teachers' individual and collective experiences and perspectives will be construed through jointly produced discourse (Mishler, 1986) between the participants and the researcher, as well as through the interaction of textual data and the researcher (Crotty, 1998). As Derrida points out, "Each reading, each interpretation inevitably indeterminately arises from the dialectical tension between the text (in whatever form, written, spoken, culture, action) and the reader's (interpreter's) situated, historically (biographically) conditioned horizon" (1982, p. xi). While the phenomenological orientation is "an attempt to accomplish the impossible: to construct a full interpretive description of the lifeworld," it is critical to "remain aware that life is always more complex than any explication of meaning can reveal" (van Manen, 1990, p. 18).

For this study in-depth interviewing from a phenomenological perspective was used. Provided is information about the philosophy of phenomenology and described the stance proposed for this study. The philosophical position of phenomenology with its foundational epistemology of constructionism was appropriate to the research questions as the questions were concerned with perceptions, experiences, and meaning.

Next, described is the research plan, including the participant selection phase, data collection phase, and data analysis phase.

Participant Selection Phase

Proposed was selecting eight participants, all of whom were graduates of the ProTeach Program. Beginning with eight would safeguard that at least three participants who had specialized in ESOL, and three who had not, should one from each group drop out or fail to provide rich stories of their experiences and expressed perceptions with detail and examples. The intention was to use stratified purposeful sampling because it facilitates comparisons of subgroups who share the same phenomenon. Patton (2002) pointed out that data may indicate that the two subgroups are more similar than different, an important finding in itself. Data analysis would yield descriptions about each participant, each subgroup, as well as shared patterns across participants. This goal was congruent with the purpose of the study as interest was shown in teachers' unique individual experiences and perceptions as well as the commonalities and differences among participants.

While the number of participants targeted was small (that is, eight participants with four in each subgroup), Creswell (2008) stated that qualitative research typically has a small number of participants because the researcher is trying to provide an in-depth

portrayal that reveals the complexity of the phenomenon of interest. With the addition of each new participant, the ability to do so is diminished. Further, Seidman (2006) indicated that having only a few participants was sufficient when they reflect the population of interest. The participants planned to include in this research would have shared the same phenomena; that is, teaching ELLs in mainstream elementary classrooms and learning to teach ELLs in the ESOL-infused Unified Elementary ProTeach Program at UF, and would have met, to the degree possible, the primary and secondary participant selection criteria, which are presented next.

Participant Selection Criteria

When planning this study, development of the following primary criteria was used in the selection of participants:

- Has obtained the Master in Elementary Education degree through the completion of the ESOL-infused unified elementary/special education; ProTeach Program at UF
- Holds a temporary or professional Florida teaching certificate in Elementary Education with the ESOL endorsement
- Has taught in a grade 2-5 elementary classroom that had ELLs identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) based on Florida Consent Decree (League of United, 1990) stipulations for at least two and one-half years

Note that I proposed to exclude novice teachers as research has shown that teachers beginning their careers go through a rite of passage of sorts, often focusing on classroom management during their first two years (Lacey, 1977; Wideen et al., 1998).

Also prepared was a secondary participation selection criteria:

- Characteristic of the typical teacher: female, White, middle class, and monolingual (Zumwalt & Craig, 2005)
- Responsible for all content instruction (including language arts, math, science, and social studies) for ELLs in an elementary classroom
- Teaching at a school with an ELL student population of greater than 15%

- Teaching at a school that receives Title I funds due to number of economically disadvantaged students enrolled

Finally, plans were to select participants from two subgroups that differed by their professional specialization. Specifically, identifying four teachers that had completed 12 graduate semester hours in the ESOL professional specialization while enrolled in the ProTeach Program and four teachers who had specialized in fields other than ESOL was planned.

Access and Entry

In the interim between the time the dissertation proposal was submitted and approved, ESOL professors at UF obtained a grant to conduct a longitudinal study of UF ProTeach graduates. They, too, were interested in the experiences of graduates in the ProTeach Program and in the classroom with ELLs. Because of this overlap, the possible participant pool was limited in this study to school districts in South Florida so they could have exclusive access to teachers in their five districts of interest in Central Florida. Graduates whose contact information had been provided were sent letters of invitation to participate (Appendix A) and the preliminary Teacher Information Form (Appendix B), which would collect data needed to select participants. Inquiries were received from five teachers who expressed interest and they were advised to complete and submit the Teacher Information Form so information about their background for participant selection purposes could be obtained. Four teachers returned the forms.

Also requested was additional names of teachers in other districts that were not included in the other study. Mailings and emails were sent to prospective participants, including emails to teachers who did not reply to the initial initiations. Also, copies of the invitation were sent to district ESOL coordinators and teachers, who were known by the

researcher, in the targeted districts; and they were asked to distribute the invitations to UF graduates. Seven more teachers expressed interest in participating; however, only six completed the Teacher Information Form.

Of the ten that expressed willingness to participate, only three met the primary and secondary criteria. Once again, emails were sent out and contact was made with known ESOL coordinators and colleagues that worked in schools; however, there were no additional responses to the invitation.

Due to the low response rate and teachers not meeting the selection criteria, it was decided to invite all nine who were willing to be in the study to participate and contacted them via email. Eight of them agreed to participate. Electronic copy of the IRB-approved consent form (Appendix C) was provided via email and a request that they print and read the consent form and return a signed copy or provide it at the first interview. A Participant Information spreadsheet was created that listed the following for each participant: name, contact information, school, grade level, and interview dates to better manage the study.

Those willing to be interview participants were contacted in order to schedule their first and second interviews. Interviews were scheduled at a time and location according to participant preference in order to minimize imposition and inconvenience. Each participant was requested to provide a copy of artifacts, including their philosophies of teaching (written while they were in the ProTeach Program), copies of pages of their lesson plan books, examples of modifications for ELLs, district and/or school guidelines and procedures for teaching ELLs, and other materials they would like to share, to the first interview.

The number of participants decreased to five by the end of data collection. One dropped out without explanation prior to her third interview. The characteristics of the five participants are shown in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1. Participant characteristics

| Name | Heritage | Language(s) spoken | K-12 education | Years teaching (as of 2008-2009) | Professional specialization | Title 1 school |
|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Megan Barrett | Multi-racial (Greek/Cuban) | English | Private Christian | 4 | Children's literature | No |
| Julie O'Brien | White | English | Public | 3 | ESOL | Yes |
| Lauren Perez-Cruz | Hispanic (Cuban/Cuban) | English Spanish | Private Catholic | 3 | ESOL | Yes |
| Christina Marino | Hispanic (Peruvian/Cuban) | English Spanish | Elem-private Catholic Gr 6-dual language Gr 7-12 public | 6 | Integrated curriculum | Yes |
| Melissa Solano | Hispanic (Cuban/Cuban) | English Spanish | Private Catholic | 6 | Literacy | Yes |

Confidentiality

UF's IRB confidentiality requirements were followed by not disclosing participants' identities to the extent provided by law. Confidentiality was ensured by using the following methods. For each of the participating teachers, an electronic list that assigned a pseudonym to each was completed. Pseudonyms were used in place of participants' names in all resulting texts, discussions, and presentations. The electronic list connecting their names with pseudonyms has been maintained on a personal computer that was password protected. In addition, dissertation files were maintained

on a back-up external hard drive that was kept in a secure area in the researcher's home.

In addition to participant confidentiality, the identities of Florida schools where participants worked were kept confidential. In addition, the names of any persons that were mentioned by participants were not mentioned. General district information and demographic information related to schools has been included.

A digital audio recorder was used to record interviews and to record any anecdotal notes. The recorder containing digital audio files was kept in a secure area of the researcher's home. Digital audio files and electronic transcripts on the computer used pseudonyms in file names. Paper copies of transcripts, collected artifacts, records, and all other documents pertaining to the study were maintained in a secure area of the home. Pseudonyms were used in place of names. Access was limited to committee members and other trusted professionals who collaborated for peer review.

Should a participant want to participate in a joint presentation or co-author an article related to this research at a future date and, thus, be identified as a participant, she may do so. Participation in such an event will demonstrate the participant's consent.

Data Collection Phase

For this study, the primary source of data collection was three in-depth interviews from a phenomenological perspective, in which the phenomena of teaching ELLs in elementary classrooms by ESOL-prepared teachers and teachers' preparation to do so were of interest. Supplemental data collection methods were used in order to assist in the refinement of interview guides, to provide context, and to allow for triangulation of data. Table 3-2 reports data methods, sources, and purposes.

Table 3-2. Methodology descriptions

| Method Data | Source | Purpose |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| Teacher information form | Participant | Identified teachers' demographics and educational background and teachers' experiences with ELLS. Designed to provide data for participant selection. Used to refine interview guide. |
| School demographics and characteristics (number of ELLs, poverty status, etc.) | FDOE, district, and school websites | Provided information about school and districts contexts. Used to refine the interview guide. |
| Electronic participant information form spreadsheet | Researcher | Provided contact information, interview date, time, location; and anecdotal notes. Means to track data collection. |
| Artifacts: Philosophy of teaching, lesson plans class schedule, work and test samples, ESOL strategy documentation sheet, school ESOL, etc., as available | Participant | Identified teachers' initial teaching perspective, documentation of comprehensible, culturally relevant, and modified instruction. Used to refine interview guide. |
| Interview facesheet | Researcher | Noted time, place, and extenuating circumstances prior to each interview. Provided interview contextual information. Provided stimulus for questions and probes for upcoming interview. |
| In-depth interviews (3) | Participant and researcher | Explored research questions in depth; corroborate life history and other data. Used to refine interview guide. |
| Field notes & post-interview anecdotal notes | Researcher | Noted non-verbal and other behaviors during interviews and researcher reflections/ comments following interview. Provided stimulus for probing and further questions. Provided supplemental data for interpreting interviews. Used to refine interview guide. |
| Researcher journal | Researcher | Noted personal reflections, hunches, and comments. Made researcher aware of biases during research process and captured researcher's thought processes. Used to refine interview guides and to remind of needed clarification. |
| ProTeach method course syllabi | Researcher | Examined to determine if TESOL Standards and ESOL-related objectives were listed |

Table 3.4 provides a matrix that correlates data sources with research topics. The collection of data through various means allowed for triangulation of data, adding to trustworthiness of findings, which will be addressed later in this chapter.

Table 3-3. Methodology matrix

| Research Method | Roles/ responsibilities | Challenges/ demands | Support/ constraints | Teacher education |
|---|----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Teacher information form | + | | | |
| School demographics and characteristics | | | + | |
| Artifacts: | | | | |
| Philosophy | + | | | + |
| Lesson plan book | + | + | + | + |
| Work and test samples | + | + | + | + |
| ESOL strategy documentation sheet | + | + | + | + |
| School ESOL procedures/guidelines | + | + | + | + |
| Class schedule | | | | |
| In-depth interviews | + | + | + | + |
| Interview face sheet | + | + | + | + |
| Field notes/Post-interview notes | + | + | + | + |
| Researcher journal | + | + | + | + |
| ProTeach method course syllabi | | | | + |

Before detail of the steps of data collection, the method of in-depth interviewing will be described.

The Method of In-Depth Interviewing

In-depth, phenomenologically-based interviewing is open-ended and discovery-oriented, having the goal of exploring participants' experiences, perceptions, feelings, and beliefs (Kavale, 1996; Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Seidman, 2006). The researcher is considered to be an instrument of data collection during interviews with meaning co-constructed by the participant and researcher through dialogue and influenced by social, cultural, and historical contexts (Seidman, 2006).

Characteristics of in-depth interviewing

Hallmarks of in-depth interviewing, described by Guion (2006), which was adhered to, are:

- Open-ended questions which require extended responses;
- A semi-structured interview format in which general questions and topics are pre-planned, but other questions and topics arise from the natural flow of the conversation;
- A quest for deeper understanding, interpretation, and clarity by both researcher and participant through negotiation of meaning (the process that interlocutors undergo to reach a clear understanding of each other, such as asking for clarification and restating);
- A conversational style in which the researcher has the primary role of active listener;
- Audio or video recording of conversation;
- Anecdotal field notes written during the interview of any non-verbal and other behaviors of interest; and
- Reflections and impressions of the researcher written following each interview.

Stages of in-depth interviewing

Kavale (1996) delineated the stages of in-depth interviewing from developing interview questions to reporting findings and conclusions. The seven stages and strategies for accomplishing each are delineated in Table 3-4 below and were followed in the research.

Topical sequence of interviews

Seidman (2006) recommended a topical sequence to in-depth interviewing with each interview lasting from 60-90 minutes and tape-recorded, open-ended (but topic-focused). He suggested the following sequence of topics for the three interviews:

1. Life history
2. Experiences related to the phenomenon of interest

3. The meaning participants make of their experiences

Table 3-4. Stages of in-depth interviewing (Kavale, 1996)

| Stage | Strategies for Implementation |
|--------------------------|--|
| Thematizing Designing | Clarify purpose of the interviews. Design the 3-part interview guide, including: (1) a facesheet to record time, date, and place of each interview along with other pertinent information, such as demographics and special conditions; (2) a list of interview questions, probes, and follow-up questions, anticipating and organizing issues but allowing for flexibility; provide a column along right side to jot observations; and (3) a field note page for writing feelings, interpretations, and comments following the interviews. |
| Interviewing | (1) Make introductions and describe purpose; (2) develop rapport and put participant at ease; and (3) facilitate conversation to cover topics of interest while actively listening, being flexible, and being patient. |
| Transcribing | Type content of interview and add any interview notes (observations, feelings, reactions). Study and review, highlighting important information. |
| Analyzing | Determine meaning of the information as related to research questions, looking for themes, commonalities, and patterns. Identify areas that need to be clarified for future interviews or follow-ups. |
| Verifying Reporting | Check credibility and validity of data through triangulation. Share what has been learned. |

Starting the interview series with conversations about participants' personal history reflects the perspective that early family, cultural, and educational experiences have a bearing on current beliefs, attitudes, and rationales and affect meaning-making. In addition, the sharing of personal background information by participants is a means to build relationships with the interviewer at the onset (Seidman, 2006).

Because of interest in two phenomena (the teaching of ELLs in mainstream classrooms and the preparation to teach them), the sequence of my interviews were modified to cover the scope of the research questions. Three interviews with each participant were conducted. The following lists the topical sequence used:

1. Life history
2. Experiences and perceptions related to teaching ELLs

3. Experiences and perceptions related to learning to teach ELLs in the ProTeach Program

Data Collection Steps

Step 1: Teacher information form, school demographics, and ProTeach syllabi

During the informed consent and participant selection process, teachers showing interest in participating in this study completed the Teacher Information Form, developed by the researcher, and reviewed by an experienced ESOL teacher. School demographics and characteristics for the work site of each of these teachers were collected, using information supplied on the FDOE, district, and school websites. Eight teachers volunteered to participate, but only five (refer to Table 3-2) completed the study.

A researcher's journal was kept from time to time to record reflections, feelings, comments, and concerns. This was useful in identifying personal biases, reminding the researcher of information needed, and providing a record of thoughts about the study. During this step, ProTeach method course syllabi that were available online were located.

Step 2: Artifact request and interview one

Participants were contacted to schedule their first interviews at a time and location that was convenient for them. This information was noted on the participation information spreadsheet. Participants were requested to provide copies of artifacts at the first interview, but most did not have them until the second interview.

An interview guide (Appendix D) had previously been developed and reviewed by two ESOL teachers and submitted to Institutional Review Board (IRB) in order to obtain study approval. An electronic copy of the first interview guide was sent to each

participant via email prior to the interview. An email reminder of the date, time, and location of the forthcoming interview was also sent.

Participants were given an interview timeframe of 45 to 90 minutes. Seidman (2006) advised that researchers should make each interview long enough to communicate about participant experiences but not so long that participants or the researcher become tired and inattentive. Prior to the interviews, copies of interview guides and interview facesheets were given to the participants. The researcher completed the facesheets with date, time, and location information. Length of time for the first interview ranged from 45 to 60 minutes.

A digital recorder was brought to the interviews. For the first few interviews, a mini cassette recorder was also used, in addition to the digital recorder. Prior to each interview, operation of the recorders was tested. Each first interview began with a greeting and an expression of appreciation followed by recapping and conducting a member check about the understanding of background information provided on the Teacher Information Form and other communications. Questions pertaining to life history, as listed in the interview guide, were asked. Additional questions asking for clarification were asked as needed. At the end of the interview, the researcher confirmed the time of the next interview.

Artifacts (refer to Table 3-2) from the study's participants had been requested to supplement interview data prior to the next session. Since none was provided, they were requested to bring them to the next interview. Reflections or comments about the preceding interview were kept as field notes.

Step 3: Interview one member check, interview two, and artifact review

Prior to the second interview of each participant, notes were reviewed and contents of the first interview were recalled, listening to parts of the recording to refresh my memory as needed. Additional questions were prepared to ask if a better understanding of a given participant's life history was needed.

The guide was reviewed and refined and questions based on data collected from the prior interview and reflections were added. Electronic copies of the interview guide packet that included facesheets, noting on each the pseudonym of the participants and scheduled interview times, date, and location were sent prior to each interview.

Before beginning the second interview with each participant, any special circumstances on the interview facesheet was noted as with the first interview. The second series of interviews each lasted from 50 to 75 minutes and began with a greeting followed by a member check. An oral summary of the researcher's understanding of the key points of the first interview was provided and each participant was asked to provide clarification and elaboration, as needed.

The topic then changed to the primary focus of the second interview, the participant's experiences as teachers of ELLs in their elementary classrooms. This included each participant sharing contextual frames of their experiences, such as relationships to others and current educational mandates. The participants were then asked to tell stories and to reconstruct a typical day to elicit details as recommended by Spradley (1990). During each of the second interviews, the participant or the researcher referred to artifacts the participants had brought in order to provide clarification, examples, or substantiation. Meaning-making of the participants' experiences teaching ELLs was considered a dialectic process that included both the

participant and the researcher. Participants were encouraged to reflect upon how past and present were related and how they informed their perceptions and beliefs about the future as well as their perceptions about the past (Seidman, 2006).

At the end of the interview, appointments for the next interviews were scheduled, which would be via phone. The researcher collected the artifacts and entered the post-interview field notes containing any perceptions and reflection.

Step 4: Interview two member check and interview three

The third interview began with a member check about the content of the second interview. Participants elaborated and clarified, as needed. The focus of Interview three was on teacher preparation to teach ELLs, considering the realities of the classroom. The two participants who had completed their ESOL specialization were asked to consider their additional ESOL coursework in addition to their ESOL-infused courses and required ESOL stand-alone courses. Participants were asked to give recommendations to make ESOL coursework in the ProTeach Program more relevant to their realities teaching ELLs. The third set of interviews was the shortest, ranging from 35 to 55 minutes.

The phone interviews appeared to be more focused. Neither the participants nor the researcher strayed from the subject as often as the face-to-face interviews. Each interview ended by thanking the participant and promising to send each a \$25 gift certificate to a local restaurant to show gratitude. Each participant was notified that she would be sent via email the transcript of the current and past interviews for review to ensure intended meaning was captured. The researcher asked to be contacted if more information came to mind about the study topics. After ending the interview,

impressions, observations, and/or perceptions that were thought to be useful as data sources were recorded.

Step 5: Interview three, individual, and transcript member-check

Each participant was sent an email thanking them for their participation and provided them with copies of interview transcripts. In addition, each was sent the life history profile the researcher had written based on each participant's first interview. Only one participant reviewed the life history profile. None commented on the transcripts or interview three.

Participants were mailed thank-you cards containing the promised gift cards. Each one was encouraged to contact the researcher if they think of additional information they would like to share or if the researcher could be of any assistance to them or their school.

Data Analysis Phase

It was appropriate to use a data analysis approach that was designed specifically for interviewing. The interview data analysis process delineated by Seidman (2006) and Kavale (1996), whom had influenced Seidman's in-depth, phenomenological interviewing methodology and method was used by the researcher and also guidance from Creswell (2008) was sought.

The data analysis approach for interviewing is inductive in that it goes "from the particular or the detailed data (e.g., transcriptions or typed notes from interviews) to the general codes and themes" (Creswell, p. 244) and is, thus, reductionist. Kavale (1996) asserted, "The central task of interview analysis...rests with the researcher, with the thematic questions he or she has asked from the start of the investigation and followed

up through designing, interviewing, and transcribing” (p. 187). He included data analysis in his stages of in-depth interviewing delineated in Table 3-3.

Creswell (2008), Kavale (1996), and Seidman (2006) discussed the interpretative nature of qualitative data analysis. Seidman (2006) commented, “Marking passages that are of interest, labeling them, and grouping them is analytic work that has within it the seeds of interpretation” (p. 128). Data analysis is based on the personal assessment of the data by the researcher, considering context, participant feedback, and the perspective of the researcher, noting that the researcher’s interpretations may differ from those of another (Creswell, 2008)).

Step 1: Preliminary Exploratory Analysis

The first step of analysis was exploratory in nature and was an iterative process that began during data collection. During the first step, data was collected, organized, and transcribed. In addition, a preliminary review of previous interview data was conducted prior to conducting the next interview. Notes were referred to and portions of recordings were listened to at times to refresh memory of content and to develop follow-up questions about areas in which more information or clarification was needed. The researcher asked, “What is this person talking about?” (Creswell, 2008, p. 251) both during and after interviews. Inferences and interpretation of meanings were noted, and any personal biases that came to mind were also noted. Any relevant artifacts that had been collected were referred to. During this stage, member checks were conducted to ensure it was fully understood what the participants were trying to convey and to expand understanding of their experiences and perceptions of them.

To manage data, transcripts were kept in a notebook; and artifacts were kept in a divided accordion folder. Electronic folders for each participant were created with their

audio files, transcripts, and any other electronic data. In addition, an electronic back-up of files on an external hard drive was maintained. Documents were managed and maintained in a manner that preserved participant confidentiality.

Step 2: Reduction/Breakdown of Text

Seidman (2006) states that “the first step in reducing the text is to read it and mark with brackets the passages that are interesting” (p. 117). Kavale (1996) stated that the researcher must be able to distinguish between the essential and nonessential based on the purpose of the study and its theoretical foundation. According to Mostyn (1985), the reduction of data requires both careful reading and judgment.

My reduction of transcript data was done by interview set. The transcript of each participant’s first interview was read, analyzed individually and collectively before reading the transcripts from the second and third series of interviews. As each interview was read, interesting passages were marked; and codes and comments were jotted down in the margins (Seidman, 2006). Creswell (2008) indicated that “codes can represent such topics as setting and context, participant perspectives and thoughts of people and things, processes, strategies, relationships, and activities” (251-252).

Transcripts were read without seeking to locate predetermined categories (Seidman, 2006). However, observations were made that many of the codes represented topics of the interview questions, which were designed to address research questions, especially when participants were prompted when they could not recall information on their own. As reading a transcript continued, passages were found that connected to other passages. Seidman (2006) said, “In a way, quantity starts to interact with quality. The repetition of an aspect of experience that was already mentioned in other passages takes on weight and calls attention to itself” (p. 127). Participants at

times gave an answer to a specific question but then contradicted what they had said previously when responding to another question was observed. For example, one participant was insistent that teaching ELLs was the same as teaching non-ELLs. However, when she was asked what strategies she used with an ELL, her answer indicated that she did alter her instruction based on the student's linguistic needs. Later, she was asked directly again if teaching ELLs was the same or different, but she again insisted it was the same.

After analyzing each participant's first interview, participants were contacted if additional information was needed and then it was analyzed. Each transcript was reviewed again to search for categories that might have been neglected initially. The coding structures across transcripts were compared to ensure that they supported the coding system and research questions. A colleague was asked to read, bracket, and code some of the interviews as a member check.

After all of the first interviews were marked and coded, individual life history profiles were developed, which served to reduce data further, and provided essential information about participants' backgrounds. Kavale (1996) refers to the creation of profiles as "*narrative structuring* [which] entails the temporal and social organization of a text to bring out its meaning" (p. 192). Seidman (2006) finds the development of a narrative as "most consistent with the process of interviewing. It allows us to present the participant in context, to clarify his or her intentions, and to convey a sense of process and time, all central components of qualitative analysis" (p. 119) and also provides the researcher with a means to share what was learned.

To create the life history profiles for each participant, categories of information to use were developed, including family background and education. The researcher began cutting and pasting excerpts from the transcript so the participant's voice could be heard instead of totally re-presenting it.

The described data analyses process was conducted for the second interview, which was intended to provide data to answer the following interview questions: secondary data sources were examined as well as each individual's first interview data for information that was relevant. Following this, a profile of each teacher about their experiences and perceptions about teaching ELLs was created. It provided background about the district, school, and classroom contexts in which each worked. In the profiles, the categories of (1) roles, responsibilities, challenges, and demands; (2) differences in teaching ELLs; (3) school constraints and supports in order to address the first research question was included. These helped to analyze the data across participants and identify themes and categories.

The same process was followed for the third interview, which focused on the following interview question:

What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their preservice teacher education experiences to teach ELLs in general education settings?

While the contexts of the participants' life history and teaching experiences were different, their teacher education experiences were similar in that they were graduates of the ESOL-infused, five-year, Unified Elementary ProTeach Program, although they were in different cohorts or graduated at different times. Because of this, narratives of each of them individually were not constructed. Rather, the next step proceeded after analyzing each transcript from interview three and reviewing data from

other interviews and sources for relevant information to answer the targeted research question.

Step 3: Making Thematic Connections

During examination of the second and third sets of interviews and supplementary data, connections were made across data sets. Deeper meaning beyond the mere words of participants was sought. While analyzing the data across participants to make connections from the first interview and summarized similarities and differences among participants, I did not go beyond this. The reason for this was that the purposes of the life history interviews and profiles were to develop rapport and an awareness of their backgrounds and experiences as individual's past and present are intertwined (Seidman, 2006).

During and after making connections across participants for the other interviews, interpretations were made about the deeper meanings of the data. Miles and Huberman (1994) described a tactic for making meaning. Noticing themes, patterns and clustering "help the analyst see 'what goes with what'" (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 204). While doing this, Seidman's advice (2006) of questioning what was learned was taken.

Presentation of Results

Results of the data analysis were presented by sharing the profiles written about each participant. Life histories of each participant are presented in the next chapter and provide a summary of participant backgrounds. In Chapter 5, the profile of each teacher's experiences and perceptions about teaching ELLs in her elementary classroom are shared followed by a results section. Seidman (2006) considers profiles as means to "bring participant[s] alive [and] offer insights into the complexities of what

the researcher is studying” (p. 120). The profiles show each participant’s unique contexts, experiences, and perceptions. Interpreting and drawing conclusions about each individual’s experiences were not attempted due to the structure of the profiles. Instead, themes that emerged across participants were discussed and point to inconsistencies among them.

Trustworthiness of Study

The trustworthiness, or credibility, of qualitative research findings is of “utmost importance” (Creswell, 2008, p. 266). To ensure that research findings are as trustworthy as possible, the following were completed: (1) clarifying researcher position (Seidman 2006); (2) following a topical sequence in collecting data (Seidman 2006); (3) conducting member checks (Creswell, 2008); (4) triangulating data sources (Creswell, 2008); and (5) providing a thorough, rich description (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each of these techniques will be described as it relates to this study.

Clarifying Researcher Position

Qualitative research is interpretive in nature (Creswell, 2008), requiring the researcher to be self-reflective and disclose prior experiences, assumptions, orientations, beliefs and values that may affect the perspective about the phenomenon under study and the interpretation of data (Seidman, 2006). Though it is not possible to bracket completely these variables or to gain clear understanding of the experiences of participants from their perspectives, the researcher may become more self-aware by writing about preconceptions and possible influences that can affect interpretations. In addition, this self-reflection informs readers of the researcher’s experiences and stance.

The researcher is a White, middle class female, who was raised by working class parents in a segregated suburb of Chattanooga, Tennessee. She attended a grade one

to six elementary school without any recognizable minorities. All teachers were White females except for a White male sixth grade math teacher. Weekly, hour-long “Bible classes” were conducted by a White female who came to the school for this purpose. Junior high and high schools were similar in demographics to the elementary school except that there were three or four Black students who were cousins. These secondary schools had a few White male teachers. Principals and other administrators at all the schools were White males.

The researcher started college following her early graduation in the fall of 2004 and declared biology as her major. She quit college after one semester and married an older man. Three years later, she had her first child. Four years later, she had another. As a mother, she enjoyed being a stay-at-home mom and intuitively knew that books should be read to the child and to take him to the library, museums, and other places.

When her first child was about two years old, the family began attending the Episcopal Church after not attending any church since the marriage. The family became very active in the Episcopal Church, and the researcher became a Church School teacher, a lay reader, the Church School Director, the president of the Episcopal Churchwomen, and other positions.

These church years proved to be an important time of self-discovery and personal growth because of not seeing myself as a leader or as a competent, capable person with talents to offer. It was during this time that going back to college to become a teacher became a passion to the researcher. Soon after her second child was born, she began enrolling in one course at a semester to obtain her education degree.

She divorced after twelve years of marriage and worked fulltime while attending school part-time. She switched her major a few times, realizing that teachers are underpaid. After reflection, she changed it back to education because she felt this was her calling. Two years after divorcing, she remarried and moved to Florida and transferred to the teacher education program at the UF and attended fulltime. In 1990, she had her third child. She graduated with my Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education in May 1992 and Master of Education degree in August 1993 with professional specializations in Education of the Gifted and in ESOL. Though she specialized in ESOL because she thought it would help her get a job, she developed a passion for the field. She accepted a position as an ESOL teacher in an elementary school in a rural school district. She pulled out most of the ELLs from their mainstream classroom for their language arts instructions. In addition, she went to a fifth grade classroom that had ELLs and co-taught language arts with the teacher.

While Lortie (1975) discusses an apprenticeship of observation in which teachers unconsciously come to think of “teaching” as what they were exposed to during our own school experiences, the researcher did not emulate the teaching that she experienced as a child. Instead, she took what she learned at the UF as “the way” and applied it to her teaching. She found that her colleagues were unfamiliar with approaches, methods, and strategies that she was using and followed more traditional methods.

After five years of teaching, the researcher became ESOL Specialist for the district, a position that was created because of the scheduled monitoring of the ESOL Program the following year. Her job was to provide technical assistance to schools and help ensure that the district was and remained in compliance with Florida Consent

Decree requirements (refer to League of United, 1990). She found district administrative staff to be apathetic about ESOL and only wanting to do what was required because of possible financial consequences if FDOE cited the district with violations. She felt disheartened by the lack of care and concern for the needs of ELLs and their families, which made her even more passionate while also aware of the need for support from like-minded peers, friends, and family members.

Both as an ESOL teacher and as an ESOL specialist, the researcher was responsible for providing after-school ESOL-in-service professional development primarily for teachers who had to meet required training deadlines because they were teaching ELLs in the mainstream. While not all of these teachers were resentful because they had to take the professional development and believed their existing knowledge was adequate in teaching ELLs, many were quite angry. It was rewarding when someone who had been initially reluctant and angry told the researcher at the end of the course that they learned something and enjoyed it. Still, she dreaded facilitating courses because of the prevailing negativity. She continued in the field, in part, because of her colleagues who shared the similar experiences

At the beginning of her teaching career, she became very involved with Sunshine State TESOL, an affiliate of TESOL, Inc., which is an international professional organization for teachers and teacher educators of ESOL, English as a Foreign Language, and other related disciplines. She made several presentations at the annual conferences of this organization through the years and was nominated to the board, serving as member-at-large, second vice president, first vice president, president, editor of the newsletter, conference and program chairs, and publishers' liaison.

The researcher believes that the success of the implementation of any ESOL/bilingual model is dependent on a variety of factors. While the oft-cited research of Thomas and Collier (2002) found that ELLs' literacy development and academic content knowledge are greater when additive bilingual models are in place, program success is dependent on how each model is implemented. Some schools and districts do not have enough ELLs or have ELLs from numerous first language backgrounds, so bilingual models are not practical. The researcher sometimes questioned if the pullout model was most appropriate for higher proficiency ELLs and kindergarteners. Of course, ELL success is related to teachers' dispositions, knowledge, and skills. From the researcher's experiences with teachers while facilitating district ESOL professional development, she observed that many harbored anger about having to attend the sessions, which possibly transferred to the ELLs in their classrooms. The researcher also was aware that mainstream classroom teachers have many responsibilities and must meet the needs of a diverse group of learners and that having ELLs might prove challenging to them, especially in the era of accountability.

The researcher enrolled in the doctoral program at the College of Education at UF in August 2000 after being awarded a U.S. Department of Education Title VII Bilingual Education fellowship. As part of her doctoral program, she specialized in ESOL/bilingual education as well as language/literacy and minored in linguistics. She gained college teaching experience as a graduate assistant, teaching various TESOL courses to undergraduate and graduate education majors. This informed her of the ESOL stand-alone coursework that teacher participants completed while in ProTeach. Questionnaires completed by students enrolled in ESOL courses that the researcher

taught informed the researcher that some were hesitant and afraid to teach ELLs because they believed they lacked experience. Some wanted to teach in the schools in their home communities that were not diverse, while others were interested in teaching in poverty schools, as encouraged by the ProTeach teacher education program, which emphasizes social justice and meeting the needs of diverse learners. Very few of these students choose to specialize in ESOL. The researcher also worked as a research assistant for a grant-funded three-year cross-age peer tutoring project that focused on literacy and English language development. This allowed the researcher to observe and collect data in both elementary and secondary classrooms settings with ELLs.

While taking coursework, the researcher had a revelation that has made a lasting impact on her. When reviewing the literature on learning styles for an assignment, she discovered there is debate about what learning styles entail and when they should be catered to (refer to Carbo, 1992; Dunn, 1990; and Kavale & Forness, 1990). She felt angry because she felt deceived by well-intentioned professors who presented concepts and practices based on their perspectives of correctness or what is best rather than informing students that multiple perspectives existed that should be critically evaluated.. She viewed presenting only one side of an issues as hypocritical in that teacher education students are encouraged to have their future students examine multiple perspectives and question, yet teacher education students were often not exposed to differing perspectives. The researcher also realized that she was to blame for blindly accepting what she was told. This experience made the researcher realize that reality and truth differ from person to person and are influenced by background and experiences with others, a constructionist perspective.

The goal of this process of clarifying researcher position was to help the researcher become consciously aware of where she came from, who she is, what she believes to better ensure the trustworthiness of this research. It also serves to inform the reader about the researcher. Personal reflections of the researcher's thoughts, feelings, and hunches will continue throughout the research process so that she will be better able to consider alternative perspectives and confront her own biases.

Topical Sequence of Data Collection

Seidman (2006) addressed the validity of participants' responses when using the phenomenological in-depth interviewing methodology and method. He argued that the three-interview structure integrates characteristics that yield validity. It does so by putting participants' responses in context. Interviews are scheduled over a one-to three-week period in which prior comments can be checked for internal consistency and clarified, as needed. The final interview builds on the first two. Finally, "the goal of the process is to understand how [my] participants understand and make meaning of their experience" (p. 24). The in-depth interview method allows participants to bring their experiences to life in words and make sense of them for both themselves and the interviewer.

While I have modified Seidman's interview content (2006) because two phenomena were of interest to me (teaching ELLs in elementary classrooms and learning to teach ELLs in the ProTeach Program), I included components of both his second and third interviews into my second and third interview. During the first interview, I explored participants' life history. During the second, participants re-presented their teaching experiences with ELLs and used their perceptions to make meaning of them. During the third interview, participants talked about their experiences

and perceptions of their teacher education program in light of their teaching experiences with ELLs and the school contexts. Therefore, Seidman's comments about validity are applicable to my study in that the three interviews were contextualized, carried out over time to account for idiosyncratic days, included member checks, and allowed me, as researcher, to understand the meaning participants put into their experiences (Seidman, 2006, p. 24).

Member Checking

Another strategy I implemented in order to validate my findings was the technique of member checking (Creswell, 2008). Member checking is the process in which participants are provided with transcripts and summaries of data so that they can confirm that their words and meanings are accurately represented. Members were the participants of the study as well as a colleague who agreed to read and code a few of the transcripts so that I could compare her codes with my own. I found consistency between them. The data collection section detailed the member checking process.

Triangulation of Data

Triangulation refers to the process of "corroborating evidence from different individuals (e.g., a principal and a student), types of data (e.g., observation field notes and interviews) or methods of data collection (e.g., documents and interviews) in descriptions and themes in qualitative research" (Creswell, 2008, p. 266). Through looking for evidence to support themes across data, the study is more accurate and credible. For this study, in-depth interviews were used as the primary data source and supplemented these data with artifacts provided by participants, field notes, and other data sources as shown in Table 3-1.

Rich, Thick Description

A research report that provides a rich, thick description includes many details concerning the methodology used as well as the context, allowing readers to determine the transferability of the data analysis and findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I provide a profile about each participant's life history as well as a profile of each as a teacher of ELLs to give greater insight into individual experiences and perceptions. I included many excerpts from the interview transcripts of each so that their voice could be heard. I also provide detailed descriptive and interpretive summaries of participants' experiences, perceptions, and comments. In addition, I include information about the district and school contexts in which each participant works.

Summary

Chapter 3 began with a discussion of philosophical foundation of phenomenology used for this research. It then described the methodology of in-depth interviewing. Next, a thick, rich description of my research plan was articulated. The philosophical foundation, methodology, and research design are appropriate for my research questions since they allowed me to gain understanding of the experiences and perceptions of teachers who teach and were prepared to teach ELLs in elementary classrooms.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS: TEACHING ELLS

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of UF ProTeach graduates about teaching and being prepared to teach ELLs in mainstream elementary classrooms. The chapter begins with narrative profiles about the life history and teaching experiences of each participant. Following this, findings are presented that answer the following research questions.

- What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their experiences with the teaching and learning of ELLs in mainstream classrooms?
 - a. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their roles and responsibilities related to the teaching and learning of ELLs?
 - b. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about the challenges and demands related to the teaching and learning of ELLs?
 - c. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about the supports and constraints related to the teaching and learning of ELLs?
- How do the experiences and perceptions of ESOL-prepared elementary teachers who specialized in ESOL during their ESOL-infused teacher education program compare to those teachers who specialized in other fields?

Megan Barrett, Fourth Grade Teacher

Family Background

Megan Barrett was born and raised in southeastern Florida. Her father, a first generation Cuban-American who immigrated to the United States as a child and assimilated to American culture as desired by his parents, works with computers and aspires to be a professor when he completes his doctorate degree. Her mother, whose

own mother is Greek, had been working for many years as an office manager at the private school Megan attended. Despite her heritage, Megan described herself as a “typical American” and does not have ties to either Greek or Cuban culture. English was the only language spoken in her home. Although Megan took Spanish in high school, Megan does not consider herself fluent in the language. Megan has an older sister, a younger sister, and a younger brother.

K-12 Education

Megan and her siblings attended a very small K-12 Christian private school. There were only nineteen people in her graduating class, and she said that it was “like a family.” The majority of teachers were White, middle-class females. When she first started attending the school, the majority of students were White. By the time she graduated, about half of the school’s student population was White and the other half Black. Her friends were typically White. She married a classmate who is Jamaican.

Career Aspiration

Megan said “there was never a doubt in my mind” that she wanted to be a teacher. She added:

I’ve always loved kids from when I was a young kid.....I was always at the church nursery, always with younger cousins—always playing with them, babysitting them....When there was a baby, I was there, and then as I grew up I just thought that it was the thing I would be good at....I work well with kids. They love me!

Higher Education

Megan chose to attend a local community college because she wanted to stay at home, stating, “I don’t like change....I had no intention of going away from my mama’s care!” After earning her Associate of Arts degree, she decided to apply to the UF because of the ProTeach Program in which she would be able to earn her Master’s degree as part

of the program. Once accepted at UF, she was able to afford to go because she worked part-time at a Gainesville restaurant and because she had received a minority scholarship based on her heritage from her father. While at UF, Megan decided to specialize in children's literature. As she began her field placements, her desire to become a teacher became "much clearer to me that that's what I wanted to do."

During her graduate school year, Megan enrolled in a course on teaching low income, inner city students. She completed her internship in a school that served a primarily Black, economically disadvantaged population and planned on teaching such a group. In the summer of 2005, Megan graduated with her Master of Education degree. After graduation, Megan accepted a fourth grade teaching position in her hometown and was in her fourth year of teaching at the same school. The district, school, and classroom contexts in which she works are presented next.

District Context

Megan works for Seaside County Public Schools located in a coastal county located in southeastern Florida. Its website proclaimed on the home page that it is an "A" school district and the sixth largest school district in the nation (Seaside County Public Schools, n.d.). In addition, it noted that Seaside is the largest fully-accredited school district in the U.S. In August 2009, the FDOE reported that 9.9% of the 256,186 students were ELLs. This is the third highest number of ELLs in a Florida school district. Students are from 66 countries (other than the U.S.) and speak 50 different languages (Seaside County Public Schools, n.d.).

School Context

Megan taught at a large elementary school that had over 1,300 students in the 2008-2009 school year. The suburban residential areas that were zoned for the school

are primarily single family residences for middle to upper income families; therefore, the school did not receive Title I funding, with only 4.5% of the population considered economically disadvantaged (based on the amount of students eligible for free and reduced lunch.) Megan stated that the community was very close knit, and residents tend to stay, so few students come and go during a school year. About half of the students were White and about 40% are Hispanic. There were very few Black students. Almost 15% of students are classified as ELLs (FDOE, 2005a). The school was given a grade of “A” for the 2008-2009 school year.

Megan reported that the majority of teachers were middle- to upper-class females. Her fourth grade team had ten teachers because of the large number of students. Megan found that the students at her school had few behavioral problems and that the PTA was very strong with exceptional parental involvement. In her own words, “these kids are given everything” and were deserving of this because they were “good kids” and “most of their families push them.” Most of the students’ mothers did not work outside of the home and were heavily involved in school activities.

Classroom Context

At Megan’s school, classroom rosters were determined by FCAT reading scores. There were four designated levels of reading ability: advanced, on level, below level, and intervention. Each fourth grade teacher was assigned either a group of advanced, on level, and below level students or a group of advanced, on level, and intervention level students. ELLs were spread out among teachers based on their reading levels, so all teachers were likely to have them. Megan was assigned an advanced, on level, and below level students. Out of her 22 students, ten were Hispanic and two were ELLs with intermediate to advanced proficiency in English. This was lowest number of ELLs

she had ever had. In the past, Megan had from three to five ELLs from beginner to advanced English proficiency levels each year. At the time of the study, one of Megan's ELLs (who Megan considered to be on grade level) was pulled-out, along with other students from the classroom who had scored below a level three on reading section of the statewide assessment, for supplemental reading instruction. The other ELL had been identified as having attention deficit disorder. Megan said that the individual attention she gave him was related to his being off-task most of her time. She considered him to be on grade level and not in need of ESOL modifications.

Megan felt more confident being a teacher of ELLs the year of the interview because she only had two ELLs who had some English proficiency. The ELL who received reading remediation required ESOL strategies and scaffolding according to Megan. In years past, Megan felt frustrated at times because she had ELLs at the beginning stage of second language acquisition. She explained, "I don't feel like I'm prepared to teach them."

In previous years, the school had self-contained classrooms for lower proficiency ELLs but parents objected, so this model was discontinued. Megan believed that pullout or self-contained models would better meet the needs of beginner ELLs.

I wished that our school provided more for them because I really didn't feel like we were reaching these students. I felt like they were just kind of thrown in there and hoping to survive. Some of them did okay, and some of them were drowning, and I wished our school could have a pullout for them or...a self-contained class.

Later in the interview, she stated that she "wouldn't even want [ESOL inclusion] for my [own] kids now."

Roles, Responsibilities, Challenges, and Demands

When asked about what it was like to be a teacher of ELLs, Megan said,

I think it's probably the hardest thing I've had to face because I feel so bad for these children, I really do, especially the ones who come over and know no English. They're forced into this classroom with the teacher speaking a different language and the children speaking another language, books in another language. I mean I just feel bad, and I wish I could give them more, and I just don't feel I'm giving them enough...I just feel like I'm just kind of leaving them there to do it, but it just makes you see that... these children do it !

She attributed the steady progress of some of her ELLs in English and academics to the effort they put forth and to parental involvement, including the provision of tutors, rather than to herself.

Megan's sentiment of feeling bad for her ELLs was interspersed throughout the interview as well as her feeling that she did not always do—or know—enough to meet their needs. “I try to do the best I can with what I have, [but] I don't feel like I was reaching them [low proficiency ELLs from years past] the best that I could.” Her frustration about this was less at the time because she only had two ELLs who she considered relatively fluent, so she believed she was able to better meet their needs.

While she said that she was not lacking for supplemental materials for her lower ELLs (her school had provided her with many resources she had requested), she believed that her weakness lied in her not being prepared enough and not making enough effort. She recalled being introduced to ESOL strategies in classes but felt like she did not take the time to learn them because she did not realize their utility. A few times in the interview she pondered if learning Spanish would have help her be a more effective teacher to her lower proficiency ELLs. She blamed herself for not reading and researching more: “I get on myself because I could be out there learning more and trying to help harder, and I don't think that I have.”

When planning and preparing for instruction, Megan stated that “I don’t really sit there and think” about what she would do specifically for her ELLs. When she had “other [ELLs] who were really low, I would have to think of different ways to reach them.” She believed that what she routinely did, such as using small groups, songs, time lines, and so forth, benefited her ELLs as well as her other students.

Megan did not have to complete ESOL paperwork or administer English language proficiency tests because the school had an ESOL coordinator who was responsible for these duties. Megan was unfamiliar with ESOL entry, exit, and other procedures at her school. At the beginning of the school year, she was informed which students were ELLs and what their FCAT levels were, complaining that she was not informed how to address their needs.

As required in Florida public schools, Megan documented her use of ESOL strategies in her lesson plan book. Although her administrator did not check to see if Megan was actually using ESOL strategies during walk-throughs or formal observations, administrators did check to see that ESOL strategies were documented in Megan’s plan book. Megan believed that administrators checked this documentation “more for legal purposes so nobody can say, ‘You’re not helping my student!’ ‘But, oh look, we are!’”

Megan remarked that she did not mind the extra workload required from having ELLs in the classroom. Rather, she was concerned about what the ELLs have to go through in order to settle into a new school where a language is spoken that they do not know. While Megan said that she did not think much about having ELLs in her classroom, she had heard some of her colleagues complain. In her words,

They don't know what to do. You feel kind of just stuck, and these kids need more, and you can't give it to them, and they get frustrated having to sit the kid at the computer every day, knowing that the kid probably hates that.... When we've got these students that are not very proficient in English...teachers really have a hard time...[I]t just kind of works on them, the same children, and you've just got to work and work with them.

Megan's alterations between the use of "they" and "you" as well as using "we" once suggest that she might have been referring to herself as well.

The Differences in Teaching ELLS

Megan explicitly stated that she believed that teaching ELLs was the same as teaching other students. However, other statements she made contradicted this stance, as shown in Table 4-1 below.

Table 4-1. Barrett: Similarities and differences between ELLs and non-ELLs

| Similarities | Differences |
|------------------------|---|
| Some need extra help | More "forgiveness" for grades and FCAT scores |
| ESOL strategies useful | Allowed FCAT modifications |
| | Need more work on fluency |
| | Held to different retention and grading standards |
| | Teachers' expectations lower |
| | Better behaved |
| | Make harder effort |
| | Parents may not be fluent and be able to help |
| | Have "language barrier" |

Megan supported her perspective that teaching ELLs was the same as teaching other students with statements, such as, "If I have a student that's low, and I know they're low, I'll go and [provide extra help] whether they're ESOL or not." She pointed out that she used what she considered to be ESOL strategies routinely with the whole class but perceived they benefited ELLs in different ways: "If I were to do a graphic organizer, I'd do it with the whole class hoping it would help the ELLs in some ways but in different ways help the other students...so a lot of the strategies I know are good for

ESOL students I don't see how it could hurt the other students, so I just do it for everybody knowing that these will help."

Megan justified giving an ELL extra attention by stating, "Because she's ESOL, I feel like I can do that with her and help her understand." When Megan had less proficient ELLs who were unable to complete fourth grade work in past years, Megan said that she used additional strategies to help them understand. She described the year that she had two beginning level ELLs as "probably the most difficult year I had.... I really had to work with them and pulled out separate stuff for them daily."

Statements that Megan made about her experiences with and perceptions of ELLs indicated that she found them to be different in other ways. For example, she said that ELLs had been "some of my best students because they work the hardest to try to catch-up, and they're quiet, and they do what they're supposed to do." Another difference that Megan mentioned was the notion of "forgiveness" for ELLs. She said that, "As far as grades, I'm not as hard on them; with their writing, I'm not as particular about it because I know there is a barrier there." Her school did not retain ELLs who had been enrolled for less than two years because of "language issues" though they might score low on the FCAT.

Supports and Constraints

Megan's support system for teaching ELLs had consisted of the reading specialist and her fourth grade team members. She spoke with the reading specialist in the past about her beginner ELLs who offered recommendations for materials based on their reading levels. Megan was unaware if this teacher was ESOL-endorsed.

Occasionally, teachers on her team discussed issues they had about teaching ELLs. Team members shared resources and strategies they used. However, Megan

pointed out that they were not ESOL specialists. The teachers were just sharing what they had found useful based on their teaching experiences. The school had not provided professional development about teaching ELLs. Megan said that teachers were told who their ELLs were and their levels at the beginning of the year, but were “not really [told] what to do with them.”

According to Megan, the school had money available to purchase any resources that she needed. For example, she had ordered beginner readers and other materials for her lower proficiency ELLs. What she wanted most for ELLs and did not get were pullout or self-contained classrooms.

Future Plans

In the next five years, Megan said,

I'd really like to teach in a low SES school. Those kids—it's harder, but they really need someone there for them, so I would feel best teaching there and happiest, but when I have kids, I want them to go to a private school, so I will most likely teach where they are. Before I have kids, I would like to go to a lower SES school. And once they are grown, I'll switch to private.

In summary, Megan portrayed herself as a compassionate teacher who was sympathetic to the linguistic and academic challenges faced by ELLs. In fact, she said her strength was that she cared about these students. Megan stated that teaching ELLs was the same as teaching other students; however, some of her other comments contradicted this position. While she perceived ELLs as some of her best students affectively, she questioned her ability to meet the academic needs of lower proficiency ELLs. Furthermore, she preferred that beginning level ELLs be pulled-out for language arts or placed in self-contained classrooms for their own benefit and described the year that she had two non-English speakers as her most difficult year.

Julie O'Brien, Fourth Grade Teacher

Family Background

Julie O'Brien, a single White female, was raised in "a very religious" Catholic "upper-middle class" household and neighborhood. Julie's father is a successful lawyer who has provided well for his family. Julie's mother was "a substitute teacher while I was growing up and in high school she returned full-time," teaching at an elementary school after Julie completed high school. Julie has two brothers and a sister. The only language spoken in her home was English.

K-12 Education

Julie attended elementary, middle, and high school in her town's public school system. She described the schools as "very good" with primarily a White middle-class student population. She recalled that there were very few Blacks and no ELLs.

Julie's mother "was always involved in education, and knew my teachers well and was always reinforcing things at home and all of that." Most of Julie's teachers were White, female, and middle class. While she "really liked all my teachers because my mom knew them all," she recalled two favorite teachers. One was her third grade teacher. "I loved her because she had a part of the day called 'Celebration,' which was like snack time. She would just play music and we could like dance. And that is why I loved her." The other teacher she fondly remembered was the White, male Advanced Placement environmental science teacher she had during high school. "I just liked him because he was challenging."

Career Aspiration

Julie always wanted to be a teacher. She explained,

I kind of always just wanted to be. I think that a lot of it had to be with seeing my mom as a teacher working. I was always playing school when I was little....I really liked to boss people around....I could play teacher and tell people what to do! I love children and wanted to help them. It was kind of [these] things all together.

Higher Education

Julie selected to attend UF because she thought it was a good school. She declared her major as elementary education upon enrollment. She considered changing her major the first year of college because she was bored with the education classes. It was an ELL class that sparked her interest and motivated her to continue in education.

I found that I was excited by that and I thought, 'Alright, maybe this is it.' And as I started doing my practicum and getting in the classrooms and seeing this population. I just loved it! That's when I decided, and I just, you know, having children that can come from lower socio-economic backgrounds and knowing that these are kids that maybe need education a little.

After visiting classrooms with ELL students, she decided to pursue a specialization in this field because she believed that ELLs needed more support than students of her own background, and she believed she could provide it.

Julie O'Brien was in her third year of teaching in the 2008-2009 school year at an elementary school in Ocean County, which was the school district she attended as a child. She taught in another district for one year prior to taking a position in Ocean County. The district, school, and classroom contexts of her most recent teaching assignment are presented next.

District Context

Ocean County Public Schools is the 12th largest in the U.S. (NCES, 2009) and received a grade of "A" for the 2008-2009 school year (FDOE, 2010a). The district is

located on the coast in southeastern Florida. The district's website stated that 199 countries are represented in the student population of the district and 152 languages are spoken (Ocean County Public Schools, n.d.). Of the almost 171,000 students, about 10% are ELLs (FDOE, 2010b). This is the fifth largest number of ELLs in a Florida school district. The district had mandated that teachers must follow the designated scope and sequence in order to address grade level educational standards. The district also expected teachers to follow the *balanced literacy* framework. The balanced literacy approach includes reading aloud, whole class shared reading and writing, small group guided reading, whole class interactive writing, writer's workshop, and independent reading and writing.

School Context

The school where Julie was hired in Fall 2007 is a designated Title I elementary school. This school has sustained a State of Florida A+ Plan grade of "A" while Julie has worked there. Julie stated there is immense pressure by school administrators to maintain the school grade, so emphasis has been placed on scoring high on the statewide assessment. According to Julie, students are "expected to perform very highly and this year from the district we've been getting a lot of pressure to keep on top of our scope and sequence so there are certain skills that need to be covered in a certain period of time [and the administrators] really like us to keep moving with that schedule." In fact, the school principal checked to make sure teachers kept up with the scope and sequence when she visited classrooms without regard to whether students had learned from prior instruction or not.

The school's reported demographics for 2008-2009 were 74% economically disadvantaged, 34% ELLs, and 1.6% migrants; Hispanics made up the majority of the

school population at 59% (FDOE, 2010b.) Julie indicated that most students are from Mexico and Central and Southern American countries and that most of them live in apartments and a nearby trailer park.

Although in the 2007-2008 teachers taught all subjects, a new principal instituted departmentalization for grades 1-5 in the 2008-2009 school year. To schedule this, the teachers at each grade level were divided into two teams with each teacher on the team teaching a different subject. Students were assigned to teams based on special needs and were grouped based on ability. One grade level team was assigned the ESE cluster, following the ESE inclusion model. Another team was given the ESOL cluster. In the fourth grade, intensive ELLs were placed in two grade level language arts blocks to accommodate the schedule of the ESOL teacher who went to different grade level language arts classrooms to provide support for ELLs, following an ESOL inclusion model. Students rotated from one classroom to another throughout the day so that teachers stayed in their own classrooms.

Classroom Context

In the 2007-2008 school year, Julie taught all subjects to her 18 third graders. One-third of the class was ELLs: two were classified as *intensive* (beginning to intermediate proficiency levels) and four were classified as *support* (advanced proficiency level.) The intensive ELLs were pulled-out of her class for the 90-minute language arts block while the support ELLs stayed in her class the entire day. Her four support ELLs required little use of ESOL strategies according to Julie. Her intensive ELLs needed greater support, having little proficiency in English. The emphasis in third grade was on reading and math because the statewide assessment for third grade does not include a writing assessment section

Julie taught fourth grade in 2008-2009 and was assigned to the departmentalized team that taught ELLs because she had her ESOL endorsement. She taught three 90-minute blocks of language arts (20 students each) with an hour of each block devoted to writing. Since fourth graders were assessed on their writing ability, this drove the fourth grade language arts curriculum. Julie was accountable for annual yearly progress in writing for all of the 60 students who she had for language arts, including her ELLs.

About half of Julie's 60 students were ELLs. The 15 intensive ELLs were placed in one of two of her language arts blocks due to the limited availability of the ESOL teacher (a second-year teacher who had experienced difficulty teaching a mainstream class the previous year and was assigned to this position so that she could observe effective teachers, according to Julie.) Because of the ESOL teacher's inexperience, Julie did planning for her and documented ESOL strategies herself. Julie and the ESOL teacher co-taught during the block in which her ELLs did not need more individualized support. During the other block, the ESOL teacher worked with a small group of ELLs following Julie's instructional plans.

Julie said that her class was extremely structured, in part due to the confrontation problems between some of her students. She had to devote time daily to refereeing some students and had to remember not to group certain ones together. In addition, she had to begin and end daily instruction for each of her three language arts block at the same place. "You have A, B, C, D that you have to finish, and you've only got 15 minutes, so you better hurry."

Roles, Responsibilities, Challenges, and Demands

When Julie was asked what it was like to be a teacher of ELLs, she replied, "I think I love it! I love those students...their culture, their family life. They are very

respectful. They are very humble and thankful.” Julie found that her ELLs progressed quickly in their English language development but felt intense pressure about being responsible for their performance on the writing portion of the FCAT. She reiterated throughout the interview that she did not think that following scope and sequence was in the best interest of ELLs. She found this challenging because “a lot of students are ready to go and a lot of them are so far behind...The ESOL students need extra time...and it’s hard to give that to them.”

While a few ELLs were from Mexico, many were born in the U.S. with Spanish as the home language, a language that they could speak but not read or write. “It’s almost like those types of students don’t even have a language because it’s such a mix between the first and second, and they are so confused that you are really starting from square one. You have nothing to build on. It’s been so tough.” In fact, this “lack of language” has been the biggest surprise that Julie has found in teaching ELLs. Her reality of teaching ELLs in South Florida was much different than what she experienced during her ProTeach internships. Her placements with ELLs were in pullout classrooms where most ELLs were literate in their first languages and often children of university graduate students—“It is so different!” Julie exclaimed.

Julie felt challenged when teaching one of the ESOL-inclusion language arts blocks because students were on so many different levels. She said that she struggled with differentiating instruction so that all students could complete some of the work independently. Julie addressed ELLs’ need during writing conferences and also worked with them individually and in small groups. She said that they had great ideas but needed a better understanding of the English language to get them on paper. Through

small groups, she tried to develop language skills and “to push them.” Since she perceived ELLs as in most need of help, she devoted most of her time to them.

Julie was not responsible for administering tests or completing data sheets or other paperwork for the ELLs enrolled in her two language arts blocks. The school employed an ESOL coordinator who prepared the required individual ELL plans and brought the ones for Julie’s students for her to sign. Julie said that the bilingual guidance counselor coordinated Parent Leadership Councils meetings and would provide Julie and other teachers of ELLs with documents to send home. Julie had never attended these meetings.

Julie’s school did not specify how teachers documented ESOL strategies in their plans. Julie “jots on the top of my week [in the plan book] what strategies I know I’m using.” She said that “it’s pretty much the same strategies all the time.” She was not required to document ESOL strategies because this was the responsibility of the ESOL teacher. However, Julie felt like she should document them herself since the ESOL teacher was inexperienced and followed Julie’s plans.

Julie said that she “tried to just kind of [teach to] the middle” because of time constraints and the diverse abilities of her students. Writing workshop, which is part of the district-mandated balanced literacy approach, allowed ELLs to go through the stages of process writing, and Julie allowed them to move at a slower pace. She used the strategies of peer and teacher conferencing, working one-on-one with them or in small groups based on needs. She said that her ELLs had great ideas to write about but needed the English language to get them on paper. Through small groups, she tried to develop language skills and “to push them.”

Since the balanced literacy approach requires the use of centers and grouping for instruction, Julie put thought into grouping patterns. She grouped ELLs in different ways, including more proficient ELLs with less, Spanish-speaking ELLs with Spanish-speaking non-ELLs, and primarily “pairing different ability levels so that they can assist each other.” Julie believed that use of the first language was beneficial for ELLs, so she provided bilingual dictionaries and allowed the use of Spanish

The Differences in Teaching ELLs

Julie discussed her perception about the teaching of ELLs in comparison to teaching other students. She said, “I think in some ways [teaching ELLs is the same] because there are things I know are good for ESOL students that I think are good for all of my students, like to always have something in front of them to refer to and things like that.” However, she pointed out that teachers have to “have an understanding of [ELLs’] language needs.” Her comments are presented in Table 4-2 below.

Table 4-2. O’Brien: Similarities and differences between ELLs and non-ELLs

| Similarities | Differences |
|---|--|
| Need visual support and other scaffolding | Errors may be attributable to first language First language literacy affects second Stage of language acquisition affects production Difficult to retain Psychological testing takes longer due to lack of bilingual psychologists Use ESOL strategies based on needed language support/stage Parents may be unable to help due to various factors, including lack of English proficiency English language development necessary for academic success Better behaved |

Julie elaborated as to why she perceived teaching ELLs to be different from teaching non-ELLs. She stated that knowing about their first language can help teachers

understand why ELLs are making syntactical and other errors. Further, she expressed that it is essential to know the stages of second language acquisition in order to plan appropriate tasks and ask questions on their levels

Julie found that her ELLs were better behaved than her non-ELLs. She commented that many of her non-ELL students had behavioral problems, providing a challenge, and that it was “wonderful and a big relief” to have well-behaved ELLs. She had heard from other teachers that it was difficult to retain ELLs—“they want to keep pushing them through.” The psychological testing of ELLs who had been recommended for evaluation “just takes forever” because there are a limited number of bilingual psychologists. The testing timeline for non-ELLs was shorter.

Supports and Constraints

Julie mentioned two sources support to teachers of ELLs at her school. The ESOL coordinator completed paperwork and administered language proficiency tests to ELLs. Two bilingual paraprofessionals served as translators of home-school correspondence that teachers wanted to send home. Teachers were required to send newsletters and other documents to parents in Spanish if that was their first language.

Julie did not perceive her colleagues to be ESOL resources because of their lack of expertise in the field. She explained that some peers merely used strategies that were mentioned as being good for ELLs in professional development workshops or listed on strategy sheets. They believed they were providing comprehensible and appropriate instruction, such as using of reader’s theatre, because of comments that were “just thrown in” staff development activities “as a way to help your ESOL students.” Using such strategies “counts [as comprehensible instruction even] if they have done nothing to help these students.”

Julie did not receive support from school administrators. She expressed concern that her principal, who was bilingual, did not understand “what these students need to learn because if she did...I don’t think our classroom would be set up the way it is...and [the principal] wouldn’t be like, ‘Well, let’s put a weak teacher as the ESOL teacher’....She would understand how much instruction and attention they actually need.”

Future Plans

In the next five years, Julie said that she might teach English in another country. She was also interested in working in a home for abused and neglected children. She said, “I’m kind of deciding where I want to go next. I know I want to teach. I know that’s what I’m supposed to be doing.”

In summary, Julie considered herself to be “conscious of what [ELLs] need” and was “doing the best I can to give them what they need.” She felt prepared because of her specialization in ESOL and recognized that ELLs needed instruction geared to their language proficiency levels. Her struggles were due to the demands of meeting the needs of 20 students with a wide range of proficiency and ability levels and following scope and sequence in a 45-minute block.

Lauren Perez-Cruz, Kindergarten Teacher

Family Background

Lauren Perez-Cruz was born and raised in South Florida. Both of her parents were born in Cuba and immigrated to Florida. Her mother worked outside the home as an administrative assistant and continues in this position today. Her father owns a home inspection business. Lauren has an older brother and two sisters, one older and

one younger. Both Spanish and English were used in Lauren's home. She considers herself to be fluent in both languages.

K-12 Education

Lauren believed that her parents sacrificed for their children by sending the girls to private Catholic schools, which had primarily Hispanic students. Her high school enrolled females only. Instruction was in English. Although Lauren does not think that the academic education her private school provided was necessarily better than that of her brother's public school, she does believe that the environment was more positive. In addition, she thinks that her classmates made her learning experience more enjoyable and comfortable. The student population remained stable, and friendships kindled as early as kindergarten still remain today. Lauren recalled that her schools had been "more family-oriented" and had much more parent involvement than the public schools she was familiar with.

Lauren's second grade teacher was her favorite: "She was just wonderful....She was caring. She really cared for the students. She had an interest in me....I just felt special around her."

Career Aspiration

Lauren always wanted to be a teacher:

Ever since I was little I knew I wanted to be a teacher....I would always get my two sisters and [say,] "Ok, I am the teacher. You sit down and I'll teach you." I just love teaching people things. I love it! In high school I would help my friends with tutoring and all that. I just loved it!

Higher Education

Lauren chose to go to UF after visiting the campus with a friend and found she "loved it!" She chose ESOL as her professional specialization because she believed

that this would help her get a teaching position in the county where she grew up because of its large population of immigrants. She graduated from the ProTeach Program in 2005. At the time of the interviews, she was taking graduate coursework for a Educational Specialist degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a specialization in teacher leadership. Part of her motivation to do so was the increase in salary she will receive once she graduates.

The 2008-2009 was Lauren's third year teaching in the city where she grew up. During her first year, she taught at a charter school. The district, school, and classroom contexts in which Laura was situated at the time of the interview and the year prior are presented next.

District Context

Everglade County Public Schools, located in South Florida, is the largest school district in Florida and the fourth largest school district in the nation (NCES, 2009). The district grade for the 2008-2009 school year was "B" (FDOE, 2010a). It has the second largest minority population in the U.S. with 9.1% of students being black, 62.5% Hispanic, and only 9.1% white (Everglade County Public Schools, 2009). The top five languages other than English that were spoken by students were Spanish, Haitian Creole, French, Portuguese, and Chinese. About 15% of the almost 345,000 students were classified as ELLs (FDOE, 2010b). This district has the largest number of ELLs in Florida.

School Context

The school where Lauren taught was housed on two campuses. In the 2007-2008 school year, prekindergarten and all but Lauren's kindergarten classrooms were located in the primary learning center facility. Lauren's kindergarten and grades 1-5 were

located in the main building. Lauren's kindergarten class was placed the next year in the primary learning center.

Having taught in the main building and developed relationships with some teachers prior to being moved to the other building, Lauren felt isolated. While at the main building, Lauren collaborated with an ESOL self-contained teacher and a third grade teacher. Lauren described perceptions about being placed in the primary learning center facility, "Here, it's a different situation. Here, everybody's to themselves. They never do things together. It's very 'my thing; let me do it my way,' so it's a very different situation. Her frustration was apparent through her words, facial expressions, and tone of voice.

Any kindergarten student who had a first language other than English or who had a home language of other than English were administered an oral/aural proficiency test. Kindergarten and first graders who scored at beginning levels of English proficiency were typically placed in self-contained ESOL classrooms. Grade two to five ELLs who had limited English proficiency were pulled out for language arts instruction by ESOL teachers but remained in mainstream classrooms for the rest of the day. Intermediate and advanced ELLs were mainstreamed throughout the day in mainstream grade level classrooms. ELLs, regardless of their first language, were only assigned to mainstream teachers who were bilingual in English and Spanish. That is, ELLs were not placed with monolingual English teachers or bilingual teachers who spoke other languages than Spanish, a practice that Lauren viewed as unfair.

The school had a Foreign Language in Elementary School program in which Spanish teachers provided Spanish instruction for about an hour weekly to each class.

The Spanish teachers also served as tutors to students who are on a Progress Monitoring Plan because of low scores on math, reading, writing, or science assessments.

In the 2008-2009 school year, Lauren's school received a school grade of "A" from the FDOE. The school received Title I funding with 66.5% reported as economically disadvantaged. Almost 90% of the student population was Hispanic, about 54% were ELLs, and no migrants were reported (FDOE, 2005a). Lauren stated that the overall student population tended to increase in January when families came from outside the U.S. to visit and enrolled their children in schools.

Classroom Context

Lauren's kindergarten class, at the time of the interview, had 21 students. Thirteen of her students were ELLs who had scored at intermediate to advanced levels of English proficiency. Lauren insisted that kindergartners who scored at these levels on English proficiency tests were actually proficient while those in higher grades who scored similarly on the tests were not, suggesting the test is biased for kindergartners.

In Lauren's classroom, only English was allowed. Lauren had concluded that her ELLs who were in self-contained classrooms during prekindergarten were less fluent than those who were mainstreamed because the self-contained teachers spoke Spanish to their students and allowed the students to speak in Spanish to each other. "I feel that if they just keep speaking Spanish, they're going to regress and not learn any English.", 2009b, lines 189-191.) "I know that they speak [Spanish] at home ,and they're going to get that at home, and I know here's where they're going to get their English" (lines 183-185.) Two ELLs in Lauren's classroom had a *Progress Monitoring Plan* due to their low ("high risk") score on their initial *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early*

Literacy Skills (commonly referred to as DIBELS) assessment. They were pulled out twice weekly for tutoring sessions with the Spanish teacher in the building who also had the responsibility of providing reading remediation..

Lauren assigned homework to her students, stating that her ELLs “manage” to complete it even when parents did not have English proficiency. She said, “I don’t know how [ELLs] do it. I guess they find somebody or... can read themselves, so, they’re fine.”

Lauren said that by the end of the year, her classroom population would be a lot different. Some of her students who had started kindergarten in her classroom only three months ago had already moved and others had arrived. She found that it was Hispanic students that were the most transient. She viewed this as a problem.

Roles, Responsibilities, Challenges, and Demands

Lauren had confessed in the first interview that she had specialized in ESOL during ProTeach because she thought it would help her to get a job in the area she wanted to in South Florida. She did not consider herself to be an ESOL teacher or want to be one—“I guess if they asked me I would, but, honestly, I’m hesitant, and it’s [because of] the parents. I do speak Spanish, but according to the other teachers, it’s hard communicating with the parents sometimes.” She said that she did not serve as an advocate of ELLs or serve as an ESOL resource to her peers in her building because she perceived that her colleagues “don’t care. They see me as young.”

Lauren held a strong belief that it was crucial for her ELLs to develop English proficiency so that they could be successful in school and pass statewide assessments. She enforced her English learning policy in her classroom by telling students: “You need to practice your English—you have to!” Lauren limited her own language use to

English, as well. She said, “I think the reason I’m so hesitant to speak in Spanish is like, ‘Well, what if you get a kid who speaks Chinese or Creole? Well, what are you going to do next? What strategies do you need to do this time?’” Based on this comment, equity was important to her.

Though Lauren felt like English was the language that should be used in the classroom, she did encourage parents to use their first languages at home. She told parents that “they could read in Spanish or English. It’s just so [their children are] getting exposure to print, the concepts of print, and all that. And at first, they’re surprised...and I go, ‘It’s fine! It’s fine for them because they’re still learning the way words work’.”

Although Lauren said that some other teachers thought having ELLs meant more paperwork, this was not the case—“Everything’s done for us!” The school had two classroom teachers who served as ESOL chairpersons with the responsibility of testing and completing paperwork. Like all teachers of ELLs, Lauren had to document the strategies that she used. The school did not specify how ESOL strategies were documented. Lauren listed the ESOL strategies she had used in her plan book. She said that administrators were supposed to check to make sure that teachers of ELLs were noting ESOL strategies; however, nobody checked her strategy documentation. Lauren commented, “I keep myself checked—I’m set; I’m good!”

While Lauren did not have beginner ELLs at the time of the interview, she shared her feelings when she was assigned an ELL in the charter school:

I was honestly disappointed, and I was like, ‘Oh, no!’ I found this to be an extra burden, and I know it was bad to think this way, but I...[thought], ‘I have these 24 other rambunctious second graders. Now I’m getting this 25th student who I’m going to have to spend extra time with.’ But when I

met her, and I saw how motivated she was, honestly, I...invested a lot of my time with her—more than I thought I would have.

Lauren used lower level books with this ELL and asked a former classmate who was a teacher for advice about what she should do to teach this student though she had stated that she felt prepared to teach ELLs..

Lauren said that if she had beginners now, she might use “shorter phrases, repeat directions more”, but because she has higher proficiency ELLs, “I haven’t done that much to change—I haven’t really changed my teaching that much.” When she taught the lower proficiency ELL, she experimented with ESOL strategies she had learned about during her ProTeach ESOL classes in order to determine their utility.

Lauren perceived that any academic or language issues ELLs had were unrelated to their English proficiency. For example, she said that one student had “a very bad speech problem—very bad. He would say “tayons” for “crayons”....He hears things, and it’s hard for him to hear. He’s picking things up but slowly, slowly, but he’s getting there.” When ELLs came in not knowing letter sounds, how to write their names, or the difference between a number and a letters, she identified lack of preliteracy skill development was the problem.

Lauren preferred that her school get rid of the self-contained classes for ELLs, commenting that the teachers in these classrooms were not bad but that they used Spanish in the classroom, limiting exposure to English. She said that she would be willing to have beginner level ESS in her classroom but only would want two or three of them.

The Differences in Teaching ELLs

Lauren expressed her belief that teaching ELLs in kindergarten was the same as teaching non-ELLs. One of her comments was:

I really don't do anything different because I feel like [at the kindergarten level] they're kind of at the same level with reading and writing the language. And again, my students aren't as low....Perhaps if I had levels one and two, I might change a little bit, but I don't think I really would.

Table 4-3 lists both similarities and differences in teaching ELLs and other students based on Lauren's comments.

Table 4-3. Perez-Cruz: Similarities and differences between ELLs and non-ELLs

| Similarities | Differences |
|--|---|
| All kindergartners at similar reading/writing levels | May need to give one-to-one attention, use shorter phrases, and repeat directions to ensure comprehension |
| Strategies, such as pairing word/picture, graphic organizers, and modeling directions, necessary at kindergarten | May need assignments modified, such as length of writing Requires more teacher time (instruction and documentation) May be difficult to communicate to parents Parents may not be as involved/supportive |

Lauren described ways that she had modified instruction for ELLs, contradicting her stance that she did the same thing for them as other students. For example, she simplified her speech shortened the length of writing assignments for a beginner ELL.

Supports and Constraints

Two teachers at Lauren's school worked as ESOL coordinators in addition to teaching. They were provided with stipends and extra planning periods to give them time to fulfill related responsibilities.

Lauren felt very isolated as a kindergarten teacher, being housed in a separate building from colleagues that had served as resources and friends in the past. The past year when she was in the main building, she perceived herself as a support to the ELLs

in the self-contained classroom of one of these teachers because Lauren's students, the self-contained teacher's students, and a third grade colleague's students had recess together and participated in other activities together, giving the ELLs greater access to English. Though Lauren perceived herself as having expertise in the ESOL field, she believed her fellow kindergarten teachers, who each had several years of teaching experience, to be unreceptive to any suggestions she might make, so Lauren did not offer assistance or seek it from them. Lauren inferred that mutual disrespect existed between the other kindergarten teachers and her. She commented, "That's fine. I'll keep doing what I'm doing—my kids are doing great!"

Future Plans

Lauren stated that she enjoyed teaching kindergarten because of the growth that she sees her students over a year. She would prefer to teach in a private school because of her own positive experiences at the private Catholic schools she attended: "What I've liked about private schools, is that, beyond the parental involvement, it is more family-oriented. I have friends who I met in the kindergarten who I am still friends with." She said the private school where she would prefer to teach "doesn't have to be Catholic...because the [salary would be a] \$10,000 pay cut. I would like to teach gifted. I think it would be fun. I have my gifted students while I have been [teaching], and I really enjoyed a lot, so maybe I could [teach] to a different level".

In summary, Lauren perceived herself to be fully prepared to teach ELLs but claimed that ELLs did not need specialized instruction though she indicated that she did differentiate instruction for low proficiency ELLs. In addition, she voiced initial frustration when a beginning level ELL was placed in her classroom. Lauren believed that schools should provide instruction to ELLs in English-only and perceived that the use of

students' first language negatively affected their mastery of academic standards and English acquisition.

Christina Marino, First Grade Teacher

Family Background

Christina Marino was born in New York City, the daughter of a Peruvian mother and a Cuban father. Her mother was a kindergarten teacher for many years. Her father, who had a Master's degree in social work, worked at a hospital with mentally retarded patients. Christina has a brother who is about a year and a half her junior. Both parents were fluent in both English and Spanish and both languages were spoken in the home. Lauren said that she typically speaks Spanish with her parents and English with her friends. Christina considers herself to be bilingual and speaks English with no accent.

K-12 Education

Lauren and her brother both attended a private Catholic elementary school where their mother taught located in the upper west side of New York City. The school had two classes per grade level and went from kindergarten to eighth grade and had a diverse student population that was reflective of the city. In the area where she lived, "most parents could afford to send their children to private school. At that time, public school was not the ideal learning environment." Most of her teachers were White, middle class females.

After her father retired and Christina completed fifth grade, the family moved to Caracas, Venezuela. Christina and her brother attended the Bilingual Academy where instruction was in Spanish and English. Her mother continued her teaching career at this school. Christina recalls that none of the family was content living in Caracas. At

the end of the school year, her parents decided to move to a small community in west central Florida that they thought would provide a relaxed lifestyle and quality education for the children. It was here that seventh grade Christina and her brother attended public schools for the first time. Her friends in middle and high school were mostly White, which was by far the majority racial group. Many classmates “were from working class homes” while a few had parents who were well known professionals in the community. While Christina’s middle school teachers were mostly White females, she recalled that she had a Black male teacher for history and that there were more males at the high school level than had taught at her middle school.

When asked about her favorite teachers, Christina had many so she had to narrow down the number. She fondly remembered her Filipino fifth grade teacher at the Catholic school. While the teacher’s persona made her appear strict and mean on the surface; but according to Christina, students were actually afraid of her. She was actually “the nicest person.” “You can’t judge a book by its cover,” stated Christina, who believed she learned a lot that year.

Another favorite teacher was her high school English honors teacher, who Christina had both in her freshman and junior years. Christina found her to be a great teacher who taught her a lot. As important, she was kind and caring—“a trusted friend and teacher”—who Christina felt close to. Christina carries such characteristics into her own teaching. To be a good teacher, she believes you must help students learn, command respect, know students, and be caring.

Career Aspiration

Christina always wanted to be a teacher and believes her primary career influence was her mother, who had originally been a high school teacher but had moved

to kindergarten and taught at this level for many years. Since her mother taught at the private elementary school where Christina attended, Christina would go to her mom's classroom and help her with tasks, such as decorating bulletin boards. She enjoyed this immensely. In addition, she would play school with her dolls and her brother. In secondary school, she served as a peer counselor and provided tutoring and other assistance. She found that she preferred working with young children.

Higher Education

Christina said that she chose to go to UF because it is the best school in Florida. She said that her fellow education majors, who started the ProTeach program in their junior year, were "guinea pigs" in that 1999 was the first year that the College of Education had implemented the Unified Elementary ProTeach Program (which provided the opportunity for dual certification in elementary education and special education) with its cohort model and ESOL infusion, allowing them to graduate with their ESOL endorsement qualifications.

Christina chose interdisciplinary studies as her professional specialization, which required taking coursework in the integration of math, science, language arts, and technology. She graduated from ProTeach in the summer of 2002. In 2008, Christina earned her Educational Specialist degree in curriculum and instruction through the Teacher Leadership for School Improvement online degree program offered by UF. She had also earned her reading endorsement.

Upon graduation from ProTeach, Lauren accepted her only job offer, which was from a school in southwest Florida a week before school started. After two years there, she applied for and accepted a teaching position in a school district closer to home and

was still teaching first grade there at the time of the interview. District, school, and classroom contexts for the school that she was teaching in are provided next.

District Context

The headquarters of Forest County Public Schools, the nation's 10th largest school district (NCES, 2009), is located in Central Florida. The district's website indicates that it received a grade of "A" from the FDOE "again" (Forest County Public Schools, n.d.). It also indicates that students are from 212 countries and speak 166 different languages. Of the 172,028 students, almost 20% are ELLs (FDOE, 2010b). This district has the largest percentage of ELLs and the second largest number of ELLs in Florida and required that English be used as the language of instruction in both ESOL self-contained and ESOL-inclusive mainstream classrooms. Spanish was allowed in transitional bilingual classrooms for half of the day.

School Context

During her first two years working for Forest County Public Schools, Christina taught in a mainstream classroom, which had ELLs enrolled. In the 2005-2006 school year, almost half of the student population was white and about one-fourth was Black; the other fourth was Hispanic. Slightly more than 10% were ELLs and almost 1% was migrants. The percentage of economically disadvantaged was almost 46% (FDOE, 2010b), qualifying the school to receive Title 1 funding. The school had received a school grade of "A" in 2004-2005 and a "B" in 2005-2006 (FDOE, 2010a).

A new elementary school opened in the fall of 2006 due to overcrowding of the school where Christina taught as well as other district elementary schools. Christina chose to transfer there and continue teaching first grade. The feeder schools (that is, the schools that students were drawn from) for the new elementary school were "A"

schools. A new school is not graded by FDOE during its first year of operation. The school received a grade of “C” in Spring 2008 to the surprise of the faculty. For the 2008-2009 school year (when the interview was done), it earned an “A.”

The school demographics for 2008-2009 were as follows: 8.6% White, 11.8% Black, 71.6% Hispanic, 3.6% Asian, and 4.1% multiracial (FDOE, 2005a). The percentage of economically disadvantaged was 71.6%; thus, the school qualified for Title 1 funding. Over half of the students were ELLs (60.3%) with no students reported as migrant. According to Christina, most of the students were Puerto Rican based on data collection the school undertook. The majority of teachers were Hispanic females, like Christina.

The school required that teachers write objectives on the board. Administrators would ask students about what they were learning during their daily classroom visits. Therefore, teacher spent time going over objectives and asking students about them so that they would be prepared to answer administrators’ questions.

Classroom Context

Christina accepted the first grade position for Fall 2006, assuming she would be teaching a mainstream class. However, she was assigned to a sheltered (self-contained) ESOL classroom without being asked her preference of settings (mainstream or sheltered.) She said that there “was this negative thing to teach sheltered because there is a lot more work that goes into it—not so much the teaching the kids but the paperwork” and that she was no happy at being assigned to a sheltered class. She believed that she was given this position because she was one of a few on the first grade team who had the ESOL endorsement and others did not want it.

Though the class size of a sheltered class was smaller (13 or less students) compared to a mainstream first grade classroom (18 or less students), the former required much more paperwork. The next school year (2007-2008), Christina was once again assigned to a sheltered ESOL first grade classroom along with the only other ESOL-endorsed first grade teacher because more experienced teachers did not want this position and had not completed their ESOL endorsement requirements.

At the end of her second year at the school, Christina requested that she be placed in a mainstream first grade classroom “because I had such a horrible year!” She did not want to teach sheltered again because she found it “just too stressful.” Her frustration was due to a variety of factors, including being compared to mainstream first grade teachers’ test scores, behavioral problems of some of her students, home problems that carried over into the classroom, parents not understanding that their children were not learning, and some students not completing homework. The principal complied with her request, and Christina was assigned to a mainstream classroom for the 2008-2009 school year with a total of 18 students; five of them were ELLs. She did not have ELLs that were non-English speakers as they were placed in sheltered or bilingual classrooms.

As required by the district, Christina taught only in English though she is fluent in Spanish. Christina does think that it is “a benefit to know two languages” but followed the mandate. She described her typical day as “very structured.” Though school did not start till 9:00 a.m., Christina allowed students who arrived early to come into the classroom at 8:15 a.m.

Roles, Responsibilities, Challenges, and Demands in Teaching ELLs

Christina said that she liked teaching ELLs. She enjoyed “the most interesting stories [they told] about what they did on their weekends and what they did—like they ate something or somebody came to visit them from another country.” She commented that teaching ELLs requires a lot of organization as well as much preparation.

You want to make sure that whatever you’re introducing, you’ve done enough background thought about whatever questions might come up for those particular students so that you can answer their questions right away so that you don’t take away learning time from them or any of the other students....When you’re practicing you have to differentiate, like I do a lot of differentiated instruction when I pull the ESOL students and the lower level students that may need more help in small groups and I review things to make sure that they got what I was trying to teach them.

When planning, Christina said that she thought about how she could meet the needs of ELLs—“I prepare extra and think about how the lesson should be presented to the ESOL students...like if I need to do a picture, a visual, or if I need to include a graphic organizer.” She displayed vocabulary paired with pictures and definitions daily on the board and went over them. She said that “it is a strategy I picked up from [ESOL], but I just decided to use it for everybody because I think it benefits everybody.” When cultural topics arose in the classroom, Christina referenced her students who were from that background. She had a culture day in which students dressed up from their native cultures and used to have them bring in food from their culture but found that providing foods was too much of a financial burden on parents.

Christina said that she differentiated instruction when she taught her small groups, such as making her instruction “a little bit higher for my higher kids.” A surprise for her about teaching ELLs was that when she paired them “with someone who is dominant in the lesson or dominant in the language, they pick up so much quicker.” She believed

that peer interaction was more beneficial to language development than teacher-student interaction.

A major challenge was finding time to do things that Christina believed would benefit her students. She would have liked to provide smaller group instruction and provide more practice opportunities to ELLs but she just did not have enough time to do so. She felt knowledgeable about teaching after doing so for almost seven years and did not mind “having to redo things for [ELLs],” but this came at a cost. She said that her colleagues perceived her to have expertise in teaching ELLs and sought her advice.

Lauren appeared to have more responsibilities and demands as a teacher of ELLs than other participants in this study although there was a teacher on special assignment who was in charge of the ESOL Program. Christina documented ESOL strategies on the bottom of lesson plans. For each ELL in her classroom, she had to complete a ten-page ESOL language arts checklist at the end of the year and monitor their performance throughout the school year. In addition, she was responsible for complementing the monitoring paperwork for the former ELLs in her class that had been exited from the program less than two years prior. She was also expected to attend all ELL committee meetings held on behalf of her ELLs. These demands were a main reason why some her colleagues had negative attitudes about having ELLs in their classrooms.

Christina spoke of trying to get some of the parents of her ELLs involved in their education as a major challenge. She called parents on the phone, talking in Spanish when necessary, to “make sure that they understand...and make sure they know when they need to come for something.” Still, some parents did not come in or make sure

their children complete homework. Christina perceived that their lack of engagement with their children created more work for her since she and parents were not partners in their children's education.

Christina did not blame her ELLs for the challenges that she had—"it's never the kids, but everything that goes into it. The kids are never the problem, it's everything around them. So much of, 'You did this, so you have to do this!'" She spoke of aspects of teaching that made it "not fun," such as having to write objectives on the board daily and the stress she felt about her ELLs achieving annual yearly progress and doing well on FCAT. She believed there were unrealistic expectations of ELLs, arguing that there are individual differences and that students should not be compared to one another—"If one child makes this tiny amount of growth and another makes more, then what is considered enough by the higher powers?...They don't really understand where [these students] came from." She believed that with the new emphasis on collecting and analyzing data, "people are finally starting to understand how reading six words, even though it took a few months, is an accomplishment!" She argued that ELLs can only make so much growth in a year and may not meet grade level expectations.

The Differences in Teaching ELLs

Christina repeatedly stated that teaching ELLs was the same as demonstrated by her following words:

I don't think an ESOL student is any different from a regular student because, like I said before, all of the strategies that you use to teach ESOL students are just good strategies that you should be using to teach all students. In my mind, I really don't see a difference, other than they come from a different background—but that's what makes them interesting. That makes you want to learn more about that particular race or country of wherever it is that they come from.

Drawing on her experience as an ESOL self-contained teacher at the school for two years, she said, “I really don’t see much difference [between teaching sheltered and teaching mainstream]...because I taught sheltered for two years...and it was the exact same thing other than I couldn’t retain any kids and some of them were very low.”

Table 4-4 presents similarities and differences in teaching ELLs that were stated or could be inferred during the interviews, with Christina.

Table 4-4. Marino: Similarities and differences between ELLs and non-ELLs

| Similarities | Differences |
|--|---|
| Varying levels of parental support | Cultural background |
| Benefit from vocabulary development activities and ESOL strategy use | Acquire English through peer interaction |
| Similar language acquisition | May not achieve on grade level on tests due to lack of proficiency in English |
| | Difficult to retain |
| | Difficult to refer for testing for learning problems |
| | Teacher has to complete 10-page checklist for each ELL |
| | Requires extra planning and preparation |
| | ESOL label might affect teacher attitudes and expectations |

Though Christina indicated that she did lesson planning specifically for ELLs based on their perceived linguistic needs and limitations, she insisted during the interview that the strategies that she used with her ELLs benefited all students. She identified language issues that her ELLs and non-ELLs had as being similar, saying these issues were “about the same. [ELLs] sometimes have problems piecing proper sentences together, but they quickly catch on because they’re immersed in the language with other students.”

Lauren expressed her view that “a true ESOL kid” is someone who has come from another country with little proficiency in English rather than students who were born here and knows another language. She believed that labeling the latter group of

students as ELLs was negative and detrimental because “once you have a label, it’s hard to get off, and people think you’re maybe not as smart as a normal basic mainstream kid.” It was troubling to her when ELLs were perceived in this way.

Supports and Constraints

Christina stated that, “There is just a lot of ESOL support [at my school] because we have so many ESOL students.” The district provided a teacher on special assignment who was “the one in charge of getting it all together.” This ESOL coordinator maintained all of the ELL folders in her office and provided teachers with the lengthy ESOL language arts checklist for teachers to complete. She also handled testing and monitoring of former ELLs. Christina had asked her ESOL-related questions on different occasions.

Someone from the district ESOL office was frequently at the school to monitor the program and to offer assistance. Christina perceived their help as “almost too much.” A rule in the district was that ELLs could not be retained if they had been in the program for less than two years. In addition, it was difficult to refer them for testing if a learning problem was suspected. ESOL district personnel supported these policies. Christina perceived some ELLs as having legitimate learning and other problems unrelated to their second language acquisition. She said, “I agree how [district ESOL staff] gives [ELLs] the benefit of the doubt, but sometimes it’s not a language problem, it’s a learning problem!” Christina said that parents, too, sometimes used their children’s ELL status as “a crutch” to keep them from being retained.

Christina had not received any professional development about teaching ELLs since she attended ProTeach. Like the other teachers discussed in this chapter, Christina was not observed for her effectiveness in teaching ELLs. While administrators

walked through to ask students what they were learning and completed required formal observations, she got no feedback about their impressions on her effectiveness in teaching ELLs to reflect upon.

Christina felt hindered by the lack of involvement and support by some parents, believing parental engagement was crucial for student success. She believed that if parents made sure that students did their homework that she would not have to re-teach certain things. She did not identify this as a problem exclusive to ELLs.

Christina found that district requirements and emphasis on accountability interfered with her doing things that would benefit her students. The requirement to write objectives on the board and cover the curriculum left her feeling constrained. She also worried about her ELLs scoring lower on FCAT and feared that she would not be viewed as the good teacher that she knew she was.

Future Plans

Christina made the following comments about what she would like to be doing in five years:

I would still be happy teaching first grade, I love it that much! I would not mind being an expert in the grade and be able to help new teachers coming into the field. Although, I would also not mind being a [curriculum research teacher] and putting my Specialist to use. I'm also thinking that I may want to teach a few days a week (or in the summer) on a community college level and teach future teachers. I always wanted to be some kind of mentor and share what I know with future teachers. I guess we will see what happens. I just like to set myself up to have as many doors open as possible. Plus, if I am married with young children, I want to be able to fully concentrate on them.

Christina said that her perfect school would be in a small, suburban middle-class neighborhood "where parents are really involved, and the kids like school...and play on sports teams, and they go to dance class."

In summary, Christina appeared to be a reflective teacher who worked hard to provide a welcoming environment and differentiated instruction for her students. Though she insisted that teaching ELLs was the same as teaching other students, she talked about how she thought about how she would differentiate instruction for ELLs based on their English proficiency levels during her planning period. Christina had more responsibilities than other participants in this study because of greater ESOL paperwork obligations. She felt great pressure for her ELLs to achieve well on statewide assessments because administrators interpreted her effectiveness as a teacher based on her students' scores. Because of the challenges and demands she faced at her current school, including those related to her being a teacher of ELLs, she would prefer to teach at a middle-class school that had high parental involvement.

Melissa Solana, ESOL Coordinator and Former 3-5 Grade Teacher

Family Background

Melissa Solano, a Hispanic female, was born in Miami, the daughter of a Cuban-American mother, raised in Philadelphia, and a Cuban father who arrived in the U.S. at the age of 10. Melissa's parents divorced when she was four. Soon after, she moved with her mother and her younger brother to Philadelphia so that "we could be closer to family." Her mother, a high school graduate at the time, worked as a bank manager and a part-time realtor. Melissa described her mother as "very strict." Melissa's father maintained only limited contact throughout her life and, thus, "we don't have much of a relationship." Both parents were fluent in both English and Spanish. Melissa shared, "I'm not sure if Spanish was my first language. I think both English and Spanish were." Melissa considered English her dominant language saying, "I mostly translate from English to Spanish when I speak Spanish."

K-12 Education

Melissa began kindergarten at a private Catholic school, the largest in the diocese, in Philadelphia, located close to their row house in the city. She said, “It was more common to go to a private school in the city.” Students were mostly from European backgrounds, including Italian, Irish, and Polish. During her seven years attending the school, most teachers were White females; some were nuns.

Melissa’s mother remarried an old Cuban acquaintance when Melissa was 12 years old, and the family moved to southeast Florida. Soon after, Melissa was enrolled in the 7th grade at a private Catholic school that had only one class per grade level and small class sizes. During her 7th and 8th grade years, Melissa’s mother was able to be a stay-at-home mom and was able to serve as a field trip chaperone and participate in the school in other ways. For high school, Melissa and her parents decided on a private Catholic school in an affluent area, which required a thirty minute ride to and from school. While a few of the teachers were nuns, priests, and male, the majority were White, middle-upper class females.

Career Aspiration

Melissa had aspired to be a pediatrician “because I wanted to work with children,” so she majored in chemistry. After the first semester, Melissa rethought this decision due to the challenging coursework. She had been working at Baby Gator, an on-campus childcare center, as she qualified for the work-study financial aid program, and she thought teaching would also meet her goal of “working with kids.” She decided to change her major to education.

Higher Education

Melissa was the “first in my family to go to college.” She chose to attend UF and designated her major as chemistry. However, she changed it to education after experiencing difficulty with chemistry courses. Early in the ProTeach Program, she selected literacy as her professional specialization after taking a required children’s literature course. While at UF, she studied abroad in Spain, “really for the adventure,” and took Spanish. Knowing that she wanted to teach near her home in South Florida, Melissa did her student teaching there at what she described as a “migrant school.” Thus, many of her students were ELLs. She graduated with her Master of Education degree in 2003. Recently, she completed coursework to get Educational Leadership certification.

Upon graduation with her teaching degree, Melisa accepted at position with Ocean County Public schools in southeastern Florida. Melissa had taught for five years in a Title 1 school in the district. Melissa had accepted the position of ESOL and Dual Language Programs Coordinator in 2008-2009 in hopes that it would help her gain experience to be hired as an assistant principal. The district, school, and classroom contexts when she was a teacher are presented next.

District Context

Melissa was employed by the same school district where Julie obtained employment. Since information was previously presented, it will not be repeated here. Please refer to pages 141 to 142 to review data about Ocean County Public Schools.

School Context

Melissa accepted a fourth-grade teaching position at a large Title I elementary school with approximately 1,000 students in southeastern Florida upon graduation in

2003. The population of the school during her first year of teaching was 44.8% Hispanic, 15.6% Black, and 30.6% White with 61.2% of students classified as economically disadvantaged and 36.5% eligible for ESOL services; only 1.4% were migrant students (FDOE, 2005a). The class photos that Melissa showed me on the wall in her office documented the demographic shift during her five years at the school with a decrease in white and Hispanic subgroups and an over 5% increase in black students, including Haitians (FDOE, 2010b). During these five years, the school's grade progressively changed from a "C" in 2003-2004 to an "A", which it has maintained.

At Melissa's school, beginning to intermediate level (*intensive*) ELLs were pulled out during the 90-minute reading block by the school's ESOL teacher while more advanced (*support*) ELLs stayed in her classroom the full day. Melissa said that her intensive ELLs did not want to go with the ESOL teacher because they wanted to participate in the classroom language arts activities, such as Reader's Theatre. Because of this, Melissa included the ELLs in her language arts activities to the extent possible and that they essentially did her assignments as well as the ESOL teacher's by choice.

In the 2007-2008 school year, the school implemented *clustering* of ELLs in which they were assigned to one or more classrooms per grade level. This was done to alleviate scheduling difficulties by the pullout ESOL teacher who met with intensive ELLs daily for language arts through ESOL instruction. Clustering also decreased the number of teachers who would be targeted to take professional development coursework for their ESOL endorsements because ELLs would be placed in fewer classrooms, usually with teachers who already held ESOL credentials.

In the five years that Melissa was at the school, there were three or four different ESOL teachers. Melissa was concerned about the lack of consistency from year to year with the ESOL teacher turnover and found that these teachers were weak. She felt that most of these teachers “work[ed] better with smaller groups than a bigger group. Just management and being organized is easier to handle in a smaller group.” Melissa stated that the year before she transferred to another school, teachers asked that the principal to assign a teacher whose students had made large achievement gains to the ESOL teacher position, believing ELLs needed effective teachers. The principal agreed to do this. This teacher had graduated from an ESOL-infused teacher education program at a Florida university and, thus, had an ESOL endorsement.

While teaching at the school, Melissa “noticed a lot of teachers don’t take ownership [of ELLs]. They don’t consider them their kids.” Instead, these teachers thought that the education of ELLs was the responsibility of the ESOL teacher. Melissa said that she had even seen some teachers “stick ELLs on computers when they came back [from ESOL pullout].” She found administrators to be neutral about ELLs, having heard them make no comments one way or another about this group.

Classroom Context

Melissa taught fourth grade for two years and then *looped*, continuing to be their teacher for their fifth grade. She continued teaching at the fifth grade level for three more years, making her teaching experience two years as a fourth grade teacher and three years as a fifth grade teacher. During her last two years at the school, she served as the School Advisory Council chairperson and took on other leadership duties. She was also a top finalist for the district’s *Hispanic Teacher of the Year* recognition.

During her years as a teacher, about one-fourth of her students were ELLs from beginning levels (*intensive*) to advanced levels (*support*.) The class size ranged from 21 to 28 students. The final year she taught, Melissa did not have an ELL until March because the ESOL cluster classroom teacher went on medical leave and her students were divided between Melissa and the other fifth grade teachers.

Roles, Responsibilities, Challenges, and Demands in Teaching ELLs

Melissa said, “I truly knew as a classroom teacher that [ELLs] needed their accommodations, and I would give them that and give them extra time and modify their test items.” However, it was not until Melissa became ESOL coordinator that she became aware of “all that was behind the scenes—all the paperwork, all the documentation, the parent notifications.” She said that when she taught ELLs, teachers “were just taken care of [by the ESOL coordinator]. We were told, ‘Sign here. Date here.’...And that would be it....I didn’t know anything!”

To get to know her students, Melissa gave an assignment at beginning of year in which they were asked to bring in items about themselves and describe why they choose them to share. She believed that this allowed her to get to know their personalities and interests and use the information gained to guide her instruction throughout the year. Melissa said she never single out her ELLs. She was amazed by their motivation to learn and would have preferred that her intensive ELLs had not been pulled out because she thought that she could have better met their needs in her classroom.

Melissa considered getting involvement and support from parents of ELLs as a major challenge for her, pointing out that in some countries it is not the norm for parents to support education at home. She perceived the knowledge and skills of parents could

be transferred to their children. She stated, “If parents had it, they could give it to their kids!”

In planning for and carrying out instruction, Melissa considered the levels of her ELLs, which the ESOL coordinator had provided her with at the beginning of the year. While she did not identify language objectives, she felt her strength was in her ability to meet ELLs’ individual needs while holding them to the same standards as other students. For example, when she taught a science lesson on matter, she expected most students to master twelve vocabulary words. For some ELLs, she would adjust that to only four in which they could illustrate their meanings with drawings. In her present position as ESOL coordinator, teachers come to her frustrated about not knowing how to accommodate ELLs. Melissa found that making modifications for her ELLs just came naturally to her; that is, she did not have to consciously think about what to do.

Melissa confided that she felt bad when she spoke to some students in Spanish to help them understand because “I know you’re not supposed to do that!” When I probed to find out why, she said that she thought she had been taught that during ProTeach. I explained that using the native language is an appropriate strategy, causing her to feel relieved that she was not doing something wrong. She commented that she just felt more approachable when students knew she could speak to them in Spanish.

While Melissa said that she did not think about the time she spent in preparing for instruction of ELLs, considering it just a part of her job, she did wish that she had had more time to work with ELLs individually. With so many students in the class, however, she found this was not feasible.

Melissa documented ESOL strategies individually for each ELL every trimester, stating that “I would have my ESOL students’ needs and then I would check off what accommodations and strategies I used with each kid.” Most of the items on the checklist were marked by the end of this time period. She chose to type daily lessons, which she bound weekly with a cover sheet of her schedule, but did not specify any modifications or language objectives for her ELLs. She was not observed by administrators about her teaching of ELLs.

The Differences in Teaching ELLs

When asked about her perceptions about teaching ELLs compared to teaching non-ELLs, Melissa responded,

I’m going to say it’s the same because to me teaching is teaching. When you’re educating, it doesn’t matter--who, what, when, where, how. I feel like I am a full heart educator, and if you give me what I need, give me the materials I need, I can teach anyone....I’m a teacher; I’m an educator...I adapt, and I think it’s the same. Teaching is teaching!”

Table 4-5 lists the similarities and differences she mentioned during the interviews. As with other teachers who stressed that there were no differences in teaching ELLs, Melissa contradicted her stance in answers to other interview questions.

Table 4-5. Solano: Similarities and differences between ELLs and non-ELLs

| Similarities | Differences |
|---|---|
| Individual differences (learning styles, ability levels, and personality) ESOL strategies useful for all | Second language acquisition affected by individual differences May need assignments modified, such as length of writing |
| Can meet same standards | Requires more teacher time (instruction and documentation) Benefit from individual instruction Highly motivated to learn Advanced level may still have difficulty with science and social studies Parents may not be as involved/supportive Homeroom teacher may not take ownership of ELL education |

Melissa believed that ESOL strategies were good for ELLs as well as for all students though sometimes teachers, including herself,

tend to get maybe a little bit lazier when it comes to general education kids, and you don't want to use the strategies. ESOL strategies work with ESE kids, they work with general education kids, they work with everybody. We tend to get a little bit lazy and don't want to do the extra work.

In other words, she felt obligated to implement strategies for ELLs but sometimes did not take the time to use them with other students.

Melissa, like other teachers interviewed, believed that more proficient ELLs needed little scaffolding, though, in her experience, she observed that they might still have problems with academic language as shown in her comments below:

With the kids that were pretty much done with the [ESOL] program and on support, they were pretty much no different than the other kids in how they learned, behavior, and everything else, except, you know, I noticed as their teacher that at times they would struggle with certain [academic] things.

She observed that some of her more proficient ELLs usually had problems with science and social studies content, rather than with reading comprehension.

Melissa observed that second language acquisition was affected by individual differences. She talked about one beginner ELL who was very shy and would not talk in front of other students. The student communicated with Melissa by whispering in Spanish. Melissa felt lucky that she spoke Spanish because it allowed her to understand the child. She had another ELL that was new to the country yet quite outgoing, participating to the extent possible in presentations and project. She was surprised by how many of her students did not have a silent period and took risks. In addition, she was surprised how quickly ELLs made gains in their English proficiency.

She believed that this might have been due to the safe environment she had established in her classroom.

Another difference between ELLs and non-ELLs that Melissa had noticed was the motivation of ELLs as demonstrated in the following quote:

I was amazed at how much they wanted to learn and how they were willing to do extra things just to be a part of what was going on in their homeroom....I was really amazed at the fact that they tried so hard, and it was like that with almost all of them....I can't think of one...[who wasn't] willing to go above and beyond."

Supports and Constraints

While Melissa's school had an ESOL coordinator, she felt like the coordinator was not an adequate ESOL resource. Melissa said she felt unprepared to teach ELLs as a teacher and found out how little she knew once she became ESOL coordinator. Because of this, she developed an informational folder for teachers, which she titled *Everything You Wanted to Know about ESOL and More*, which contained the Consent Decree (1990), tips on lesson planning, stages of English proficiency, and other information. She regularly communicated with teachers so that they could better understand and meet the needs of ELLs as well as know about the ends and outs of the program. She said,

The teachers really need to be informed, they really need to know what's going on and where these kids stand, and I feel like that's my number one priority and that's why I made those folders. The teachers need to know, they need to know what's going on and what to do for these kids.

While teaching, Melissa's school not only had the ESOL coordinator to manage the large ESOL program there, but they also had a dedicated ESOL guidance counselor and three bilingual paraprofessionals, which were referred to as *language facilitators*. Two were Spanish speakers and one spoke Haitian Creole. The Haitian Creole

language facilitator came to Melissa's classroom twice weekly during math the year that she had a Haitian ELL. A Spanish language facilitator visited her classroom more frequently to assist with Spanish-speaking ELLs under Melissa's direction.

Like the other teachers, no professional development activities were provided to help teachers become more effective teachers of ELLs. In addition, Melissa was not observed specifically about her teaching of ELLs so was not provided any feedback. Her administrators never discussed teaching ELLs. Melissa met their expectations simply by documenting ESOL strategies, which they did not look at. Some of her colleagues expressed negative attitudes toward ELLs and did not assume responsibility for their education, so Melissa did not consider them as resources.

Because some parents of ELLs did not become involved in their children's education, Melissa spent time trying to inform them of the expectations in American schools that parents ensure their children complete homework and attend conferences and other school functions. She believed that greater parental educational support would have positive effects on the achievement of ELLs in her classroom.

While the other teachers mentioned pressure from accountability measures, Melissa did not mention this as a constraint. In fact, she did not mention it at all. Perhaps it was because her focus had changed since she had left the classroom.

Future Plans

Melissa's career aspiration was to be an assistant principal within the next five years. She said, "I don't know if I want to be a principal." She stated that she "definitely does not want to be a district administrator" because she wanted "to be around kids." She found that she missed being with children at the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year when she assumed the ESOL coordinator position. Since then she has gotten to

know many of the students at the school who speak to her in the hallways and classrooms, which makes her feel content.

In summary, Melissa was a nurturing teacher who created a positive environment for ELLs in her classroom. She included ELLs that were pulled out for language arts into language arts activities in her classroom because of their desire to be members of the class. Melissa perceived teaching ELLs as being similar to teaching other students, saying “teaching is teaching.” In contradiction, she said that she provided differentiated instruction for ELLs based on their linguistic needs. She did not modify instruction for her more proficient ELLs unless she noticed that they were having difficulty with academic language. Melissa stated that she did not feel prepared to teach ELLs and learned about what she did not know when she took on the role of ESOL coordinator. However, she spoke of “naturally” providing comprehensible instruction to her ELLs prior to her becoming ESOL coordinator.

Individual Profile Summary

Individual profiles of each of the five participants in this study have been presented. To review, all of the participants in this study graduated from the ProTeach Program, considered themselves to be middle class, and had experience teaching elementary-aged ELLs in large districts in Florida that have high immigrant populations. Participants differs not only by ethnicity, proficiency in two languages, grades taught, and professional specialization but also by their schooling with four of the five attending private schools at least for part of their K-12 education.

Participants’ perceived teacher roles, responsibilities, challenges, demands, support, and constraints in teaching ELLs in elementary classrooms were re-presented, often through using the participants’ own words. Each participant was bounded in what

they did in their classrooms by their perceptions about what their ELLs' needed (usually based on their oral English proficiency levels), their sense of self-confidence in teaching ELLs, and district and school contexts. Findings across participants are presented next.

Cross-Profile Findings

Findings are reported using themes that emerged during data analysis to teacher's perceptions of their experiences teaching ELLs in their mainstream elementary classrooms. Table 4-6 below provides demographics for the four school districts where the participants taught.

Table 4-6. School district demographics

| School District | Total Population | ELL | U.S. Size Rank | Economically Disadvantaged |
|---|------------------|-------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Megan's District, Seaside County Public Schools | 256,186 | 9.9% | 6th | 47.82% |
| Lauren's District, Everglades County Public Schools | 344,913 | 15.2% | 4th | 63.42% |
| Christina's District, Forest County Public Schools | 172,028 | 19.4% | 10th | 48.55% |
| Julie's & Melissa's District, Oceanside County Public Schools | 170,745 | 10.2% | 12th | 44.13% |

As shown in the table, these districts rank in the top 12 largest districts in the United States.

Table 4-7 provides school and classroom contextual factors for each participant.

Table 4-7. School and classroom contexts

| Teacher | ESOL support | ELL levels in classroom | Language(s) in classroom |
|-------------------|--|-------------------------|---|
| Megan Barrett | None | All levels | Spanish by students |
| Julie O'Brien | ESOL teacher in class | All levels | Spanish by students; Limited Spanish by teacher |
| Lauren Perez-Cruz | None | Higher proficiency | English only |
| Christina Marino | None | Higher proficiency | English only |
| Melissa Solano | Pullout of lower proficiency for language arts | All levels | Some Spanish by teacher and students |

The order of presentation that follows is: (1) roles and responsibilities; (2) challenges and demands; (3) constraints and supports. Some data from one category overlaps to another. Embedded in the discussion for each topic is a comparison of the experiences and perceptions of Julie and Lauren, who specialized in ESOL, to those of other participants.

Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers in this study had certain roles that were imposed on them because they had ELLs in the classroom and others that they took on themselves. Three themes emerged from the data analysis of the five teachers' interviews and artifacts about their perceived roles and responsibilities. The roles identified were teacher as: (a) instructor, (b) secretary, and (c) nurturer. In the sections that follow, these roles and accompanying responsibilities are discussed and illustrated with examples and comments shared by the participants.

Instructor

These participants indicated that their primary role was to be a teacher to all of their students in their classrooms. A responsibility of this teacher role was to address the teaching and learning of ELLs in their classrooms. Four of the five teachers stated that they considered teaching ELLs to be the same as teaching other students because the strategies that had been identified as ESOL strategies in their college courses and on their ESOL strategy sheets that they referred to when documenting how they made instruction comprehensible to ELLs were strategies that they believed were good for all students. Participants indicated that they used the reported proficiency levels of ELLs, which had been provided to them by their ESOL coordinators at the beginning of the year as a guide in determining modifications. In addition, they used their own

observations of ELLs language use and performance on class assignments to determine their need for modifications.

Planning for instruction for ELLs

Not all teachers reflected about how to make instruction comprehensible and how to modify activities for ELLs during planning. None indicated they considered the cultural background or prior knowledge of ELLs. Both Lauren and Megan said that they did not think about their ELLs during planning. Both also believed that the strategies that are considered ESOL strategies are part of the repertoire that they normally used.

Megan said:

I know a lot of what I do benefits [ELLs]. I make up songs for math, and I know it helps them, and it also helps the other students....Like I'll do the graphs. I'll do the pictures. A lot of the things that are ESOL strategies I'll do helps everybody. So I just do it, so I don't really sit there and think.

For example, Lauren referred to using visuals and demonstrating her activity instructions as "just kindergarten in my opinion."

Though Christina and Melissa also believed that teaching ELLs was the same as teaching non-ELLs, they did make instructional decisions for ELLs during planning, though Melissa said that you would not see anything related to this in the lesson plans that she typed up.

Like Lauren, Christina had higher proficiency ELLs in her classroom but thought it was necessary to plan for them. Julie and Melissa had support and intensive ELLs in their classrooms. All teachers indicated that they planned and prepared more when they had lower proficiency ELLs. Megan spoke of asking for additional resources for her beginners, such as lower level books and a language master.

Both Julie and Melissa mentioned that you must know the proficiency levels of your ELLs. In fact, Melissa said that she started “with what their level was” when planning. Julie and Melissa also were aware that students that were proficient in social language need support with academic language. Julie said of her support students, “they’ve built-up a lot of that conversational language but their academics are still lacking.”

Though Melissa said that she used what she found out about students in the sharing activity at the beginning of the school year and Christina spoke about making connections to cultural backgrounds when a culture was mentioned in a lesson, no teacher considered culture when planning—neither affirming students’ cultures nor teaching them about American culture.

None of the teachers planned language objectives for their ELLs. They commented that their lesson plans are not the detailed plans that they had to write for ProTeach classes during their internships. Christina and Julie indicated that they did think about the language they would teach to ELLs. They, along with Melissa, shared that while they lacked putting details in their actual lesson plans, they automatically included certain strategies and modifications while carrying out instruction.

Providing instruction to ELLs

Teachers identified strategies that they routinely used for ELLs. They included the use of visuals, graphic organizers, repetition, demonstrations, modifying assignments, small groups, and one-to-one instruction. As mentioned previously, teachers found that more proficient students required little, if any, strategies and modifications while less proficient ELLs required more, including the use of supplemental resources such as lower level reading materials. Lauren, who had only support ELLs in her classroom,

mentioned that “if I had a self-contained classroom, I would have changed things a little bit. I would have used shorter phrases and repeated directions more.”

All teachers used small group and individual instruction. Christina usually groups students based on needs. Most of her ELLs were in her lowest language arts group. However, she also stated that “I have some ESOL students that are amazing and wonderful, and I work with them last, because I work from the lowest to the highest.” While she’s meeting with a small group of first graders, the other students are with either their learning buddies or learning groups. She commented:

What's surprising is that when you have an ELL and they're paired with someone who is dominant in the lesson or dominant in the language, they pick up so much quicker. It's really amazing to see how a peer buddy can be more beneficial to their language than a teacher can. It's like their little peer buddy is actually teaching them, and it's amazing how quickly they pick things up.

Megan, too, found that pairing her ELLs with a buddy has benefits—“I’m always pairing them up with a buddy. It’s really helpful for them!”

Both Julie and Megan shared that they felt justified to spend one-to-one time with ELLs. Julie said that “it’s usually those ESOL kids that I am really spending the most time with, because I know that they need that language.” Megan said that “because [a student is] ESOL I feel like I can [spend individual time] with her and help her understand.” Melissa and Christina both wished for additional time in their busy days to devote to ELLs.

While all teachers were aware of specific ESOL strategies and used them routinely believing that they were beneficial to all students, some thought the mere use of ESOL strategies met ELLs needs. For example, Megan said, “If I were to do a graphic organizer, I’d do it with the whole class hoping it would help the ELLs in some ways but

in different ways help the other students.” She did not differentiate the use of a graphic organizer among ELLs and other students. This is reminiscent of a comment made by Julie about how some teachers at her school believed simply using particular methods and strategies met ELL needs because workshop facilitators would make comments, such as this method “is a good way to get the ELLs up, reading, and build their confidence.”

Both Julie (who had specialized in ESOL) and Melissa spoke about the hows and whys of ESOL strategies. For example, Melissa talked of requiring lower proficiency ELLs to only learn four science terms instead of the 12 she required of other students, saying that the demand of knowing all of them would be just too great. She saw her strength as a teacher of ELLs was holding them to the same standards through her modifications. Julie lessened the writing for her intensive ELLs and gave them booklets to write in so that they would not be overwhelmed by a blank page and would be more successful writing a few sentences rather than a few paragraphs while receiving scaffolding from her.

Teachers varied with the use of Spanish in their classrooms. Christina said that teachers were not allowed to use Spanish at her school. Though she was fluent in Spanish and spoke to parents in the language, she did all instruction in English. Lauren was adamant that English was the only language in her classroom, telling students when she heard them talking in Spanish, “You need to practice your English. You have to!” Christina said she felt that school was often the only place for ELLs to have exposure to English and saw proficiency in English as required for success in school. Melissa said she used Spanish as a way to better instruction comprehension and to

make her beginner ELLs feel more comfortable. She spoke Spanish in the classroom though she thought at the time of the interview that it was a strategy that was unsupported by research. Both Megan and Julie sometimes grouped Spanish speakers together so that they could communicate in Spanish to aid in their understanding and expression.

All teachers felt responsible for the academic achievement of their ELLs. In addition, they knew they had the responsibility of developing their English. The emphasis on academics versus language development, however, differed from one teacher to another. For example, Julie, the ESOL specialist, focused on language as well as on language arts skills. Lauren, another ESOL specialist, believed that a natural part of kindergarten was the development of language and literacy skills. Megan let beginner ELLs use the language master to learn English vocabulary words. Melissa tended to teach English through academic content.

In addition to the role of instructor that teachers had for ELLs, they were also responsible for completing certain paperwork and documentation. Their role of secretary is discussed next.

Secretary

For the purpose of this study, the term “secretary” refers to someone who performs clerical work and maintains records in order to comply with bureaucratic requirements of accountability as set forth by the Florida Consent Decree (League of Nation, 1990) and by the local educational system. As with other special programs in schools, the ESOL Program in Florida involves much paperwork and documentation. For example, data elements have to be reported to FDOE for each ELL. The *Data Elements Handbook* is provided to districts to explain the various data elements. This

includes such elements as ESOL program eligibility date, entry date, exit date, test date, test scores, and test name. Each ELL also has to have an annual ELL plan that contains the student schedule, number of minutes in language arts, and other information. For any ELL Committee meetings, minutes are supposed to be kept of the proceedings and recommendations. In this section, the responsibilities that teachers do and do not have related to completing paperwork, documenting strategies, and providing home-school communication will be described.

Paperwork tasks

For all the teachers in this study except Christina, the completion of ELL-related paperwork, other than dating and signing forms they were provided with by their ESOL coordinator, was practically nonexistent. Melissa said, “We were just taken care of. We were told sign here. Date here....I would add a little extra data or couple of lines there, comments, but that would be it.”

In Florida, former ELLs who were exited from the program for less than two years have to be monitored periodically to ensure that they are achieving academically. The teachers in this study were rarely involved in this process. Julie assumed that the ESOL coordinator just pulled the grades from the computer. She recalled, “I know last year I had to send in a writing sample for them, but that was it. So whatever other documentation she’s doing, I don’t know.” Christina, who worked in another district, was responsible for the monitoring of her the former ELLs in her classroom.

Christina was the sole participant in the study that had to complete time-consuming paperwork (as well as being the only participant who had called and attended ELL Committee meetings about some of her ELLs and was familiar with the school’s required Parent Leadership Council for parents of ELLs). Her district required

that teachers of ELLs complete a ten-page checklist about each child's language arts standard mastery in addition to monitoring documents about former ELLs. She found this very time consuming and a reason that teachers did not want to have ELLs or teach self-contained ELL classes. What was most frustrating to her was that these forms were just stuck in the folders of ELLs and were rarely, if at all, examined.

ESOL strategy documentation

One task that all teachers completed was the documentation of ESOL strategies. Julie indicated that she really did not have to document since the ESOL teacher came to her language arts blocks that had ELLs and was technically responsible for doing this. However, the ESOL teacher was "weak" to the extent that Julie did all of the planning and told her what to do. Therefore, Julie felt responsible for documenting the strategies that she used with ELLs.

How teachers documented strategies varied from listing codes from a master strategy sheet daily in the plan book, like Megan, to completing a checklist every trimester for individual students, like Melissa. While some administrators checked this documentation, others did not. Megan said, "I know they want to see them, and I know that's more for legal purposes so nobody can [claim we aren't doing what we should]." Lauren said that her administrators did not check to make sure teachers documented strategies but "I keep myself checked."

Home-school communication

The teachers in this study routinely wrote newsletters and other communications to send home to parents. A Consent Decree (LEAGUE OF UNITED, 1990) requirement is that communication must be in the first language of the parents or guardians, whenever feasible. Feasibility is determined by the number of speakers of a specific

language in a school. For the schools in this study, a feasible language was Spanish. Therefore, teachers were required to send communications to Spanish-speaking parents or guardians in Spanish. To meet this mandate, schools provided translators for teachers who could not write in Spanish. Julie explained, “Our school requires that everything is sent home in English and Spanish, at least, so we have two language facilitators who we turn things in to. They’ll translate our newsletters and stuff for us.” This required that she had newsletters and other documents prepared in advance to allow time for them to be translated.

These findings dispel the myth that Lauren said some teachers believed at her school: “Some teachers think that [there’s a lot of paperwork]. In reality, “Everything’s done for us....[The ESOL chairpersons] do everything for us. There’s really no extra paperwork.” This statement applied to all teachers in this study—except Christina who had to complete the lengthy checklist for each ELL.

Nurturer

In this study, “nurturer” refers to someone who expresses compassion, interest, and guidance to students in order to create an environment that is conducive to sense of well-being, acceptance, and cognitive and affective development. Teachers in this study created positive environments in their classrooms and established positive relationships with their ELLs. They nurtured their ELLs by giving them individual attention and by holding positive dispositions.

Individual attention

All the teachers spoke of giving ELLs individual attention and some wished that they had had time to do it more. Lauren spoke of working with her only beginner when she taught second grade at the charter school during her first year of teaching. She

found working with her enjoyable and spent “more time than I thought I would” with her. According to Lauren, the student made rapid gains in her acquisition of English.

Positive dispositions

Teachers exhibited compassion and interest in ELLs. Both Megan and Julie perceived that their ELLs were their best behaved students. Christina spoke of how she enjoyed the stories that her ELLs told and of their excitement at sharing what they had done at home. Melissa said, “I can’t think of one in my head...that’s not willing to go above and beyond.” Megan was sympathetic to the circumstances of some ELLs. “I know it’s got to be really hard for some of them, and I can’t even imagine going to a new school, let alone a new country, learning a new language.” She said that her strength was “that I really just care for these children...and want them to succeed.”

In summary, the roles that the five participants undertook as teachers of ELLs were: (a) instructor, (b) secretary, and (c) nurturer. While these were roles that emerged from data across participants, how each role was carried out was affected by the perceptions of each teacher as well as contextual factors.

While two of the teachers (Julie and Lauren) had specialized in ESOL during ProTeach, their perceptions and beliefs regarding their roles and responsibilities were for the most part similar to the other teachers. An important distinction about Julie’s understanding about teaching ELLs was that they have needs based on their linguistic and cultural diversity, factors that should be taken into account when planning and implementing instruction.

The next section will discuss themes that emerged from teacher talk and other data sources about the challenges and demands participants experienced as teachers of ELLs.

Challenges and Demands

Teachers voiced both challenges and demands. Some of them overlap with role and responsibility themes and categories. While participants did not complain about some of their challenges and demands, their frustrations were apparent about others. The common themes that were identified during data analysis were: (a) parental support and involvement, (b) time, (c) educational mandates, and (d) meeting the needs of diverse learners. Each of these themes is discussed next.

Parental Support and Involvement

One of the biggest demands and challenges that teachers experienced was parental involvement and support in their children's education—or lack of it for Julie, Christina, and Melissa. Some parents did not help with homework. In addition, communication could be difficult between teacher and parent.

Melissa's experience was similar to that of Julie and Christina.

The only place where [ELLs] were getting English was at school, and then they would go home and would not get that extra support for homework—not even, 'Let me look at your homework.' Some came from countries where it wasn't the norm [to help at home] or schooling wasn't possible at times....I felt that I was teaching them alone. You would call and ask them and give them things to do but they didn't have the language.

Christina's frustration was apparent in her words and non-verbal communication when she said:

I went to the parents with issues and data that the child wasn't learning, and they still didn't understand.... It wasn't all of the parents. I had some high kids, and the parents were wonderful. I'd give out homework, and they'd do their homework. And some others would go home and not do anything, and I'd have to teach it all over again.

Julie understood about the lack of support and involvement of some of her ELL parents but still wished students had it.

For a lot of my ESOL students, their parents know that education is important and they enforce that... but for several different reasons maybe they're not necessarily actually able to support their students....A lot of my ESOL parents are working multiple jobs, so they're not even home with the kids, or they don't speak any English at all so helping with the English homework and writing in English, you know, they can't do that. Or they're not literate on their first language either.

Lauren said that her ELLs managed to get their homework done—"I don't know how"—and did not mention any problems she had with parents. However, she said that she did not want to be an ESOL teacher, giving as the reason, "It's the parents. I do speak Spanish but according to the other teachers, it's hard communicating with the parents." In addition, she wondered if some ELLs who had been in the bilingual prekindergarten were behind academically because their parents did not provide educational support at home. She said that she believed there was a correlation.

Although Megan, the only teacher at a non-Title 1 school, did not experience lack of parental involvement, she had to counsel ELL parents who were upset and concerned about the difficulties their children were having because of their lack of familiarity with English and the culture. Megan said,

"I'd like to help the parents. They're confused, I mean, I've had parents that have come crying to me because of what their kids say. [A parent will say,] 'She's trying so hard, and I just want her to do well.'...So I can see where they're at, where the parents are at, where the kids are at. If I can help them in any way I would love to help them."

Parental support and involvement posed challenges and demands for most of the teachers. Megan's issue was likely different from Melissa's, Julie's, and Christina's as her parents were typically well educated.

Time as an Obstacle

Although most participants indicated that teaching ELLs was the same as teaching other students, they contradicted themselves when they described modifications

specifically for them and mentioned that teaching and learning of ELLs took teacher time. Christina described herself as being “super busy,” in part, due to her having ELLs in her classroom. The categories of the time theme: (1) time spent planning and preparing for instruction; (2) time spent on instructional tasks; and (3) time spent for documentation and other paperwork.

The amount of time spent on planning and preparing for instruction specifically geared to ELL needs varied from teacher to teacher. For Lauren, the fact that she taught kindergarten was a factor. She said that the use of what are considered ESOL strategies were a routine part of her kindergarten instruction. However, when she had a beginner ELL when she taught second grade, she spent time gathering resources, such as lower level reading material. While Megan, who had only two ELLs who were at higher English proficiency levels the year of the interview said she did “think about ELLs” when planning, she recalled having “to pullout extra stuff for [beginners] daily” when she had lower proficiency ones in prior years. Julie, Christina, and Melissa all spent time planning for ELL instruction, considering proficiency levels. Christina, like Megan, had higher proficiency ELLs, but she still thought it necessary to plan for them. While all of the teachers put students into small groups, only Julie and Christina spoke of taking proficiency levels of their ELLs into consideration while spending time making decisions about the makeup of the groups.

Providing instruction to ELLs also took extra time. No teachers complained about this. Both Megan and Julie shared that they felt justified in doing so since these students had special needs. Melissa thought her weakness was that there “was not enough time to work with ELLs individually with so many in the class.” This was related

to there being a curriculum to be covered, which will be discussed in the educational mandates section that follows.

While bilingual paraprofessionals assisted students in the classroom and sometimes made copies for the teachers, they were under the supervision of the teachers. Teachers had to plan tasks for them to complete and communicate them to the paraprofessionals, which also took time.

For all but Christina, having ELLs did not mean having much extra paperwork. None of the teachers complained about the time that they spent on documenting ESOL strategies. They just had to sign, date, and perhaps write a few comments on forms that the schools' ESOL contacts provided them. In contrast, Christina had to complete a ten page checklist for each ELL by the end of the year. She indicated this was very time consuming. It was evident from her tone that she found this task frustrating—especially since the completed checklists just got stuck into ELLs' special folders.

Educational Mandates

Teachers felt the pressure of educational mandates from federal, state, district, and schools levels. All but Melissa, who was no longer teaching, and Lauren, whose kindergarteners were not assessed in the statewide assessment program, voiced the demands, challenges, and frustrations that they felt. For example, Christina said “the powers that be” had “unrealistic expectations” of ELLs. She voiced concerns that ELLs were being compared against native English speakers and that she was being compared with teachers who did not have ELLs.

Julie was forced to adhere to a defined scope and sequence and was observed to make sure that she was doing so. Having specialized in ESOL, she felt quite prepared to teach ELLs and knew that they could not be rushed to learn English or academic

content. They needed time to learn just as she needed time to teach. She said, “My principal is bilingual, she speaks Spanish and English, but I don’t really know that she understands what these students need to learn.” She continued in saying that “The only thing that my administrator has judged me by is the scores. If my scores aren’t good, you know? So what do I have to do to get their scores good?”

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners

The purpose of inclusion is to put students with diverse backgrounds and needs together in the same classroom. It is supposed to benefit ELLs because it gives them exposure to native English speakers and to the same academic content. Most of the teachers spoke of the demands of having students with so many different levels and backgrounds in the same classroom. For example, Julie perceived her struggle to be due to the demands of meeting the needs of 20 students with a wide range of proficiency and ability levels.

Megan believed that she did not always do—or know—enough to meet ELLs’ needs. “I try to do the best I can with what I have, [but] I don’t feel like I was reaching them [low proficiency ELLs from years past] the best that I could.” She would prefer that ELLs be placed in self-contained or pullout classes.

Both Lauren and Melissa thought that it would be better if ELLs at their grade levels had been placed in their classrooms rather than in self-contained or bilingual classrooms. However, Lauren only wanted a few ELLs. She said, “I think if I had two or three ESOL levels one and two [beginners], I could help them with their English. I could give them the strategies, and...they would pick up the language much easier.” Though she felt prepared to teach ELLs, she said, “The only hard thing is trying to teach ELLs and non-ELLs at the same time. It is a balancing act!”

In summary, having ELLs in the classroom put some extra challenges and demands on the teachers in this study. The challenges and demands that teachers spoke of were: (1) parental support and involvement; (2) time; (3) educational mandates; and (4) meeting the needs of diverse learners. Christina's shared the following sentiment, which is a good ending to this section: "The kids are never the problem. It's everything around them." The final section of findings is about supports and constraints the teachers had experienced.

Both the two participants (Julie and Lauren) who had specialized in ESOL during ProTeach identified the same challenges and demands as the others who had specialized in something else. A difference in Julie and Lauren was their self-efficacy about teaching ELLs.

Supports and Constraints

The teachers were asked directly about what they perceived to be supports in their teaching of ELLs in the mainstream as well as constraints. Themes and categories were identified in their responses to these questions as well as to other questions. Some of the themes and categories overlap the previous sections about roles and responsibilities and challenges and demands. The presentation will begin with the topic of supports.

Supports

Schools had some supports in place to alleviate the demands that having ELLs could potentially place on the teacher. These included the provision of ESOL coordinators and bilingual paraprofessionals.

ESOL coordinator

An important support that greatly reduced the amount of paperwork that the teachers potentially could have had was the provision of ESOL coordinators at the schools. These persons completed the required data elements and ELL plan for each child and maintained ELL folders. Teachers typically only had to sign and date documents. As Lauren indicated, “Everything’s done for us.”

Melissa realized that this came at a cost once she became an ESOL coordinator. “I knew nothing!” she exclaimed. Once she became aware of what she did not know regarding such things as ESOL entry, exit, and monitoring procedures as well as what English proficiency levels indicated about ELLs, she believed that she would have done a better job as a teacher. This led her to put together a folder of information for teachers at her school and be available to help some of them who felt frustrated at not knowing how to modify instruction.

Bilingual paraprofessionals

Another support that all teachers had (except for Julie during the year of the interview since she taught language arts and had an ESOL teacher come in) was bilingual paraprofessionals. This was a requirement of the Florida Consent Decree (1990). At some schools, the paraprofessional did not only help to make instruction comprehensible, they also served as translators.

Constraints

While the teachers were supported in some ways, they had a greater number of constraining factors. The data analysis identified the following as constraints in the participants teaching ELLs: (1) lack of time to plan and carry out instruction specifically

designed for ELLs; (2) unskilled colleagues; (3) limited parental educational support for some ELLs; and (4) lack of autonomy due to educational policies.

Time to meet ELLs' needs

Teachers spoke of time being a constraint to them. Some participants wished that they had additional time to spend with ELLs but felt pressured to cover the curriculum. Others did spend extra time with ELLs because they believed they were justified to do so based on the special needs of ELLs. While time to plan for and implement instruction did take up participants' time, none complained about it. Instead, they considered this as part of their jobs.

Unskilled colleagues

Potential resources were colleagues; however, the participants in this study described many of their colleagues as lacking in knowledge and skills as well as positive dispositions toward ELLs. Melissa said that she noticed a lot of her colleagues "did not take ownership of ELLs" because they considered the education of ELLs to be the ESOL teachers' responsibility. Some research lends credibility to her perception (e.g., Constantino, 1994; Harklau, 2000; Mohr, 2004; Penfield, 1987). Some participants mentioned that they had opportunities to talk about any issues and offer advice during team meetings and other times. However, as Megan pointed out, they were not experts in the field. They were only giving advice based on what had worked for them. Julie suggested that "maybe there was a lack of accountability" as a reason for other teachers not appropriately addressing the needs of ELLs. However, there was no accountability for the participants either as they had never been observed for the effectiveness of their instruction to ELLs. Some administrators did not even check to see if ESOL strategies were documented.

Limited parental support and involvement

As mentioned, parental support and involvement was seen by most participants as a major challenge—*the* major challenge for Melissa. The lack of parental support and the illiteracy of some parents were perceived as constraints in that participants believed that their ELLs were unable to achieve as they could have if their parents were engaged in their education. Participants realized that parents faced various barriers, such as lack of English proficiency and lack of transportation but still held the same expectations of them as middle-class parents.

Lack of autonomy due to educational policies

Most teachers expressed that their teaching was informed by educational policy. They had to follow specific curricula, teach students test-taking skills, administer practice, and actual statewide assessments. Following these requirements prevented participants from providing effective instruction to ELLs. For example, Julie did not have the option of spending additional time when ELLs did not understand concepts or have the English skills and vocabulary necessary to master standards. Thus, ELLs did not develop foundational skills that were required for future instruction and tasks. All but Melissa, who was no longer a mainstream classroom teacher at the time of the study, and Lauren, who taught kindergarteners and therefore did not participate in the statewide assessment, voiced the pressure they felt for their students to do well. They worried about the performance of their ELLs and geared their instruction toward the test. Megan, who taught at a school that served primarily students from middle- to upper-class families, expressed the least concern, realizing that her ELLs came from literate families. She had more autonomy and resources than the other teachers.

The number of constraints outweighed the number of supports. Constraining forces were the lack of time, knowledgeable and skilled colleagues, parental support and involvement by some parents, and lack of autonomy due to educational policies. Supports came in the form of people—ESOL coordinators and bilingual paraprofessionals. Julie and Lauren had the same constraints and supports as the other teachers who had not specialized in ESOL.

This section concludes the presentation of findings about the participants' experiences with the teaching and learning of ELLs in their mainstream elementary classrooms and their perceptions of those experiences. A summary of these are provided next.

Summary

Data across the five participants were explored about the teaching of ELLs in elementary classrooms located in large school districts. Themes and related categories were discussed about their roles and responsibilities, their challenges and demands, and their supports and constraints.

Three roles were identified. Participants served as: (1) instructors of ELLs; (2) secretaries who completed paperwork and documented ESOL strategies; and (3) nurturers who strived to create a positive class environment and to make ELLs for safe and comfortable. These roles applied to Julie and Lauren, who had specialized in ESOL, as well as the other teachers.

The teachers shared the following challenges and demands: (1) parental support and involvement; (2) time obstacles; (3) meeting educational mandates; and (4) meeting the needs of diverse learners. Julie and Lauren faced similar pressures as the other

teachers though especially Julie prepared to teach all ELLs, regardless of their English proficiency levels.

Two sources of support were identified as well as four factors that functioned as constraints to all of the teachers. The supports were: (1) ESOL coordinators who prepared paperwork and administered tests and (2) bilingual paraprofessionals who came to classrooms and assisted teachers. The constraints were: (1) inadequate time to plan and carry out instruction specifically designed for ELLs; (2) unskilled colleagues; (3) limited parental educational involvement and support for some ELLs; and (4) lack of autonomy due to educational policies. Julie and Lauren had the same constraints and supports as the other teachers who had not specialized in ESOL.

CHAPTER 5
FINDINGS: PREPARING TO TEACH ELLS

This chapter re-presents teachers' perceptions on their experiences learning to teach ELLs during their five year ESOL-infused teacher education program. It also examines similarities and differences in participants between those who specialized in ESOL during their teacher preparation and those who did not. Specifically, it addresses the following research questions:

- What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their preservice teacher education experiences to teach ELLs in general education settings?
 - a. What are teachers' perceptions about ESOL-related content and activities in their teacher education program?
 - b. What are teachers' perceptions about how their teacher education program could better address their actual experiences of teaching ELLs in elementary classrooms?
- How do the experiences and perceptions of teachers who specialized in ESOL during their ESOL-infused teacher education program compare to those teachers who specialized in other areas?

Table 5-1 below provides the years that teachers graduated from ProTeach and identifies their areas of specialization.

Table 5-1. Participant ProTeach data

| Name | Year of Graduation | Professional specialization |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Megan Barrett | 2005 | Children's literature |
| Julie O'Brien | 2006 | ESOL |
| Lauren Perez-Cruz | 2005 | ESOL |
| Christina Marino | 2002 | Integrated curriculum |
| Melissa Solano | 2003 | Literacy |

The five year, ESOL-infused Unified Elementary ProTeach Program at the UF provides its graduates with coursework that allows them to get ESOL credential upon successful completion. The ESOL-infused program in place requires that students complete one ESOL stand-alone course in their senior year and another in the fifth, master's year. ESOL standards should be infused into designated courses.

Christina was a member of the first two cohorts who graduated with her master's degree from the ESOL-infused ProTeach program in 2002. Melissa followed in August of 2003. Both Megan and Lauren graduated in 2005 while Julie is the most recent graduate participating in this study, having graduated in 2006. Both Lauren and Julie specialized in ESOL. Lauren admitted that she did so because she believed it would help her get a job in the school system in Miami since it has many ELLs. Julie specialized in ESOL because she found it both interesting and challenging as well as a calling for her future career. Although they both specialized in ESOL, neither Lauren nor Julie have been ESOL teachers and do not want to be as they prefer teaching in mainstream elementary classrooms.

A limitation of this chapter, as well as other chapters, was that recollections and perceptions are based on memories. Teachers had lapses in their reminiscences about ESOL-related ProTeach experiences. Megan admitted, "I honestly don't even remember a lot of it; like I can remember some of it but not too much. I don't remember a lot of what I did in college." She, like others, was anxious to graduate. While participants made good grades, some indicated that they put forth effort to actually learn what was taught.

What participants did recall and their perceptions of the utility of their teacher preparation to teach ELLs varied from individual to individual. During the interviews, each was asked about key experiences in their two required ESOL courses as well as specified courses in which ESOL standards were to be infused. In order to refresh their memories, asking them about specific tasks was resorted to. While some recalled activities after the prompts, they still could not remember exactly what the assignment entailed in some cases. Based on their lack of memory about some of these, it may be assumed that these assignments were not key experiences.

ESOL-Infused Courses

Christina was in the first graduating class who completed ESOL-infused courses. She considered herself and other cohort members as “guinea pigs.” They were also the first group to participate in the Unified ProTeach Program in which students had the opportunity to graduate with dual certificates in elementary education and special education along with meeting the requirements for their ESOL endorsement. Christina recalled the following about ESOL infusion in her classes:

In every one of our classes there was always, at least when I was going through, there was always a little piece of, ‘Okay this is what you can do with ESOL kids,’ or ‘Don’t forget that you can do this.’ And it was the same thing about the kids with learning problems.

Christina remembered that the syllabi from these classes specifically mentioned ESOL objectives and assignments, such as how a “lesson could be adjusted to help those students.”

Though the other teachers had graduated more recently than Christina, their recollections were not as strong. In fact, Lauren said that she did not remember anything! Melissa, who graduated a year later than Christina, said about ESOL

infusion in her classes, “I really don’t remember if [method course instructors] did or not. I don’t remember it being a big push.” Megan, who graduated in 2005, did not recall “teachers making [ESOL] connections,” or instructors “specifying this strategy would be good for ELLs.” In addition, she perceived, “The things that we learned could be applied to ESOL students because the strategies were the same.”

Julie’s recollections were similar to those of Melissa and Megan. They said that “teaching diverse learners” was a part of the curricula but did not recall content specific to teaching ELLs. I examined a few 2008 course syllabi that were available online and did not see ESOL standards included though reference was made to “students from diverse backgrounds.”

In summary, all participants, except Christina who was a student during the first year ESOL-infusion was implemented, did not recall content and activities specifically related to the teaching and learning of ELLs infused in their classes. My inspection of course syllabi substantiated their recollections. While some found objectives related to the teaching and learning of diverse learners to be relevant to ESOL learners, it was unknown if they thought this only because they were taking an ESOL stand-alone course at the same time, had taken one previously, or were using hindsight from completing one afterwards.

Next, teacher talk about their two stand-alone ESOL courses and their perspectives about the usefulness of some of the content and activities is presented.

ESOL Stand-Alone Courses

As noted previously, the two ESOL stand-alone courses were offered toward the end of the ProTeach program. Though most participants considered their ESOL stand-alone courses as helpful in them being able to teach ELLs, some contradicted

themselves by saying that they did not feel prepared to teach ELLs. For example, Megan said, “When I had my ESOL classes and we were working with ESOL children, that really opened my eyes... [They helped me] know what to do with them.” However, she said at a later point in an interview how she did not feel prepared and thought that beginner ELLs would be better served by the use of ESOL pullout or self-contained models.

Lauren stated, “I learned a lot of good strategies [in my ESOL classes] that I use with my class that weren’t really mentioned in my other classes” based on her contention that ESOL strategies are good for all students. She said that she felt prepared to teach ELLs yet expressed dissatisfaction at the initial placement of a non-English speaker into her class and contacted a friend to seek advice on how to teach her.

Some teachers wished that they had taken the ESOL classes more seriously in hindsight. For example, Christina stated, “I really don’t think I saw the point until now because now I have that strong theory foundation.” In addition, she commented:

I know my ESOL classes were the hardest classes I took... [My] other classes were challenging, too, and kind of flowed better, but I think that the ESOL classes challenged me. It was all like theory and theorists that kind of stick out in my mind and making posters and acting things out and doing the lessons and watching my classmates do the lessons....[I remember thinking,] ‘Maybe I can do something like this in the classroom.’

She recalled that her ESOL classes were taught by ESOL professors.

Melissa was an outlier in that she did not hold the ESOL stand-alone courses in high regard. After pointing out that she did not want to be negative and loved the ProTeach Program, she shared, “ESOL [courses] were not the best classes I took. I didn’t like them! I’m not sure why.” She wondered if the courses would have been

better if ESOL professors had actually taught the courses rather than teaching assistants. In addition, she did not like learning about theory and language structure but rather preferred application.

Participants were asked to recall key experiences in their ESOL stand-alone courses. Since participants had limited recollections of content and assignments on their own, they were prompted. Participants shared their perceptions about applied linguistics course content and about some of the required assignments, including field experiences, cultural self-reflections, lesson planning, and conversation exchanges with adult international students. Lauren and Julie, who had both specialized in ESOL, could not always recall what course content and activities were specific to the ESOL stand-alone courses and ESOL specialization courses. Therefore, they are not included as data sources for some of the topics presented subsequently.

Second Language Acquisition Theory

An important component of the ESOL stand-alone courses was theory as it served as a foundation for providing appropriate instruction for ELLs at their English proficiency levels. One topic that was discussed in both ESOL stand-alone classes was prevailing second language acquisition theory. Melissa said, "I hated it all when I was learning it!" However, she "practiced it without thinking of it as theory [because it was] the right thing to do." She said that she was notified of the proficiency levels of her ELLs when she was teaching but did not credit her ESOL coursework with any understanding she had. Interestingly, she said during the second interview that her lack of knowledge of applied linguistics was a weakness and that she would like to learn more about it.

Christina recalled that in ESOL stand-alone classes, instructors went "over and over and over" second language acquisition concepts and theories. Christina thought

that the theories she learned about and applied when doing assignments provided her with foundational knowledge to plan and implement effective instruction for ELLs. She said, “You have the theory so you understand why you are doing it.” Because of the repetition and application of second language acquisition content, she stated, “It’s kind of like embedded in how I think.” When her school administrator announced the decision to limit recess to one day a week, Christina argued, “No! Kids need that for their learning. They are picking up [social] language.” Her principal was not persuaded as she thought additional instruction time was more beneficial.

Megan said that she remembered learning about the stages of second language acquisition and found it had application in her teaching. She commented:

I think I remember that more because I’ve seen it with my students. I can see the different levels. I remember those...I’ve applied that on my own, like indentifying where they are at and see what they need. If they are in the silent period, [I] back off and not try and push them as much but still try and get them to the point where they are comfortable to talk.

Both Lauren and Julie both recalled learning about second language acquisition theory in the ESOL stand-alone courses as well as in the applied linguistics course they took as part of their ESOL specialization. Both have applied their related knowledge and skills as teachers and believe they have a thorough knowledge base.

To review, all participants, except Melissa, found second language theory to be foundational and have applied it to their teaching. It cannot be determined the extent that the ESOL stand-alone courses built a knowledge base for Lauren and Julie since they had completed an applied linguistic course, which provided more depth and breadth about this subject.

Field Experiences

Before sharing the participants' perceptions of their field experiences, background about the context of ESOL field placements is provided. Elementary ProTeach students were assigned ESOL field placements in middle school, high school, elementary school, and adult classes because of the low number of ELLs in elementary schools. Some ProTeach students travelled to adjacent districts that had ESOL infusion.

The Alachua County School District where UF is located uses a center school model in which ELLs are bused to schools at their grade levels that have ESOL teachers. At the elementary school, ESOL teachers pulled out ELLs for language arts instruction. At the middle and high school level center schools, lower proficiency ELLs went to language arts/ English through ESOL classrooms rather than being mainstreamed where teachers had ESOL credentials.

Some ELLs attended non-center schools since parents had the option of deciding whether their children attended a center school, a magnet school, or the school where they were zoned. Because of this, some ProTeach students were able to have field placements in mainstream elementary classrooms that had ELLs taught by teachers that were ESOL endorsed and known to be excellent teachers. While some of the ELLs were what Naranjo (2000) referred to as typical ELLs in that they were economically disadvantaged and were from low literacy backgrounds, many of the ELLs were atypical in that they were from higher income, professional families.

Lauren's "first experience in dealing with ESOL students" was "to go to a school and tutor an ESOL girl for one hour a week." She found the experience enjoyable. It made her aware of ESOL strategies and the linguistic needs of ELLs. She said that since she specialized in ESOL, she had many placements working with ELLs.

Julie not only did a field placement in an elementary ESOL pullout classroom, she also did her internship in one since she was specializing in ESOL. While she did not experience what it was like to teach ELLs in a heterogeneous setting, she did find that her field placements helped her gain expertise in teaching ELLs at different proficiency and grade levels under the direction of an experienced ESOL teacher. After teaching ELLs in South Florida, she realized that her internship experience was “so different,” as warned by her internship host teacher. The ELLs she taught there were typically economically disadvantaged and “did not have a language,” meaning they had little and were not provided educational support at home.

Megan had one placement in a high school ESOL class and another at an elementary ESOL pullout class. When asked if she found these experiences useful, she replied, “Not so much.” She perceived the pullout and high school contexts to be different from her actual teaching reality of ESOL inclusion. About the high school placement she commented, “It was different because they were older and more mature than what I deal with. But at the same time, you saw how they struggled, and you could feel how they felt, and I was really very sympathetic with these children.” Her awareness of their struggles was “the biggest thing [she] took from it.” She expressed several times in her second interview that she “felt bad” for ELLs.

Melissa stated that, while there were a lot of field experiences, including ESOL ones, during ProTeach, “I didn’t really get it until I was teaching [because there is not] someone watching, helping, or reviewing your lesson.” Her ESOL placement was at a high school. She recalled that it was for only 10 hours. While she was at first skeptical that it would be useful since it was at the secondary level, it turned out to be “a neat

experience for [her] actually.” She attributed this to her attitude of “when you teach, you teach.” To her, age and needs of students as well as the subject matter were irrelevant, believing she could teach anything to anyone.

Melissa found the ESOL classroom environment in her placement made students feel safe. She described it as “very comfortable,” because of the sofas, tables and lamps that were present. What she took from this experience was the desire to create a positive environment in her own classroom.

One of Christina’s field experiences was with adult ELLs and another was with elementary ELLs who were pulled out for language arts. Christina felt that, while the adults were older than the students she would be teaching, it was beneficial to observe the instruction of low proficiency ELLs by an experienced teacher. During her elementary placement, Christina found that she liked the pullout model because ELLs “were embedded in their old classrooms with the other kids and they could learn the language that way, but then the ESOL pullout class met their specific needs.” She was allowed to work with students in this placement, which provided her with hands-on experience. She valued seeing and experiencing the ESOL teaching of low proficiency students. After completing placements, she felt more prepared in the use of strategies for ELLs at different proficiency levels.

In summary, most participants found their time in field placements to be meaningful experiences. What they perceived to have gained from their placements varied from one participant to another. While Megan thought that her placement at a high school was not very relevant to her future teaching at the elementary level, Melissa and Christina found there was application to lower grade levels. Julie, Megan, and

Christina were placed in pullout ESOL classrooms at the elementary level. The perception of both Julie and Christina was that it was a useful experience though Julie found that the ELL population in this situation was less challenging to teach than the typical ELLs where she teaches due to their literacy and socioeconomic backgrounds. Megan found the pullout context was too dissimilar to a diverse mainstream elementary classroom that included ELLs of various proficiency levels.

Second Language Learning and Culture Self-Reflection

During their first ESOL stand-alone course, teachers wrote papers that addressed their experiences learning (or trying to learn) another language and their cultural background. Both Melissa and Lauren, who are Hispanic and learned both Spanish and English growing up, did not identify the assignment as a key experience. Melissa said that she “vaguely recalled this assignment [and that] it didn’t stand out.” Lauren did not remember it.

Megan remembered the assignment but was unsure if it served a purpose for her:

I remember that project, and I guess it kind of made me aware that I need to understand where the kids are coming from so I guess it was beneficial, but I don’t know. Maybe it’s because I didn’t feel like it was something that I needed to do, whereas others may have found that project more beneficial to them.

Julie and Christina were somewhat more positive about this assignment. For example, Christina (who is also bilingual and Hispanic) stated:

It’s not like I specifically think to that assignment, but I do think about that when I am teaching because I know how hard it was when I struggled to learn another language, so I can only imagine how hard it is for my ELLs....These children don’t have that option [to learn English or not], so I can sympathize with them a little bit more because of doing that.

This self-reflection assignment was not a key experience for the participants.

While examining one’s own background is supposed to be a first step in developing

cross-cultural awareness and understanding, the participants did not perceive it to be meaningful or relevant to their future teaching careers.

Lesson Planning

An assignment in the second ESOL stand-alone class was for ProTeach students to develop detailed lesson plans specifically targeted to ELLs that listed content, language, and metacognitive objectives. The plans were to also include responses to questions to indicate how they would use or build on existing background knowledge, make the instruction comprehensible, use cultural knowledge, use higher order questions appropriate for ELLs at different proficiency levels, and provide appropriate assessments. Christina's sentiments on this assignment were similar to the other participants in the study:

You know, the reason why they have all those questions is to make sure you know that when you're sitting down to plan a lesson, when you're writing it all down, or you're thinking about it in your head that you know what you have to include in every portion of the lesson. And like I don't write it down anymore, I just know and the reason why I know is because I spent so much time writing it and thinking about it and after a while it just becomes normal. And you have the theory so you understand why you are doing it.

In contrast, Megan said, "I mean back then I thought it was useful for me to understand, but I don't really apply it."

Teachers indicated that the lesson plans they had to write during college are dissimilar to the plans that they have written since they became teachers. Most of them filled out small blocks for each subject in lesson plan books that referenced the text pages and topics that they would be covering. Melissa differed in that she typed up general lesson plans but indicated that "there wasn't anything in my plans that actually said 'for ELLs'." She, like the other teachers, documented ESOL strategies that they

used. Melissa completed a checklist for each ELL every trimester while the other teachers either wrote down the strategies or used a code in their plan books to indicate the ESOL strategies that they used. While Lauren said that she did not actually plan specifically for ELLs in kindergarten due to her perspective that it was language-based and that she used ESOL strategies routinely, the other teachers indicated that they did plan and prepare for their ELLs, considering their proficiency levels and academic challenges.

None of the teachers explicitly identified language objectives for their ELLs though doing so was stressed in their ESOL stand-alone courses and lesson planning assignments required their inclusion. Megan and Lauren had ELLs with intermediate to advanced English proficiency and perceived them to be “doing fine.” Lauren pointed out that kindergarten is “so language based anyway.” Christina and Julie found that teaching language embedded in content was something that they automatically did. Christina attributed this automatization to her completing very detailed lesson plan assignments in her ESOL stand-alone courses.

Overall, participants found the lesson plan assignments to be beneficial and challenging, as it gave them experience planning for ELLs and reflecting on their plans. As Christina said about the ProTeach lesson planning experiences, “You can’t just be this amazing teacher if you don’t have the background, and you don’t think about things.”

Conversational Exchange with Adult International Students

As part of the first ESOL stand-alone course, ProTeach students had to meet with international students who were attending the English Language Institute to develop further English proficiency in hopes of being able to attend a university in the United

States. During the four meetings, ProTeach students were to engage in formal conversations that would enable them to write papers about the culture and language learning experiences of their partners.

The conversation exchange was not considered a key experience for most participants. Its benefit was that it allowed them to become aware of other cultures and the difficulties some people have in adjusting to another culture and learning another language. As Megan said, “It opened my eyes a little bit more to the different cultures out there and what they have to go through to come over to this country and learn things.”

Recommendations for the ESOL-Infused Program

Participants were asked to make recommendations for the ESOL-infused ProTeach Program at UF based on the realities of teaching ELLs they experienced. Participants saw the need for: (1) explicit ESOL content in infused courses; (2) additional content in ESOL stand-alone courses about legal requirements and procedures for educating ELLs in Florida schools; and (3) field experiences with ELLs in mainstream elementary classrooms. There was no overlap in suggestions across participants.

Better Infusion of ESOL Content in Courses

Four of the five participants did not recall that content in their courses was made explicit regarding the teaching and learning of ELLs. While they perceive some application of content related to teaching diverse learners as applicable to ELLs, they had to infer this.

Melissa suggested, “Clearly define ESOL components in the syllabus [of each method course].” She complained, “I came out with my endorsement but didn’t know about ESOL.”

Legalities and Procedures Related to ELLs

While Christina was more knowledgeable than other participants about ESOL identification and other procedures (other than Melissa after she became an ESOL coordinator in Fall of 2008), she wanted to know more. She said:

The one thing that I wish that they would have taught more of was the laws and what surrounds ESOL, but then again all of that is always changing, and you’re not really going to have a strong grasp on that unless you have those [ELL] kids all the time and really take the time to understand all the laws that govern what you can do in the classroom.

ESOL Field Placements in Mainstream Classroom with ELLs

ESOL field placements for ProTeach students have been limited due to the lack of availability of ELLs and the center schools model that Alachua County Schools implements in which many secondary ELLs take language arts/ English courses in sheltered (self-contained) classrooms and elementary students are pulled out for language arts instruction by specialized ESOL teachers. Some ESOL placements are in adult ESOL classes. While most participants saw some relevance of such placements outside the mainstream elementary setting in which they planned to teach, Christina, for one, argued:

I really, really think that the more experiences they can have with ESOL students, the better. And at different types of settings because [when I started teaching] I had some students in my class that didn’t speak any English... and it was up to me. I was like, ‘Oh, gosh! How am I going to manage my non-ESOL kids with my kids who don’t speak any English at all? How do I do that?’ It was kind of like I wasn’t prepared for that so that’s what I mean by having multiple opportunities so you don’t have this fake idea of how things are going to be once you get into the classroom.

Three of the teachers had no recommendations. Both Lauren and Julie considered themselves well prepared to teach ELLs upon graduation, but they had specialized in ESOL. Lauren said, "Since I took so many ESOL courses, I learned a lot about ELL's and had many experiences with ELL's that prepared me for my teaching." They both were sure that they would not have felt so prepared if they had not specialized in ESOL.

Megan perceived that what she neglected to take to the classroom after graduation was due to a fault within herself:

As a student I wasn't probably as focused as I should have been...I should have taken [what was taught in ESOL courses] and practiced it. I know at the time I was learning a lot at the time when I was involved in it. I really understood it. I just didn't bring a lot of it with me into my classroom, but that just could be how I am as a student.

Summary

This chapter included a description of common teacher perceptions across participants about their preparation to teach ELLs in an ESOL-infused teacher education program. The majority of participants identified the following three components of the two ESOL stand-alone courses as important and applicable to the settings in which they have taught: (1) second language acquisition theory and application; (2) ESOL field experiences; and (3) lesson planning specifically for ELLs at different proficiency levels.

Participants did not find two assignments as important: (1) second language acquisition/ cultural self-reflection; and (2) conversational exchanges with international adults attending the English Language Institute at UF.

When asked for recommendations to improve the ESOL-infused Proteach Program, only two participants had suggestions, which were not shared between them.

They mentioned suggestions including: (1) explicit ESOL content in infused courses; (2) additional content in ESOL stand-alone courses about legal requirements and procedures for educating ELLs in Florida schools; and (3) field experiences with ELLs in mainstream elementary classrooms to reflect the settings.

Neither Julie nor Lauren, who had specialized in ESOL, had any suggestions. Megan believed that she did not feel prepared because she did not take her teacher education as seriously as she could have, though she made good grades.

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION

One purpose of this study was to explore the teaching realities of five teacher graduates of an ESOL-infused teacher education program to portray the perceptions and lived experiences of mainstream elementary teachers whose students include ELLs. Another purpose was to discover participants' perceptions about the effectiveness of their ESOL-infused teacher education program, specifically, the five-year Unified Elementary ProTeach Program at UF. A third purpose was to compare the experiences and perceptions of the two teacher participants who had specialized in ESOL with those who had not. The research questions guiding the study were:

- What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their experiences with the teaching and learning of ELLs in mainstream classrooms?
 - 1a. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their roles and responsibilities related to the teaching and learning of ELLs?
 - 1b. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about the challenges and demands related to the teaching and learning of ELLs?
 - 1c. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about the supports and constraints related to the teaching and learning of ELLs?
- What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about their preservice teacher education experiences to teach ELLs in general education settings?
 - 2a. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' perceptions about ESOL-related content and activities in their teacher education program?
 - 2b. What are ESOL-prepared elementary teachers' recommendations for improvements to the ESOL-infused Unified Elementary ProTeach Program

based on their teaching experiences?

- How do the experiences and perceptions of ESOL-prepared elementary teachers who specialized in ESOL during their ESOL-infused teacher education program compare to those teachers who specialized in other fields?

The discussion of the results is presented according to the following topics: (1) summary of the findings, (2) theoretical implications of the findings, (3), summary of the contributions of this research; (4) limitations of the study; (5) implications for educators and teacher educators; and (6) recommendations for future research.

Summary of the Findings: Teaching ELLs

The data analysis of the second interview transcripts and secondary data sources yielded the following findings for research question one, specified above. The primary roles participants described that were specific to the teaching of ELLs were those of: (1) instructor; (2) secretary; and (3) nurturer. The challenges and demands associated with being teachers of ELLs identified by participants were: (1) lack of parental support and involvement; (2) time as an obstacle to meeting the needs of ELLs; (3) the requirements of educational mandates; and (4) meeting the needs of diverse learners in a single classroom. Participants were supported in carrying out their responsibilities by: (1) ESOL coordinators and (2) bilingual paraprofessionals. They were constrained by: (1) lack of time to plan and carry out instruction specifically designed for ELLs; (2) unskilled colleagues; (3) limited parental educational support for some ELLs; and (4) lack of autonomy.

The findings across subquestions for Research Question 1 overlapped to a great extent. Therefore, the following discussion integrates some of the findings in the discussion of salient themes that emerged overall. When conclusions cannot be drawn

based on data, alternative explanations are offered to interpret meaning of participants' words and actions.

Perceptions about Teaching ELLs

Teachers were well aware that they were responsible for the instruction of the ELLs in their classrooms. They perceived one of their responsibilities as being a nurturer by establishing environments that were conducive to the adjustment, language development, and academic achievement of ELLs. Another responsibility related to having ELLs as students was performing clerical duties, such as documenting ESOL strategies. While four of the five participants had little secretarial duties to complete for their ELLs, Christina had to complete extensive documentation due to requirements of her district. Participant roles and responsibilities were bounded by the participants' perceptions about: (1) themselves as teachers; (2) ESOL teachers, (3) educational policies; (4) parental responsibilities; (5) the similarities and differences in teaching ELLs and other students; and (6) the needs of ELLs. Perceptions of participants have been re-interpreted by the researcher in attempt to explain what it is like to be a teacher of ELLs in a mainstream elementary classroom and to find deeper meanings.

Perceptions of selves as teachers

All of the teacher participants in this study considered themselves to be first and foremost teachers of all students, including ELLs. Most of the secondary level mainstream teachers in the study by Song et al. (2010) also identified themselves as teachers of all of their students, and Yoon (2008) found that secondary age ELLs felt empowered and motivated when their teachers assumed this inclusive teaching identity. In the current study, the mainstream elementary teachers of ELLs perceived themselves as instructors who were primarily responsible for developing students' English language

proficiency and for addressing the state-mandated content learning standards. For example, Lauren only allowed the use of English in her classroom, believing that the use of Spanish, which was the first language of her ELLs and herself, was detrimental to learning English, which she perceived as needed for her kindergartners to master standards. Three of the participants stated that they did not feel prepared to meet the needs of lower proficiency ELLs, in particular. This finding also supports the conclusions of Song et al. (2010) and Reeves (2006) who found that teachers were frustrated by and reluctant to teach ELLs with very limited English. Among the participants in this study, Lauren, who had specialized in ESOL, said that she thought low proficiency ELLs would do better in her mainstream kindergarten classroom than in self-contained ESOL or bilingual classrooms but preferred that she have only two or three beginner-level ELLs due to the increased demands on her time associated with such placements. Megan believed that the needs of low proficiency ELLs could not be met in mainstream classrooms. She mentioned at several points in the interview that she wished her school would implement the ESOL pullout model or the ESOL self-contained model for the benefit of ELLs. She shared the frustration of her colleagues when trying to meet the needs of low proficiency ELLs, specifically noting the additional work required and the lack of self-confidence in addressing their needs. Her comments suggested that she would prefer not being solely responsible for the instruction of ELLs who had limited English proficiency.

Both Lauren and Julie could be considered ESOL experts based on their preservice program specialization in ESOL, yet they perceived that their teacher colleagues viewed them as young and inexperienced, and they were unaware if their

colleagues even knew about their preparation in ESOL. Of the five participants, four had never been approached by other teachers or school administrators to serve as an ESOL resource, nor had they voluntarily assumed this role in their schools.

Christina, however, did volunteer to administer the annual English proficiency test to first grade ELLs, and she reported that her colleagues did come to her for advice about teaching ELLs, perhaps because she had been an ESOL teacher at the school for two years. Melissa extended her ESOL knowledge only after assuming the role of ESOL coordinator in her school, admitting that she “knew nothing” before then.

All of the participants had earned the ESOL endorsement, while many of the teachers at their school had not, so school administrators often took advantage of this required teaching credential. Christina was assigned to teach a self-contained ESOL class at her school, and Julie was designated as the fourth grade language arts/ESOL inclusion teacher. She noted that this assignment was welcome news to some of her peers who did not want to teach ELLs themselves. Earning the ESOL endorsement as part of an ESOL-infused preservice teacher preparation program was perceived as a mixed blessing because even first-year teachers could be assigned to teach ELLs. Administrators may have rationalized decisions to assign novice teachers to classrooms with large numbers of at-risk ELLs by imagining that these ESOL-endorsed teachers’ understanding of second language teaching and learning would compensate for the handicapping effects of their inexperience. However, it is likely that many new teachers were assigned to classrooms with ELLs because veteran teachers at their schools were reluctant to take on the added responsibility (and the required ESOL professional development) associated with teaching

Perceptions of ESOL Teachers

Although Julie and Lauren had specialized in ESOL during their ProTeach preparation at UF, they, along with the other participants, who all had ESOL endorsements, did not view themselves as primarily or uniquely ESOL teachers. All participants identified an “ESOL teacher” as an educator who had only ELLs as students, such as in ESOL pull-out and ESOL self-contained classrooms, as reflected in Megan’s comments:

I teach ESOL students, but I don’t really think of myself as an ESOL teacher just because, I mean, I’m teaching fourth grade, and they’re learning, and I’m giving them strategies. I think of an ESOL teacher as a teacher... [who has] a classroom of ESOL students.

Megan does not provide an example of what the ESOL teacher might be teaching or what the students might be learning (though they might be fourth graders and the ESOL teacher might be teaching them to apply reading strategies--or any other learning objectives in the fourth grade curriculum). Instead, the ESOL teacher’s identity is defined by her association with the group of students in the hypothetical classroom, and their identity is assigned based on a single characteristic—their ESOL status. Megan refuses this close association with that student characteristic (ESOL) as part of her own identity, as do all of the teachers participating in this study.

Julie and Lauren had expertise in ESOL by virtue of their specialization in the ProTeach program and reported self-confidence in teaching ELLs. Although they believed that the designated ESOL teachers at their schools were not meeting the needs of ELLs, they were unmotivated to apply for ESOL teacher positions. For unclear reasons, Julie preferred being a mainstream teacher of ELLs though she was considering teaching English to children in other countries. Melissa indicated that she

felt unprepared to teach ELLs as a classroom teacher, yet she applied for the ESOL coordinator position at an elementary school because she had been advised that it could be a means of access to being hired as an assistant principal. After accepting the position, she became motivated to learn more about ESOL program requirements and effective teaching of ELLs in order to serve as an ESOL resource to teachers in her school.

Four participants explained why they and some of their colleagues did not hold the ESOL teacher position in high regard. For example, Christina, a bilingual speaker of English and Spanish, had been assigned as a first grade self-contained ESOL classroom teacher for two years without being asked if she wanted to assume this teaching position and asked to be placed in a mainstream first grade after what she referred to as two frustrating years. She believed she had been assigned to be an ESOL teacher because veteran teachers did not want the position, assuming correctly that ESOL teachers had additional administrative and documentation responsibilities and were required to complete up to 300 inservice-hours of professional development in ESOL if they did not already have an ESOL endorsement.

Lauren, who was fluent in Spanish and had specialized in ESOL in the hope that it would help her get a teaching position in her district, said that she did not want to be an ESOL teacher because ESOL teachers at her school had complained to her that they had difficulty in communicating with parents of ELLs, even though they were bilingual. She also recalled having to spend extra time preparing to teach an ELL who had no proficiency in English her first year of teaching. Lauren's comments infer that she did not want to expend time and effort with the challenges that she perceived the ESOL

teacher position held. The teacher participants in several studies (e.g., Franson, 1999; Penfield, 1987; Reeves, 2002; Youngs, 1999; and Walker et al., 2004) considered modifying instruction for ELLs to be a time-consuming burden, which resulted in them having negative attitudes toward ELLs, who they perceived to be the cause of their problems.

At Julie's and Melissa's schools, administrators reportedly assigned teachers who had experienced difficulty teaching in mainstream elementary classrooms as their schools' ESOL teachers. According to participants, administrators reassigned these low-performing teachers as ESOL teachers in the hope that they could improve their teaching skills by teaching in small groups of students or by observing mainstream teachers with ELLs included in their classrooms. Based on participants' accounts of administrators' actions, a number of assumptions are possible. One is that administrators did not believe that ELLs needed teachers who were skilled in teaching or who had expertise in ESOL. Another possibility is that those administrators did not perceive ESOL as a professional field in its own right and therefore believed that anyone could step into that position. Four of the five participants perceived that teaching ELLs was the same as teaching any other student; it is therefore reasonable to imagine that their school administrators might have had such a perspective. A third (more cynical) possibility is that those administrators felt that weak teachers could do the least harm teaching ESOL students. In any case, the example illustrates the relatively low status held by ESOL teachers and ESOL teaching within the larger school context.

The low status of ESOL teachers is likely linked to the status of their students. Because ESOL teachers are responsible for teaching a marginalized group, their social

status reflects this association. Unfortunately, anti-immigrant sentiment is frequently reported in the media. Many Americans are angered that money is spent on the education of immigrant children who are here illegally, though *Plyler v Doe* (1982) guarantees a free public education for all children. In addition, some Americans believe that American citizenship should not be conferred on immigrant children who are born in the United States.

In summary, participants viewed themselves as teachers of all students, including ELL students, but they did not consider themselves to be ESOL teachers even though they held ESOL credentials on their teaching certificates and taught ELLs in their classrooms. Participants' perceptions that ESOL teachers were held in low esteem in their schools were supported with accounts of administrators reassigning low performing mainstream teachers to ESOL teaching positions. Such assignments in effect disregarded Julie and Lauren's ESOL expertise and teaching credentials, and their colleagues' expressed desire to avoid an ESOL teaching assignment reinforced the undesirable status of ESOL instruction. Even Julie and Lauren, who had specialized in ESOL in their preservice program, did not wish to assume the role of ESOL expert in their schools.

Perceptions of educational policies

The goal of NCLB (2002) was to close the achievement gap between subgroups of students by holding districts, schools, and teachers accountable for holding all students to the same educational standards. The school districts that employed the participants were required to follow the requirements it set forth and adopted policies to implement research-supported practices in attempts to increase student achievement. How well each student performs on the statewide assessment impacts how a classroom

performs; how each classroom performs impacts how the school performs; how the school performs impacts how the district performs. Low performance over time results in the school being taken over by a governmental agency.

Teacher participants felt the force of educational policies in their classrooms. The policies determined what, when, and, in many cases, how these teachers taught. Interview data indicated that participants perceived educational policy as both a demand and constraint for participants. That is, what and how participants taught were influenced by educational mandates, such as prescribed curricula, writing objectives on the board, and adhering to scope and sequence. With the exception of Lauren, who taught kindergarten, and Melissa, who was no longer teaching, the other three participants complained about accountability pressures, and their frustration with the educational system was apparent. Julie especially expressed a sense of helplessness and resentment about having to keep her three language arts classes at the same place in the curricula and focusing on writing at the expense of reading since fourth graders were assessed on writing ability in fourth grade only in elementary schools. They were also assessed on reading so spending the majority of her 90-minute block on writing baffled her. In addition, she felt forced to go against her beliefs about how to effectively teach ELLs, yet she never voiced this to administrators, believing that she could not change the system. Julie, as well as three of the other participants, expressed their perceptions that curricular demands prevented them from having adequate time to provide individualized instruction to ELLs.

Most participants expressed concern that their ELLs would not score as high as their peers on statewide assessments because of their limited English proficiency.

Cobb (2004) reported that “teachers who possess high levels of efficacy, who use research-based instructional models and provide explicit strategy instruction, can make a difference with ELL students and close the achievement gaps” (p. 4).

Assessment results of a class can influence teacher evaluations as well as the achievement-based grade assigned to schools by the state. While participants did not express negative attitudes toward ELLs, they did worry ELLs would score lower on the statewide assessments, which could lower teacher evaluations. Since most participants did not provide modifications to support ELLs, thinking they were not in need, they may have inadvertently kept them from scoring higher on the tests had they focused on developing academic language and making instruction comprehensible. Christina found it unfair for schools to compare the student scores of teachers who had ELLs with the student scores of teachers who did not have ELLs or had more proficient ELLs. Though she was dissatisfied with this practice, she accepted that she had no control in changing it.

Based on comments from participants in this study in regard to educational policy, as well as other issues, none really took action on their beliefs. Fulton (cited in Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage, 2005) argued that teachers must have a strong sense of moral purpose and be aware of the change process so that they can support school reform. Megan spoke to her team about her perception that ELLs would be better served through self-contained or pullout models but was told by her team leader that that was not going to happen since the self-contained model was disbanded in previous years because parents of ELLs did not support it. Megan’s desired action of removing beginning ELLs from classrooms as well as Christina’s view that comparing

the class assessment scores of teachers of ELLs to those who were not teachers of ELLs was unfair can be interpreted to mean that these participants were concerned about themselves. For example, if ELLs were placed in self-contained classes, Megan would not have the challenge of teaching them. Although selfish motives can be hypothesized, no data supported this perspective. What can be concluded is that participants lacked a sense of agency. They stayed in their classrooms, following the rules. Research that investigated strategies to help teachers with passion to become change agents would be useful for ELLs as well as participants such as these who kept their frustration and resentment to themselves.

Perceptions about parental responsibilities

Participants perceived parental involvement and support for student learning as required for the school success of ELLs. In Megan's school, serving primarily middle- to upper middle-class children, parents of ELLs attended meetings and checked the completion of work assigned to their children, as did most of the parents. On the other hand, the parental expectations of participants who taught at Title 1 schools were not always met. Teacher participants at these schools pointed out that they used communication strategies such as providing written information in the family's first language and speaking to parents on the phone in Spanish, but still felt that parents did not understand how their children were performing or what they, as parents, were supposed to do.

Teacher participants in these high poverty schools recognized the barriers that some parents of ELLs might experience in becoming fully involved in their children's education. These included mismatches between the home and school cultures (Tinker, cited in Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008), the lack of educational experience, and

English proficiency, as well as ongoing practical challenges such as unreliable transportation and inflexible work schedules. However, even after multiple attempts to engage and support their participation, some parents remained uninvolved. Teacher participants expressed frustration through comments intended to place the burden of responsibility for students' school success (or failure) onto the parents. Assertions that some ELLs would have had higher grades if their parents had required them to do their homework reflected the middle-class values orientation of their expectations for parent involvement. Such comments also revealed a deficit perspective that "leads educators to view culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families as 'the problem' rather than to consider and remedy their own deficiencies in working with diverse populations" (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008, p. 8). Some educators have documented successful efforts to engage ELLs' parents' participation, first through education about the school culture and literacy education (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008).

Given their convictions regarding the importance of parental involvement, these teacher participants should continue their attempts to connect with, inform, and support parents of ELLs' through nontraditional approaches. However, they must first acknowledge that they too need to be open to learning, perhaps starting with an acceptance of different understandings and expectations of parent involvement.

Perceptions of similarities in teaching ELLs and other students

When asked directly if teaching ELLs was the same or different from teaching non-ELLs, Julie, who had specialized in ESOL, was the only participant who stated that there were differences. She said, "I think to be able to do it right for ESOL students, you have to have an understanding of their language needs...and you have to know the [heritage] language and...be able to compare [it with English]." Further, she argued that

it was necessary to “have any understanding of where they are in their levels and what they are able to produce.”

While the other four participants’ answer to the same question was that they thought teaching ELLs was the same, their descriptions of how they addressed ELL needs indicated that they did differentiate instruction for ELLs based on their perceived proficiency level. When participants contradicted themselves, the researcher would refer back to their perceptions that teaching ELLs is the same as teaching others, they repeated their position. For example, Melissa said, “Teaching is teaching.” Lauren commented, “I do the same things with my other students.” Christina explained that when she taught ESOL self-contained that she did the same things as in her mainstream first grade classroom.

Participants did find some differences in ELLs and other students. Megan, Melissa, and Lauren found their ELLs to put forth more effort to learn. Julie joined Megan perceiving that ELLs were better behaved than other students. These affective characteristics made the teachers enjoy teaching ELLs and want to spend time with them.

Perceptions of the needs of ELL

Participants perceived the needs of their ELLs primarily using the results of English oral/aural proficiency tests provided to the participants by ESOL coordinators. They used observations of language use and academic performance to supplement this data. Depending on the proficiency test that was administered, scores could be more reflective of social language proficiency rather than academic language proficiency needed for school. Social language, referred to as “playground talk” is language used in informal settings about familiar topics, such as family and interests, and is

contextualized and not cognitively demanding. ELLs who are exposed to and have opportunities to use English for social interaction will typically acquire social language proficiency within two to three years. Academic language, referred to as “school language,” is the technical, complex, and abstract language used in the classroom and for work. Often times, it is cognitively challenging and no contextual support is present. The development of academic language for an ELL takes much longer than social language development, on average between five and seven years, (Cummins, 1996). The distinction between social and academic language is emphasized as a core concept related to English language development in the ESOL stand-alone courses. All participants had successfully completed this course as part of the ProTeach Program, though they seemingly remembered neither the concept nor its relevance for their ELLs

Schrank, Fletcher, and Alvarado (1996) found that two English oral/aural proficiency tests, which are commonly used to determine eligibility to receive ESOL services in Florida, tended to measure more social language than academic language, causing them to have questionable validity as measures of the language needed for school. To complicate matters further, teachers might wrongly conclude that the display of verbosity in ELLs about familiar topics indicates their overall fluency. Therefore, the academic language limitations and needs of some ELLs might not be recognized.

Internal and external factors were in place that helped determine the teacher roles that participants assumed and the challenges they faced. The participants shared perceptions about themselves as teachers, about ESOL teachers, about educational policies, about the similarities and differences in teaching ELLs, and about the needs of ELLs. These were re-interpreted by the researcher in attempt to explain what it is like to

be a teacher of ELLs in a mainstream elementary classroom and to identify additional research that is needed. Next, the teacher role as a provider of instruction and support to ELLs is discussed.

Participant roles, challenges, supports, and constraints were bounded by the participants' perceptions about: (1) themselves as teachers; (2) ESOL teachers, (3) educational policies; (4) parental responsibilities; (5) the similarities and differences in teaching ELLs and other students; and (6) the needs of ELLs. A discussion related to their role as teacher of ELLs, which subsumes their roles of instructor, secretary, and nurturer, is provided next. This dialogue includes findings about challenges, supports, and constraints that participants have experienced.

Providing Instruction for ELLs

Participants in this study typically differentiated instruction for the ELLs based on the reported oral/aural English proficiency scores. Participants indicated that they had provided a nurturing environment in which ELLs felt safe and accepted. This section discusses: (1) modifications for less proficient ELLs; (2) the lack of modifications for more proficient ELLs; (3) the lack of use of language objectives; and (4) the neglect of integrating the culture of ELLs.

Modifications for less proficient ELLs

Although four of the five participants explicitly stated that teaching ELLs was the same as teaching other students, they contradicted themselves when they gave examples of how they made instruction comprehensible for ELLs with lower English proficiency. For example, Megan provided her beginner ELLs with a language master machine and cards with magnetic strips that contained pictures and names of items, which her ELLs inserted into the machine so they could hear and repeat the words.

Christina considered her ELLs' English proficiency levels as well as their first language background when grouping students. Lauren used a slower rate of speech and repetition when speaking to her ELLs. All of the teachers said they often used small-group instruction, realizing that peer interaction and support helped ELLs develop their English language skills and content knowledge.

Participants nurtured ELLs by giving them one-on-one instruction, showing interest in them personally, and including them in class activities despite their limited English proficiency. Krashen (1981) argued comprehensible input is necessary for second language acquisition and that a positive classroom environment fosters it. Two participants mentioned their amazement at how many of their beginners developed English skills quickly.

Lack of modifications for more proficient ELLs

Of those four participants who insisted that teaching ELLs was the same as teaching other students and yet modified their instruction for ELLs with more limited English, ability, three commented that students who had been classified as "support ELLs" required little, if any, differentiated instruction or English language development. (The "support ELL" designation was based on these ELLs' advanced performance on an English proficiency test of listening/speaking skills.) These teachers risked mistakenly inferring advanced levels of academic English proficiency for ELLs based on their fluent social (and oral) communication skills in English. They did not acknowledge the difference in language demands for ELLs in school settings, nor did they seem to be aware of typical patterns of second language development. For example, ELLs who take advantage of opportunities to use English for social interaction typically acquire the ability to use English socially within two to three years. However, it takes much longer,

on average between five and seven years or longer, for ELLs to develop proficiency in using English for academic purposes (Cummins, 1996).

Therefore, the English language needs of some ELLs may not be accurately identified, depending on perceptions of what English language ability entails and on the accuracy of the assessment tool used to measure it. Schrank, Fletcher, and Alvarado (1996) found that two tests commonly used to determine ELLs' eligibility for ESOL services tended to measure social language rather than the academic language skills needed for school success. Participants did not seem to realize that the apparent fluency of their "support ELLs" may have been based on samples of (oral) communication about familiar topics for social purposes. Although the distinction between social and academic language is emphasized as a core concept related to English language development in the ESOL stand-alone courses that all participants took, they seemed to remember neither the concept nor its relevance for their ELLs.

Similarly, although the development and use of language objectives in lesson planning had been emphasized and practiced in participants' ProTeach ESOL coursework, none of the five teacher participants in this study reported setting language objectives for the ELLs in their classrooms. The identification of language objectives is considered to be an effective instructional practice to facilitate ELLs' social and academic language development in English (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008 Harper & de Jong, 2004; Gibbons, 2002; Hruska & Clancy, 2005; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Language objectives can be developed to target vocabulary, social and academic communication functions, grammatical category, and language structures in the four skills areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. An example of a language

objective for speaking or writing is, “Students will identify the relative location of two or more places on a map using prepositional phrases such as “to the south of,” “along the river,” and “in the center.” Informal and formal assessment methods can be used to determine if an ELL has achieved a language objective.

Short and Fitzsimmons (2007) reported that the creation and assessment of language objectives resulted in academic language development for ELLs. Teachers who do not teach to language objectives may miss valuable opportunities to promote their ELLs’ English language proficiency. Three of the participants stated that while they did not create language objectives prior to teaching, they did point out language during instruction. Further, they claimed that the extensive practice of generating language objectives for required ESOL lesson plans in their second ESOL stand-alone course had developed their ability to automatically target language objectives during instruction.

Lauren believed that the kindergarten curriculum was sufficiently language based. It was unnecessary for her to specify separate language objectives for her ELLs. In addition, Lauren perceived that the ELLs in her classroom did not need additional language development activities because they had scored at intermediate or advanced levels of oral/aural English proficiency and, thus, were similar to her other kindergartners in terms of their English language development. Future research that includes observations of graduates teaching ELLs could provide data to confirm or call into question whether teachers explicitly focus on language learning objectives related to content area instruction. Classroom-based assessments could also help to determine whether ELLs are learning English in these mainstream content classrooms.

The neglect of ELLs' cultural background

In reflecting on their roles and responsibilities in teaching ELLs, none of the five participants mentioned the need to consider the cultural backgrounds of ELLs. However, scholars in the areas of ESOL and culturally responsive pedagogy (e.g., Bartolomé, 1994; Gay, 2000; Harper & de Jong, 2004; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007; Villegas & Lucas, 2000) have argued that instruction should build upon and be sensitive to the cultures of students, viewing students' ways of learning, and using language and knowledge gained from prior experiences as assets rather than deficits. Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (2001) reported the benefits of teachers learning about and incorporating students' *funds of knowledge*, which refer "to the historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (p. 133), into instruction.

Based on conversations with participants, the inclusion of ELLs' cultures in their classrooms was limited to practices such as mentioning that a story being read in class was set in the home country of an ELL, and organizing a cultural event in which students wore ethnic clothing and brought traditional foods to school from their home cultures. Such isolated activities clearly do not meet current standards for culturally responsive pedagogy. Yet in the ESOL stand-alone courses, incorporating ELLs' cultures in instruction and developing ELLs' awareness of U.S. cultural norms were addressed. Teacher candidates built and incorporated ELLs' background knowledge and cultural experiences into their lesson plan assignments. Research on preservice teachers' understandings of teacher knowledge and skills identified cultural competence as one of the most salient and significant aspects of effective teaching for ELLs (de Jong & Harper, in press).

One possible explanation of why the three Hispanic participants did not integrate students' cultures into their curriculum was because they shared a similar heritage with their ELLs who were also Hispanic. However, Hispanics come from many countries with different ethnic influences and cultural norms. Another more likely explanation is that designing instruction around students' cultural experiences takes time; the curriculum is already crowded, and teachers' schedules are hectic. Although student-centered learning is addressed in the preservice teacher preparation program as a principle of effective curriculum design and instruction for diverse learners, including ELLs, in reality standards-based academic content areas (e.g., math, science) and basic literacy (particularly reading) skills drive the curriculum in all but the earliest grades. Nevertheless, further research into participants' considerations and efforts in incorporating their culturally diverse students' backgrounds in their mainstream classroom instruction would help to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

ESOL resources

A teacher depends on others in the school to fulfill her roles and responsibilities. The potential workload of the participants in this study was reduced because their districts provided ESOL coordinators at their schools to administer language assessments to ELLs and to complete ESOL-related paperwork. All three of the participants who indicated that they did not feel fully prepared to teach ELLs had ESOL coordinators at their schools, but the teachers did not seek those ESOL resource personnel out for assistance. Because Melissa had previously served as an ESOL coordinator herself, admitting that she "knew nothing" when she began, she realized that ESOL expertise was not a requirement for this position, and she knew that this new ESOL coordinator was no expert in teaching ELLs. At Lauren's school, two classroom

teachers shared the ESOL coordinator position. They were knowledgeable about procedures related to the ESOL program, but they were not ESOL experts either.

Although the ESOL coordinators shouldered much of the administrative load associated with ELL assessment and record keeping, they did not serve in a professional development, curriculum resource, or coaching capacity for mainstream teachers of ELLs. Research by Edstam et al. (2007) found that teacher effectiveness was enhanced when ESOL experts were available to collaborate with teachers. If the ESOL coordinators had been more knowledgeable about ELL issues and more experienced in teaching ELLs, and if both they and the teacher participants had been motivated to work collaboratively, their potential for improving teaching and learning for ELLs throughout their schools could have been significantly expanded.

This section discussed findings related to teaching ELLs. Specifically, it discussed: (1) modifications for less proficient ELLs; (2) the lack of modifications for more proficient ELLs; (3) the lack of use of language objectives; (4) the neglect of integrating the culture of ELLs; and (5) ESOL resources. What participants described were informed by their perceptions discussed in the previous section.

In conclusion, findings suggest that the responsibility of teaching ELLs falls within the role of teacher, which is how they identified themselves. They did not consider themselves as ESOL teachers, considering an ESOL teacher as a teacher who teaches only ELLs, and did not want to become one. Their lack of identity as an ESOL teacher may be influenced by the low status of ESOL teachers that derives from such factors as the marginalized population they serve, the extra demands on time to plan instruction, and the assignment of ineffective teachers to ESOL teacher positions in the past. As a

teacher of ELLs, participants provided instruction based the perceived constraints of educational policies and lack of parental contribution to their children's education. In addition, instruction was informed about participants' views of teaching ELLs being similar to and different from teaching other students as well as their perceptions of the modifications and support ELLs of different English proficiency levels need. The interview data provided by participants may not be indicative of their actual classroom practices. Observations of them in their teaching contexts would likely affect findings and conclusions.

ESOL Specialists and Non-Specialists

Research Question 3 was interested in differences and similarities between participants who had specialized in ESOL and those who had not. An important finding is that the ESOL specialists in this study felt prepared to teach ELLs while other participants expressed lack of confidence. Overall, however, ESOL specialists were more similar than dissimilar to the other participants who did not specialize in ESOL. All participants identified themselves as teachers and did not consider themselves ESOL teachers. All but one (who had become an ESOL coordinator and had not specialized in ESOL) felt demands on their time and constraints on their autonomy by federal and local educational policies. Other commonalities were that participants perceived the needs of ELLs primarily based on their oral proficiency in English and devoted more time and effort to modifying instruction for ELLs with lower English proficiency. In addition, both ESOL specialists and those who had not specialized in ESOL did not designate language objectives or integrate the culture of ELLs into instruction. None of the participants served as advocates of ELLs. Finally, all of the participants expressed positive dispositions toward ELLs with most perceiving ELLs to have more positive

behavioral characteristics than other students. One participant (Julie), who had specialized in ESOL, was the sole participant who perceived that ELLs have unique needs that require specialized ESOL instruction.

These findings suggest that teachers who have specialized in ESOL do not necessarily have the desire to exclusively teach ELLs or advocate on their behalf. Neither does it ensure that they will apply effective practices, such as identifying language objectives and making connections to culture, anymore than those who have not specialized in ESOL. In addition, ESOL specialists conform to school culture like other teachers. One of the participants who specialized in ESOL recognized that ESOL was a specialized field. The other participant who had specialized in ESOL might have perceived the teaching of ELLs as different from teaching non-ELLs if she taught a higher grade level than kindergarten and more than one ELL with low English proficiency during her tenure as a teacher.

Summary of Findings: Learning to Teach ELLs

The infused ESOL component of the Unified Elementary ProTeach Program required two ESOL stand-alone courses and also infuse ESOL Teaching Standards into existing required courses so that graduates would be considered prepared to teach ELLs. All of the participants had successfully completed the ESOL-infused ProTeach Program. They were asked to provide their perceptions about the two ESOL stand-alone courses and the ESOL-infused courses, based on their experiences as teachers of ELLs in elementary classrooms. In addition, they were asked to make recommendations about ways that teacher education programs could better address the realities of today's inclusive elementary classrooms. These findings, which are discussed next, are based on the participants' recollections of courses that they took

from three to seven years ago. Some participants had difficulty remembering exactly what occurred. In addition, perceptions of events are based on an individual's reality and may not reflect actual events.

ESOL-Infused Courses

Christina was a member of one of the first two cohorts to enroll in ESOL-infused courses. She recalled that the courses had ESOL-specific objectives, content, and assignments. The other four participants, however, did not recall objectives, content, and assignments specific to teaching ELLs as components of these courses when they were enrolled in them. They did recall that they learned about teaching minorities and learners from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. However, instruction about teaching diverse learners, in general, does not necessarily promote the development of knowledge and skills that are essential in addressing the unique linguistic and cultural needs of ELLs (Cummins, 2001; de Jong & Harper, 2005).

Participants stated that they were able to see some applications of methods to teach economically disadvantaged and minority students to the teaching of ELLs. It is unknown if their perceived transfer of knowledge about teaching academic content to diverse learners to teaching it to ELLs was a result of participants taking ESOL stand-alone courses or if the lack of information about teaching content to ELLs in other courses influenced the perception that teaching ELLs was the same as teaching other learners. Future research is needed to examine the effects of coursework that focuses on the teaching for diversity on perceptions and the development of knowledge and skills about teaching ELLs.

ESOL Stand-Alone Courses

Students enrolled in the ESOL-infused ProTeach Program are required to take two ESOL stand-alone courses. One course is taken in their senior year and the second course is taken during their master's (fifth) year. Participants were asked to recall key experiences from the two ESOL stand-alone courses they had successfully completed through the lens of their actual experiences of teaching ELLs in elementary classrooms. It was necessary to prompt participants about the content and activities in these courses because of their difficulty in recalling content and tasks. Participants identified the following as applicable to their teaching of ELL: (1) second language acquisition content and related assignments; (2) classroom-based field experiences; and (3) lesson planning. They did not consider self-reflections about their cultural identity and their second language learning experiences or their conversations with adult international students enrolled at UF to have been relevant to their teaching of ELLs in elementary classrooms.

Second language acquisition content and application

Participants reported that they used their knowledge of the stages of language acquisition to differentiate instruction for ELLs based on their English proficiency levels. Four of the participants, including the two who had specialized in ESOL, found the theories of Krashen and Cummins to be foundational to their application of effective instruction of ELLs. They perceived ELLs who had scored at higher levels of English proficiency on district-adopted oral/aural English proficiency assessments, which may be measures of social language proficiency rather than academic language proficiency, as similar in English language development to their native English peers. As a result, they seldom provided modifications.

Field experiences

Participants spoke of a disparity between their preservice field experiences and their actual experiences teaching ELLs in mainstream elementary classrooms. Their field placements were in adult ESOL classes, secondary language arts/English through ESOL classrooms, or elementary ESOL pullout classrooms. Most saw some application of teaching ELLs from these placement settings to their teaching contexts. For example, supervising teachers in their placements modified instruction based on the English proficiency levels of their students. Whether they would have had more beneficial experiences in mainstream elementary classrooms with ELLs is unknown since none had experienced this setting.

Two participants mentioned the difference between the literate ELLs they encountered during those placements and the less economically advantaged, low literacy students they had in their own classrooms. None made reference to the variety of how ethnicities and first languages of ELLs in field placements differed from the primarily Hispanic, Spanish-speaking ELLs that they teach. One participant perceived that she had been misled by her field experiences, thinking that ESOL pullout was a model implemented by all schools. Based on the participants' comments, students in the ESOL-infused teacher education program should be provided with the opportunities to experience field placements in settings similar to those in which they will teach. If this is not possible, video cases or requirements for students to visit mainstream elementary classrooms in the districts where they hope to teach could expose students to contexts that they are likely to encounter when teaching.

Lesson planning for ELLs

The second ESOL standalone course required participant teachers to write multiple comprehensive lesson plans that specified language objectives, instructional and assessment modifications, grouping patterns, and other accommodations for ELLs at different proficiency levels. These assignments were intended to develop teacher expertise in addressing the linguistic and cultural needs of ELLs while developing their academic language and content knowledge. However, participants noted that once they became teachers, they were not required to write in-depth plans or target the teaching and learning of ELLs. Most teachers completed a block for each subject area they taught daily in their lesson plan books, listing page numbers, objective phrases, standards, and/or other information. The use of ESOL strategies, such as providing visuals, demonstrations, and hands-on cooperative learning experiences, was documented in a manner determined by the teacher, such as writing codes in plan book blocks daily or completing an ESOL strategy checklist for each ELL every trimester.

Participants perceived that the lesson planning assignments they had to complete in their ESOL practicum course were beneficial in that they provided extensive practice in adapting lessons specifically for ELLs at various proficiency levels. Some participants indicated that those planning tasks had made them so adept at identifying language to target in instruction in their own classroom, and so aware of various ESOL strategies (an awareness that was reinforced by the requirement for teachers to document the names of strategies that they used) that they did not have to spend additional time planning for the instruction of ELLs. That is, they perceived that they did not have to consider what instruction was appropriate because they already knew.

However, based on interview data and examination of the lesson plans they provided, as teachers, none of the participants reported creating explicit language objectives or integrating the culture of ELLs into instruction as they had practiced doing in their courses. In addition, most participants perceived that ELLs who had more advanced English proficiency did not need instructional modifications or instruction targeted to their language proficiency level though participants stated that they perceived the lesson planning assignments to be useful in preparing them to teach ELLs, four of the five participants insisted that teaching ELLs was the same as teaching other students. This contradiction calls for research that includes observations of ProTeach graduates as they plan to teach and teach ELLs to determine what understandings and skills were actually applied in their classrooms.

Self-reflection

One assignment that participants did not consider relevant to their experience teaching ELLs in elementary classrooms was the second language acquisition/cultural self-reflection paper. Most thought that the self-reflection was not something they needed to do because they already had awareness of their own cultures and experiences learning, or attempting to learn, foreign languages. Their stance is contradicted by ESOL scholars (e.g., Moll & Arnot-Hoppfer, 2005; Villegas & Lucas, 2002b) who argue that one's own culture needs to be personally examined to uncover one's own worldviews that might be tacit. It is through this self-awareness that one can understand the cultural similarities and differences of others.

Participants may have perceived their reflections about their foreign language learning to be unrelated to their teaching experience because they were not dependent on the foreign language they were studying for social or academic purposes. In English

language environments in which the demand to learn another language is often related to college entry requirements. On the other hand, ELLs have to learn English to participate in school and society, which is something that these teacher participants have not experienced.

Conversational exchange

While Moll and Arnot-Hopfer (2005) stated that interactions between linguistically and culturally individuals are useful in creating awareness and understanding of linguistic and cultural diversity, four of the participants perceived the assigned conversational exchange with adult international students as just a task that had to be completed. It is possible that participants experienced discomfort in trying to establish rapport and communicate with individuals who had limited English proficiency or they resented the time their meetings and follow-up papers took. Although participants had been preparing for positions teaching elementary learners, this assignment involved meeting with adults. Participants may have perceived the experience differently with children, or if they had realized that they would be responsible for communicating with ELLs' parents or guardians who may also be limited English speakers.

Recommendations

Only three recommendations were made to improve their preparation to teach ELLs in elementary classrooms: (1) add ESOL-specific objectives into ESOL-infused courses; (2) include more information about legalities and procedures to provide teachers background about ESOL Program guidelines in ESOL courses; and (3) provide field experiences in mainstream elementary classrooms with ELLs. Each suggestion was only mentioned by one individual; therefore, there was no consensus. The lack of recommendations especially by participants who felt unprepared to teach

ELLs was surprising. An explanation is that they did not know what they needed to know. Melissa pointed out that she did not realize the knowledge and skills she lacked until she became ESOL coordinator, and this awareness motivated her to become more knowledgeable.

In conclusion, participants perceived some content and activities in their ESOL-related coursework to be more useful than other. Specifically, they found practical application of second language acquisition and other theories to lesson planning as beneficial, believing it instilled foundational knowledge and skills in planning instruction for ELLs. They did not value cultural-related tasks, including self-reflections about their own cultures as well as sharing cultural knowledge in conversation with adult international students. It is interesting that participants did not integrate the culture of students in their classroom and did not find assignments that addressed cultural differences in coursework as helpful in them teaching ELLs.

Perceptions of Participants Who Specialized in ESOL

Because Lauren and Julie specialized in ESOL, they took three additional ESOL courses, which added depth and breadth to their preparation. Assignments, such as lesson planning for ELLs and field placements in classes with ELLs, occurred in the ESOL specialization courses as well as in the ESOL-infused program. Both participants stated that their teacher preparation to teach ELLs in the ProTeach Program, including their specialization coursework, had adequately prepared them to teach ELLs in the mainstream. They expressed stronger self-efficacy in teaching ELLs than the other three participants who had not specialized in ESOL. However, Lauren spoke of her initial dread when a beginning level ELL was placed in her second grade classroom, and she sought advice from a teacher friend on what strategies to use. Explanations for

the contradiction of Lauren's statement that she felt prepared to teach ELLs and her statement that she asked a friend for advice about teaching her first ELL is that she did not want to admit that she did not take away from her ESOL specialization coursework the knowledge and skills that she needed or that she simply needed to talk to a valued colleague to gain confidence in teaching an ELL with no proficiency in English for the first time. Lauren shared that her pragmatic motivation to specialize in ESOL was based on the belief that it would help her get a job. She may have lacked the passion and commitment to learn all that was being taught about teaching ELLs. For example, Lauren said that she would only want two or three ELLs who needed intensive ESOL support as members of her class, voicing her concern about the difficulty in meeting the needs of a heterogeneous group of students with a range of English proficiency and academic achievement levels.

Julie, on the other hand, always had low to high English proficiency ELLs in her classroom and felt equipped to teach them. The dispositions she expressed toward ELLs were always positive; her frustrations derived from other sources, such as the departmentalization of instruction at her school as well as strict adherence to requirements to scope and sequence, which she believed did not meet the needs of her ELLs. She expressed commitment to teaching ELLs because she perceived them to need her as a teacher more than other students. She also acknowledged that she had had economic and educational advantages as a child. Julie's comments portrayed her as being altruistic in nature and motivated to teach ELLs who needed her help.

Perceptions of Participants Who Did Not Specialize in ESOL

The three participants who did not specialize in ESOL earned good grades in their two ESOL stand-alone courses as well as their ESOL-infused courses. However, all

stated that they did not feel prepared to teach ELLs upon graduation. Christina said that she did not realize her need for learning to teach ELLs until after she began teaching the classroom and realized that her placement experiences were different from the setting in which she taught. However, Megan blamed herself for not truly learning what she was taught and had practiced. Rather, she said that her goal had been to “get done.”

Wing and Warne (1998) summarized literature that gives insight into the behavior of these participants. They reported that education students “may form a collective student culture which often centers on a practical focus of just ‘getting through’ the program, or surviving college, instead of around the ideals of the profession (p.3).

Although these participants were physically present in ESOL-related courses and successfully completed coursework and assignments, they likely followed some of these collective student culture guidelines for program participation.

A theoretical premise of the ProTeach Program is that students are co-constructors of knowledge rather than empty vessels to be filled by teachers. Many of the instructors model the non-traditional practices, such as group work, student presentations, and discussions, to help create engagement and interaction so that students can construct knowledge and be exposed to what are considered effective practices, which they should use when they are teachers. . Three of the participants acknowledged that they did not feel prepared when they began teaching. One attributed it to her not realizing the value of the content prior to actually teaching ELLs, another to her wanting to graduate, and the third to her perception that theory has little application to teaching. More research is needed to better understand why some students lack motivation to learn about the teaching of ELLs and what can be done to create their interest and engagement.

Theoretical Implications of the Findings

The conceptual frameworks for this study were teacher socialization and teacher perceptions. The view of teacher socialization that was adopted was the interpretative, dialectical perspective. For the purpose of this study, teacher socialization was defined as the process in which socio-political factors, teacher education programs, and schools as institutions, interact with individuals' values and beliefs in order to shape them to become participating, competent members of the teaching profession (Achinstein et al., 2004; Brown & Borko, 2006). This view concurs with the position of Bolster (1983) who argued that in educational research, "People must be considered as both the creators and the products of the social situations in which they live" (p. 303).

The frameworks of teacher socialization and teacher perceptions are intertwined in that the belief systems in which perceptions are derived are shaped through the process of socialization. Perceptions are a reflection of what individuals believe to be true; they may not be based on the reality perceived by others or on facts (Barker et al., 2002). Hence, each person constructs their own reality based on their background and unique contextual factors, resulting in the possibility of multiple perspectives about similar experiences.

The next section discusses the findings of this study through the lenses of teacher socialization and teacher perception theory. The discussion will follow the model of Brown and Borko (2006) and include the areas of (1) life history; (2) learning to teach ELLs; and (3) teaching ELLs.

Life History

The teacher is considered to be a domain that interacts with other variables to influence teacher socialization (Aichenstein et al., 2004), and includes characteristics such as family background, education, and socioeconomic status. The participants in this study had experiences as children, college students, and teachers that have shaped their perceptions. Table 3-1 presented teacher characteristics. Participants' were influenced by their ethnicity, K-12 educational experiences, socio-economic status, exposure to other cultures, college education, and other factors. All of the participants were from middle class backgrounds. Christina, Lauren, and Melissa were Hispanic, Megan had Cuban and Greek heritages but considered herself to be White, and Julie was White. The Hispanic participants were fluent in both English and Spanish but consider English their dominant language. Megan and Julie are monolingual English speakers. All participants except Julie attended private religious schools for at least some of their K-12 education and the language of instruction was in English except for Christina who attended a bilingual school in Venezuela for one year. The participants' teachers were predominately White, middle-class females. Lauren classmates were Hispanic like her. Megan and Julie attended schools with majority White populations. Melissa and Christina attended private Catholic elementary schools in the North with diverse populations; however, their secondary schools were predominately White. Christina is the only participant who has travelled extensively.

Four of the five participants in this study had always wanted to be teachers. Of these, two had mothers who were teachers and one had a mother who was an administrative assistant at her school. Julie, Lauren, Megan, and Christina remembered

playing school with siblings as children. They likely unconsciously practiced the teaching approaches that their own teachers had used just as this researcher's daughter did. Lortie (1975) concluded that, due to the hours and years they spend in schools under the tutelage of teachers, children are, in effect, teaching apprentices. From their observations and experiences with teachers, children develop a strong sense about teaching based on the instructional approaches and teacher dispositions they have been exposed to.

—Only one of the participants in this study attended public schools from kindergarten to graduation, and these were located in the affluent area in which she lived. The other participants attended private parochial schools. . A similarity of the schools attended by participants was that the schools were considered to be high performing schools, which was important to their parents. All of the parents were involved in the participants' education, and the participants were successful students, which allowed them to be accepted at UF.

The school contexts that participants had experienced as students were much different than the settings in which they were situated as teachers. Four of the five participants worked in Title 1 schools that had diverse populations, yet none of the participants recalled having ELLs as classmates. Therefore, they lacked exposure to ELLs as learners and to the instructional practices that addressed the backgrounds and needs of ELLs.

Most participants indicated that they would like to teach at schools that had high parental involvement, like the schools they had attended as students. Participants' perspectives about parental involvement likely evolved from the engagement of their

own parents and of their classmates' parents. They may have observed their own parents' participation and equated this involvement as interest in the education of their children.

Learning to Teach

All participants selected to attend UF, one of the largest public universities in the United States. One participant said she chose to go there because "it is the best school in Florida." The university has a highly selective admittance policy, which promotes a sense of status and success for those who are lucky enough to be admitted. While the population at UF is predominately White, several students are from other backgrounds, including some international students. The university actively seeks future faculty and students for diverse backgrounds.

The ProTeach Program in the College of Education has a good reputation. It is one of the few five-year teacher education program that results in a Master's of Education degree and requires that students designate an academic specialization and take 12-semester hours of coursework in that field. Starting in 2002, ProTeach adopted an ESOL-infusing model that allowed preservice teachers to graduate with eligibility to obtain their ESOL endorsement in addition to elementary or other areas of certification. The participants of this study graduated from ProTeach from 2002 to 2006. Since there is individual variation between instructors, course content and course activities likely were not identical for all participants.

The findings about their teacher preparation were based on participants recollections from a few to several years ago; therefore, their perceptions of what occurred may not concur with actual events. The experiences of the two participants who specialized in ESOL during ProTeach had more exposure to ESOL-related content

and ELLs. The life experiences and teaching experiences of all participants since graduation have certainly influenced how they perceive the education and other experiences in retrospect.

Participants who had specialized in ESOL perceived that ProTeach had prepared them to teach ELLs, while the other three felt a lack of confidence in teaching ELLs.. Their feelings of being unprepared may have resulted from participants not actively engaging in their ESOL-related coursework as those who had specialized in ESOL because the latter group had instrumental interests in doing so. Julie felt a passion for teaching ELLs and Lauren hoped it would help her get a job.

Wing and Warne (1999) concluded after reviewing teacher socialization research on the influence of teacher education programs: “The consensus seems to be that most programs exert little influence on the socialization of prospective teachers” (p. 7). They reported findings by Book, Byers, and Freeman that preservice teachers questioned the usefulness of methods and foundations courses even before enrolling in them and after completing them, students rated their impact as low. Some of the participants in this study likely held similar perspectives. They spoke of not knowing the utility of what they were taught in the ESOL courses until after they started teaching and were responsible for meeting the needs of this population of students.

In this study, participants had few different recommendations about how the ESOL-infused teacher preparation that they had all experienced could be improved. The differences in their perceptions about the relevance of what they had been taught about teaching to their actual experience teaching ELLs were dependent on the educational contexts in which they were situated and on their perceptions about the

needs of ELLs. A conclusion cannot be drawn about the source of the four participants' perception that teaching ELLs is the same as teaching others. Stand-alone ESOL courses had the goal that though the same strategies might be used with all learners, why and how they were used with ELLs was different due to their unique linguistic and cultural needs. Research is needed to explore the sources of the "just good teaching" perception and what can be done to create greater awareness and understanding so that teachers can address the unique needs of ELLs.

Teaching ELLs

In their review of teacher socialization literature, Brown and Borko (2006) found consistency in findings that new teachers assimilated to the teaching culture of their schools. In this age of educational policy aimed at creating teacher accountability, teachers feel pressure to adopt the instructional approaches mandated by their districts (Grossman et al. 2002). Achinstein and Ogawa (2006) found that when some of the new teachers in their study resisted prescriptive educational policies, they suffered negative consequences, such as losing their jobs.

In this study, participants felt the force of institutional socialization in the mandate to implement instructional practices that were determined by "the powers that be," as Christina referred to those who create educational policy. The teachers who worked at Title 1 schools expressed feeling more pressure than the participant who worked at a school in an affluent residential area. Achinstein et al. (2004) found in their study that teachers who worked at Title 1 schools had more accountability pressures than those who did not.

Participants simply followed the policies that were mandated though they felt frustrated by them. For example, Julie chose to go along with the scope and sequence

requirements that her district insisted upon though she saw this as being incompatible with effective teaching practices of ELLs. Participants did not perceive themselves to be change agents or advocates of ELLs, believing their voices would not be heard, and, therefore, chose not to assume these roles.

In conclusion, the participants' journeys of becoming and being teachers were influenced by their own educational experiences as children, including their parents' involvement in their education. Along the way, they developed beliefs about teaching that they brought to their teacher education program and later to their teaching. As students in the ProTeach Program, some participants adhered to a collective student culture that emphasized getting through the program rather than learning from it. Some participants did not realize the practicality of what they were taught about teaching ELLs until they actually experienced teaching them in their own classrooms. When they entered the teaching profession, they were immediately faced with the pressure of accountability measures and conformed to the demands of educational policies even when they did not perceive them to be in the best interest of ELLs. Further research is needed to explore why some teachers of ELLs choose to remain silent and hide their frustration from administrators. In addition, researchers should implement course content in teacher education programs that aims to increase the awareness of preservice teachers about the process to promote change in educational settings (Fulton cited in Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage, 2005) and determine if it causes participants to perceive themselves as change agents and actively participate in creating reform that better meets the needs of ELLs.

Summary of the Contributions of This Research

This research addressed a gap in the literature by examining ESOL-prepared teachers' perceptions about teaching and learning to teach ELLs in mainstream elementary classrooms. Participants were graduates of an ESOL-infused teacher education program. Prior research had not included participants with this background. The findings can help district and school administrators and teacher educators better understand what it is like to be a teacher who is responsible for the instruction of ELLs within the context of a mainstream classroom and learn to address the linguistic and cultural needs of ELLs in such a setting.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to five teacher participants in large school districts who had graduated from the five-year, ESOL-infused Unified Elementary ProTeach Program at UF. Each had taught in elementary classrooms ELLs. Descriptions of participants and their teaching contexts were detailed to facilitate transferability to similar participants and settings; however, generalizations are limited because the research explored the individual experiences and perceptions of each participant who were situated in specific settings.

In-depth interviews were the primary data source for this study. Interviews, along with other forms of communication, have potential shortcomings. The resulting data reflect "interview-situated" stories, perspectives, and meanings. The quality of data was dependent on participants' abilities to understand what is being asked and to articulate their experiences, perspectives, and interpretations of events. Participants may have the desire to be politically correct (Wiggins & Follo cited in Hollins & Guzman, 2005) or withhold information due to embarrassment or the desire to be viewed as effective. In

addition, participants may be uncomfortable with the interviewer, or the interviewer might be uncomfortable with the participants.

The researcher attempted to be an active listener and refrain from leading the conversation in the direction of personal biases. It was useful to recall Bakhtin's (1975/1981) warning:

Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated—overpopulated—with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process (p. 294).

Given that meaning is created between two interlocutors (Bakhtin, 1981), meaning was influenced by the interaction between each participant and the researcher (Seidman, 2006).

The researcher had some previous knowledge of one of the participants who she had taught in an ESOL stand-alone course. This prior relationship may have influenced the participant's responses. The researcher also had previous knowledge of the two ESOL stand-alone courses, having taught each several times. Researcher biases included those as a former elementary ESOL teacher, a former district ESOL specialist, an inservice and preservice ESOL teacher educator, and a graduate student specializing in ESOL. In addition, biases also included those associated with a white, middle class female. While the researcher reflected on biases that came to mind during data collection and data analysis, the re-interpretation of participant data, findings, and conclusions were influenced by the background, beliefs, and identity of the researcher.

Implications of the Study

District- and School-Based

This study examined the realities of teaching ELLs in mainstream classrooms from the perspectives of teachers who were graduates of an ESOL-infused education program. Though all teachers who participated in the study had the professional credential to teach ELLs, not all felt prepared to do so. Participants reported that many of their teacher colleagues had similar feelings. An implication of this is to provide inservice ESOL support to teachers, such as offering professional development opportunities facilitated by ESOL experts. While the schools had designated ESOL coordinators and ESOL teachers, they were typically perceived as lacking in expertise in teaching ELLs, which suggests that individuals who are assigned to such positions may not be formally qualified. Therefore, administrators should hire personnel who have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to the teaching and learning of ELLs so that ESOL coordinators and ESOL teachers can serve as mentors and instructional resources to teachers of ELLs.

Two of the participants had completed an ESOL specialization in the ProTeach Program. Administrators should be aware of the strengths and expertise that teachers such as these bring to schools and use their knowledge and skills to benefit colleagues and ELLs. Such teachers could serve as coaches or as advisors and mentors to other teachers.

Administrators should find ways to become knowledgeable themselves about the teaching and learning of ELLs and serve as advocates for them. Administrators may be able to exercise greater power to create change in educational policies that do not consider the needs of ELLs. With administrators assuming such a proactive role,

teachers at their schools may develop more positive dispositions toward ELLs and assume personal responsibility for the learning of ELLs at all English proficiency levels.

Teacher Education Programs

In order for future teachers to be prepared to teach ELLs, objectives, content, and activities that specifically address the teaching and learning of ELLs must be incorporated into teacher education courses. Four of the five participants did not recall the explicit infusion of ESOL standards into courses that were identified as ESOL-infused. Lack of visibility of ESL issues within the program could be due to oversight by instructors of ESOL-infused courses, their lack of understanding that teaching ELLs is different from teaching other learners, or their lack of ESOL expertise. An action plan should be developed to ensure that ESOL-infused courses and are, indeed, infused with ESOL content. In addition, instructors must be knowledgeable about teaching ELLs in order to teach preservice teachers how to do so.

Most of the participants in this study held the misconception that teaching ELLs is the same as teaching other students. As a possible result, they neglected to create language objectives for ELLs or to build on the cultural backgrounds of ELLs. In addition, they did not perceive more fluent ELLs as needing support, ignoring the possibility that these students may not have the needed academic language proficiency necessary for school success. ESOL stand-alone and ESOL-infused course faculty should implement instruction that addresses the unique linguistic and cultural needs of ELLs and show students how to differentiate language and content instruction based on these needs.

Faculty should also be aware of the reality of classrooms today. While foundational theory and best practices for ELLs are taught in ProTeach courses, they

may be in opposition to the mandates of educational policies and other school contexts which affect the practice of graduates once they begin teaching. Preservice teachers need to learn how to operate within the educational system while being active in promoting change that would benefit the education of ELLs.

Recommendations for Future Studies

The following recommendations are made for future studies based on findings and conclusions of this research. Future research should include observations of the actual classroom practices of graduates of ESOL-infused teacher education programs in order to explore participants' application of ESOL-related learning from the teacher education program to the classroom and to understand why and how teacher graduates do or do not create and teach to language objectives, build ELLs' academic language, and integrate ELLs' cultural experiences into instruction. In addition, future research is needed to provide insight into whether teachers' perceptions of their teaching ELLs match their actual practices in teaching ELLs. Future research is also recommended to examine why teachers adhere to the perspective that teaching ELLs is the same as teaching all other students, even after they have successfully completed coursework that emphasized the distinct linguistic and cultural needs of ELLs. Finally, research is needed to understand why some of the participants in this study were not cognitively engaged in their ESOL courses and explore ways to enhance student engagement, to provide opportunities for students to be in classroom contexts similar to those where they plan to teach, and improve relevance of coursework.

APPENDIX A
LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

To: University of Florida ProTeach Graduates

From Sandra J. Hancock, M.Ed.

Re: UF ProTeach Graduates' Perceptions of and Experiences with Teaching English Language Learners in Inclusive Elementary Classrooms

Dear UF ProTeach Grad:

I am a former elementary teacher and am currently a Doctoral Candidate at UF. I would like to invite you participate in my dissertation research! As a graduate of ProTeach, you were qualified to obtain your ESOL endorsement along with your elementary certification upon graduation since you completed two stand-alone ESOL courses and ESOL-infused methods courses. Little research exists about teachers who were prepared for English language learners (ELLs) through ESOL-infusion. In addition, research is lacking about teachers' perceptions of and experiences with teaching ELLs in regular elementary classrooms. My study seeks to help fill this gap.

Please share your reality of teaching ELLs—your roles, challenges, and successes—and your perspectives on your ProTeach preparation. The study protocol requires that participants provide personal and professional background information and participate in two 60 to 90 minute interviews that will be scheduled at a location convenient to you (or by phone). The participants' names will remain confidential.

If you would like to participate in this study and provide this valuable feedback regarding your formal college preparation for teaching English language learners in regular, inclusive classroom settings and let teacher educators know what it's really like in the trenches, please contact me by email, phone, fax, or mail.

I have attached a copy of the initial questionnaire to this letter. If you want to participate you can either fill it out using the .pdf form and return it to me via email, fax, or mail, or we can do it together during a telephone call and discuss the study further.

I appreciate your consideration and look forward to hearing from you.



Sincerely,

Sandra J. Hancock, M.Ed.
Principal Investigator

Email: shm@ufl.edu
4005 SW 26th Drive, Unit D
Gainesville, FL 32608
352.374.2282 (home)
352.514.5249 (cell)
352.466.0657 (fax)

University of Florida
School of Teaching &
Learning
2423 Norman Hall
P.O. Box 117048
Gainesville, FL 32611

APPENDIX B
TEACHER INFORMATION FORM

TEACHER INFORMATION FORM

To participate in this study you must:

- Be a graduate of the ESOL-infused Elementary ProTeach Program at UF
- Have completed a minimum of two years of teaching experience with English language learners (ELLs) in your grade 2-5 inclusive classroom
- Currently have ELLs enrolled in your elementary classroom
- Be willing to provide personal and professional background information and meet for three 60- to 90-minute interviews at a time and location that is convenient for you (phone interviews can be arranged, if desired).
- Share artifacts, such as lesson plans, materials, and your philosophy of teaching you prepared during your ProTeach Program.

Please provide the following information to let me know of your interest in participating in my study. You can call me at 352-374-2282 or 352-514-5249 (cell) if you would like me to take down your information. I look forward to talking to you about your experiences and perspectives.

Email: shm@ufl.edu or SandraJHancock@gmail.com

FAX: 352-466-0657

Mail: Sandra Hancock, 4005 SW 26th Drive, Unit D, Gainesville, FL 32608

Name: _____ **Address:** _____ **Telephone Number(s):** _____

Email Address: _____ **Semester/Year graduated from UF ProTeach Program:** _____

Professional Specialization(s) at UF (e.g., reading, children’s literature, ESOL, etc.): _____ **Date began teaching:** _____

Teaching Experience with English Language Learners

| School Year | School Name | District | Grade | Number of ELLs Assigned | Proficiency levels of ELLs assigned (beginner, intermediate, and/or advanced) | Are you responsible for teaching ELLs all subjects? | Type of ESOL Support Available (e.g., School ESOL Resource Teacher) |
|-------------|-------------|----------|-------|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| 2007-2008 | | | | | | | |
| 2006-2007 | | | | | | | |
| 2005-2006 | | | | | | | |
| 2004-2005 | | | | | | | |

Please add additional teaching experience, if applicable.

APPENDIX C
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent

Protocol Title: ESOL-INFUSION GRADUATES' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT TEACHING AND
LEARNING TO TEACH ELLS IN ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS

**** Please read this consent document carefully before you decide to participate in this study. ****

Purpose of the research study: The purpose of this qualitative exploratory and descriptive dissertation study is to give voice to graduates of an ESOL-infused teacher education program in order to understand, from their perspectives, the nature of being an elementary teacher of ELLs in a general education, inclusive classroom setting and their perceptions about their ESOL-infused teacher preparation

What you will be asked to do in the study:

1. To be interviewed individually by me three times between August 2008 and December 2008. The interviews will last approximately 60-90 minutes each. You will be provided with the interview protocol prior to the day's interview. Interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed by a paid transcriber and/or me. You do not have to answer any question(s) you do not wish to answer. At the beginning of each interview, you will be asked to provide a member check, that is, to confirm the accuracy of my interpretation of what you stated and to provide clarification and elaboration, as needed.
2. To participate in informal communication, via email, face-to-face, or by telephone, as needed, throughout the study period, in order to ask/respond to questions, provide clarification, and/or provide additional information.
3. To provide, if available, your philosophy of teaching paper that was prepared as part of your portfolio while enrolled in the ProTeach Program.
4. To provide copies of your teaching schedules, sample lesson plan book pages, sample ESOL strategy documentation sheets, and other related documents you are willing to share.
5. To ensure that your experiences and perceptions have been accurately and fully captured, you will be provided with all interview transcripts to review. During this member check, you can recommend deletions and insertions as well as provide clarification or elaboration, as desired.
6. To participate in a group focus group session via the Internet, the telephone, or in-person, as desired, for approximately 60 minutes to obtain group consensus about perceptions of experiences

Time required: 5-8 hours

Risks and Benefits: I do not anticipate any risks to you during this study. In addition, I do not anticipate that you will benefit directly by participating in this study though you might feel a sense of satisfaction for contributing to a needed literature on this topic as well as for providing important feedback about your teacher education program.

Compensation: No financial compensation will be provided for your participation. However, you will receive a gift certificate in the amount of \$25 to show my appreciation for you contributing to this important research.

Confidentiality: Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. You will be given a pseudonym. The list connecting your name to this pseudonym along with audio tapes of the interviews will be kept in a locked file in my office. When the study is completed and the data have been analyzed, the list and tapes will be destroyed. Your name will not be used in any report, article, and/or presentation that results from this study.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating.

Right to withdraw from the study: You have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime without consequence.

Whom to contact if you have questions about the study:

Sandra Hancock (352.374.2282 [home], 352.514.5249 [cell], or shm@ufl.edu [email])
4005 SW 26th Drive, Unit D, Gainesville, FL 32608

Doctoral Committee Chair:
Dr. Candace Harper (352.392.9191, ext. 299; charper@coe.ufl.edu)

2423 Norman Hall, PO Box 117048, Gainesville, FL 32611

Whom to contact about your rights as a research participant in the study:

IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone 392-0433

Agreement: I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure and I have received a copy of this description.

Participant: _____ Date: _____

Principal Investigator: _____ Date: _____

Copy 1 : Researcher
Copy 2 : Participant Copy

APPENDIX D INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview One

Introductions and a review of the participant's life history

1. Describe your family background and upbringing.
2. Describe your K-12 school experience (where attended, population, public/private, etc.).
3. What language(s) do you speak (or have studied) other than English? Where did you learn/study it (them)? Do you consider yourself proficient in listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing it (them)?
4. What are your experiences with people from cultures different than your own (consider travel, schooling, friendships, field placements, etc.)?
5. Why did you choose to become an elementary teacher (what events shaped your career choice)?
6. What grade do you prefer teaching? Why?
7. Describe where you currently teach. What do you like/not like about it? [Did you choose to teach at this school? Why?]
8. If you could teach at any school, where would that be? (Describe the type of school, e.g., suburban, inner city, private, etc.) Why?
9. How do you identify yourself when someone asks what you do? [Do you consider yourself a teacher? An elementary teacher? A xth grade teacher? An ESOL teacher? Other?]
10. What population(s) would/do you like to teach (minority, middle class, native/non-native English speakers, economically disadvantaged, gifted, etc.)? Why?
11. What else would you like to share?

Interview Two

Member check and contemporary teaching experiences/perceptions:

1. Summarize/discuss past interview briefly to verify accuracy/expand on a particular point. [Do you have any questions or corrections to the transcript of the previous interview?]

2. Tell me about your teaching background with ELLs (school context; number of ELLs, grade(s), proficiency levels).
3. What is it like to be a teacher of ELLs in a mainstream elementary classroom?
4. Describe a typical day. Details: What are your roles and responsibilities with respect to being a teacher of ELLs in a general education classroom? [In what ways are they the same or different from teaching your other students?]
5. How do you feel about your having ELLs in your classroom? Other teachers in your school? Administrators' attitudes?
6. Do you consider yourself to be an advocate of ELLs and their families? How?
7. How do you plan for and carry out language, literacy, and content instruction for ELLs amidst non-ELLs?
8. What have been the challenges and demands for you in respect to teaching ELLs? How have you dealt with these? What knowledge and skills have you relied on and/or developed in response? What are your strengths/weaknesses?
9. What have you found surprising about having ELLs in your classroom?
10. Are the language and cultural differences of ELLs' apparent in your classroom and school?
11. What are your concerns about having ELLs in your classroom considering accountability requirements?
12. What are ways your school (administration, program structure, resources, collaboration, requirements, professional development, bilingual paraprofessionals, etc.) has (or has not) supported you to be an effective teacher of ELLs?
13. What do you need/want to know more about or learn to become more effective?
14. What else would you like to share?

Interview Three

Member check, meaning-making, teacher preparation experiences/perceptions

1. Summarize/discuss past interview briefly to verify accuracy/expand on a particular point. [Do you have any questions or corrections to the transcript of the previous interview?]
2. What are your perceptions about your PROTEACH preparation to teach ELLs?
3. What were key experiences during your teacher preparation to teach ELLs?
4. How did PROTEACH prepare you to teach ELLs in a mainstream classroom setting?

5. In what ways has the PROTEACH program been confirmed or disconfirmed by your actual teaching experiences relative to ELLs in your elementary classrooms?
6. What are your recommendations for making PROTEACH more effective in preparing future teachers for ELLs in their classrooms?
7. What else would you like to share?

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Sandra Jean Hancock is a native of Chattanooga, Tennessee. After a one-semester stint in 1974 attending college, she returned in 1982. She took one course per semester during the journey to her first degree until she moved to Florida in 1989 and began attending UF fulltime. She graduated from the College of Education's ProTeach Program with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education in 1992 and a Master of Education degree, specializing in ESOL and Gifted Education, in 1993.

Following graduation, she accepted an elementary ESOL teacher position in Hernando County, Florida, and taught for five years, resigning to accept the district ESOL Specialist position. In two years, she was awarded a Title VII (Bilingual Education) fellowship to pursue a doctoral degree with an emphasis in ESOL/Bilingual Education at UF. Nearing the completion of her degree requirements in 2009, she accepted an assistant professor of early childhood position at Georgia College & State University in Milledgeville, Georgia, where she remains.

Mother to three talented children, Sandra's son, Joshua, is the Lead MPages Software Architect at Lucille Packard Children's Hospital. Sandra's second eldest child, Megan, is a Senior Advanced Quality Biomedical Engineer with Stryker Endoscopy. Her youngest child, Kelly, is majoring in Art History at UF and has plans to earn a Master's degree in Historical Preservation and Urban and Regional Planning.

Sandra is currently resides in Milledgeville, Georgia, with her adored dogs, Jack and Pippen.